



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY - FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

First Session

Number 53

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Wednesday

[Preliminary Transcript]

13 December 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

0 0 0

MS COWAN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of
Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:
Mr. Speaker, I wonder if before we
move into that section it would be
appropriate for me to now bring to
the attention of the House the
surgery of our Sergeant in charge
of security.

MR. SPEAKER:
If hon. Members would agree just
remove Statements by Ministers for
a moment, to leave that?

MS COWAN:
Mr. Jack Gosse has undergone
surgery at the Grace Hospital. I
understand he is now out of
Intensive Care and on a ward,
which sounds most positive. I
thought it might be appropriate if
we as a House did send greetings
to the gentleman, because he
certainly, I know, brightens up my
day, anyway, every time I get off
the elevator, and I am certainly
looking forward to having him back
in the House.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, we would like to

be associated with those remarks,
as Mr. Gosse, Jack, is the
individual being referred to. For
many of us who have been here for
ten or eleven years, of course, he
has been around just about that
length of time. And you are
absolutely right, he does brighten
up people's days. He has a good
repertoire of stories to tell from
time to time, and I think it might
be appropriate for us, perhaps, to
tell him a story and send him a
get well message.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Statements by Ministers

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER:
Mr. Speaker, in recent days
National Sea Products Limited has
announced the closure of several
large plants in Atlantic Canada,
including the large offshore plant
in St. John's. These plant
closures, which will see the loss
of approximately 1,500 jobs,
including some 492 workers at the
St. John's plant, will have a
major economic impact on this
Province. The Company has
indicated that these plant
closures and employee layoffs are
the direct result of quota
reductions over the past several
years. The Company has further
stated that plant closures are
necessary if the Company's
financial difficulties are to be
overcome.

In making its plant closure
announcement, Mr. Speaker,

National Sea Products Limited was silent on the deployment of its factory freezer trawler. This technology, which has already displaced shore based employment in Atlantic Canada, was introduced into the Atlantic Fishery on an experimental basis in 1986. This technology introduction was vehemently opposed by all interested groups within this Province, including the Government of the day; and, I might add, as well by the Opposition of the day. However, the Government of Canada elected to licence such technology on an experimental basis. As a condition of this licence approval, the vessel in question, the Cape North, has been engaged in the northern cod fishery. In the process of harvesting northern cod over the past several years, shore-based employment that otherwise would be generated in shore-based plants such as St. John's and Burgeo has been compromised.

Mr. Speaker, it is our understanding that National Sea Products Limited does not plan to tie up the Cape North as part of its overall plant rationalization plan. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador finds such a course of action totally unacceptable and repugnant in the wake of the Company's announced plant closures. I have therefore written the hon. Tom Siddon, and a copy of my letter is attached to this statement, demanding that all licences held for this vessel for traditionally exported species such as northern cod and redfish be cancelled. This is the most appropriate action for the Government of Canada to take given present circumstances in the fishing industry.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that

the action taken on this matter meets with the full approval of this hon. House. I fully believe, therefore, that the Government of Canada should accept the Province's position and help safeguard employment in shore-based plants in this Province. Otherwise, there is a real danger that the future of other fish plants could also be compromised by the continued operation of the vessel in question.

Mr. Speaker, my letter to the hon. Tom Siddon dated December 12, on this same subject is attached to my statement.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like, firstly, to thank the Minister of Fisheries for kindly providing me with a copy of his statement and letter well in advance of the opening of the House. I would just like to tell him at the outset that the Government certainly does have the support of this side in requesting the Federal Government to take this action.

For those of us who were here we can well remember the debate about the factory freezer trawlers and how opposed we were in this House of Assembly to any factory freezer trawlers being licenced for experimental, exploratory or any other reason. Of course, again now the Federal Government, particularly, comes back to reap what they have sowed.

Another thing I would like to mention is the question was raised yesterday by my colleague, the Member for St. John's East (Ms Duff), and, of course, the date of the letter is yesterday's, so she is very concerned about it as well. We would just like to join with the Provincial Government, and very strongly request that the Federal Government immediately cancel that particular licence to the Cape North.

I understand, since coming into the House, that the Vice-President of National Sea has been on saying that they want to continue with the Cape North, and that their plans and their positions as announced over the last couple of days include the Cape North being in the system. But it is incumbent upon the Federal Government to move and take this very justified decision to cancel that particular licence to the factory freezer trawler. We cannot have jobs being displaced on land when, if that fish came ashore to this Province, it would provide meaningful employment to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Again, I would like to thank the Minister for the statement well in advance of the House. And we will tell the Federal Government, as well, that they are the only party involved in this particular situation which can take meaningful action. It is incumbent upon the Federal Government to take that action immediately so that people in Newfoundland and Labrador can have the protection they so deserve, and should get, from the Federal Government of this country. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to advise this hon. House about the progress of work by the Special Committee of the Cabinet and a Committee of Deputy Ministers on the Grand Falls Pulp and Paper Mill situation. Mr. Speaker, the first round of meetings was held on Friday, December 8, 1989, with officials of Abitibi-Price Limited, various local unions and the Mayors of Badger, Windsor, Grand Falls, Bishops Falls and Botwood, the five communities most affected by Abitibi-Price's decision on restructuring the mill.

All parties realize that there is a considerable amount to be accomplished in the next few weeks. The company has assured us of its full co-operation in providing all the necessary information. Another round of meetings has been set for next week with the company, and I might add, Mr. Speaker, that is a meeting set in Toronto with senior management of Abitibi-Price. Similarly, we have established an ongoing dialogue with the labour unions and the communities affected.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some speculation about the total number of employees affected. As stated by the hon. Premier, we were advised by Abitibi-Price that 250 permanent union employees would be affected. However, the actual number of permanent union employees who received notices was 245. In addition, 26 management employees will also be affected.

With respect to temporary, or what is known locally as casual employees, the actual number is still undetermined. It is my understanding that the number of temporary employees is subject to negotiations between the company and the union. I would not, therefore, be able to confirm a fixed number. Mr. Speaker, we hope the final number could be reduced as far as possible. We will make every effort to accomplish this.

I will be reporting to this Hon. House on a regular basis about any further developments in this situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Forestry critic, the Member for Humber Valley, has agreed to let me respond to the statement, obviously, as it applies to my district.

It is interesting to note that the Minister's statement implies somehow that the Cabinet Committee had its first round of meetings on Friday, December 8, out in Grand Falls with officials of the various communities and so on. I do not believe that is accurate. As a matter of fact, I asked a question in the House yesterday whether indeed, the Cabinet Committee, the high profile Cabinet Committee itself had been out to Grand Falls to meet with all the interested parties. The statement implies they had, but, in fact, the meeting referred to by the Minister was a meeting of officials, not a meeting of the Cabinet Committee. That is the question I asked. This high

profile Cabinet Committee was appointed nearly two weeks ago now, on Black Friday, and they have not even been out there.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the comment in here about the company assuring the Government that it would provide all information, well, we already found out yesterday in response to a question I asked the Premier the day before, that in fact the 250 job loss number that the company provided it with on Black Friday was inaccurate. In fact it was 271, and the Premier confirmed it yesterday. So I would suggest that the Government might want to ask some questions of Abiti-Price and make sure you get the answers you are satisfied with, because the other point I raised is still operative.

I have talked to some union representatives out there as recently as today, and they, in fact, cannot understand the logic: If there are 271 permanent jobs to be eliminated, how in the name of heavens can there still be 130 temporary jobs left on, as the Premier suggested yesterday? The fact of the matter is, the job loss is much more significant than we were first led to believe. Of course the Premier told me yesterday I was wrong, and here we have the Minister saying today that he is not able to confirm what the number is. So they should get their act together.

Mr. Speaker, let me just pass on quickly to the Minister, who was not here, two or three suggestions that I hope his Committee will consider. Would they advise the company or discuss with the company the possibility of reinvesting savings - reinvesting savings - into the upgrading of that number seven machine, the

other old machine that remains? Would they consider asking the company, which I asked yesterday, to offer the early retirement package, because that certainly would diminish the impact, no question about it, offer it as opposed to negotiating? I would like to know what effort has been undertaken with respect to Government Response Programs that may be available to deal with the people in the area. Cut out the plans that he has to eliminate jobs at Wooddale, locate the university in the Exploits area and so on and so on, and perhaps have a look at increasing its own silviculture efforts.

Mr. Speaker, this issue is much more significant that we have been treating it, as far as I am concerned and as far as the people of Central Newfoundland are concerned, and I hope to see a little more action on the part of the Cabinet Committee. Certainly, the very least they could do is go out themselves as a Cabinet Committee and meet with the people themselves and talk to them first-hand, as opposed to sending out a bunch of officials. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Questions

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

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

I have a question for the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation. Will the Minister confirm that some time last spring

he had a meeting with the Elected Roads Committee for the Bellevue area concerning the transportation issues in that area and, in particular, a request for money to complete the paving of the Loop Road at Hillview or Hillview Extension? And, were they given a commitment on this road?

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

MR. GILBERT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I had a meeting with the Elected Committee from the Bellevue area before the Budget was passed. The meeting was chaired by the man who ran for the Tories in that District in the previous election. I told him that as it stood right now, there was nothing I could do but I would certainly look at it. The Member then came back, and another delegation came in after the Budget came down, and I told him I would look at it. As a result, obviously there was something done about it.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, was it the same group at the second meeting? And was Mr. Stagg, whom he referred to, at the second meeting that was attended by the people from Hillview?

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

MR. GILBERT:
No, I do not think it was the same group. It was a different group. Mr. Stagg was not there, anyhow.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, will the hon. Minister confirm that it was not an elected group at all, it was residents of the Hillview area, the Loop Road area in particular? Will he confirm, Mr. Speaker, that this meeting was headed up, or at least was attended by, the Premier's brother and they were given a commitment at that time that the road would be paved?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know that either Committee was elected. I was told it was a delegation from the District.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:

No, I said if he said it was elected, but I do not know if either group was elected. I know there was a Mr. Wells at both meetings. I have since found out he was the Premier's brother, but I did not know at the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:

You had better get your family history straight or you might not be in that job very long!

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

As the Minister suggested

yesterday in his answers to questions, the contract for the Loop Road pavement, Hillview Extension, Contract No. 6688, was extended to accommodate the paving of the road in front of the Premier's brother's home. Will the Minister confirm that the contractors were moved out of that area and were requested to come back in to finish that paving after they had gone to another area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not know the answer to that question. I will take it and report back to the Member.

MR. HEWLETT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

One of the Bills before the House at present is a Bill to eliminate the Power Distribution District subsidy. Obviously, this will mean an increase for ratepayers in the Province.

I wonder if the Minister of Energy could indicate in general percentage terms what this rate increase will involve?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, in our Budget last year, we indicated that with the phaseout of the PDD subsidy there

would be an increase in cost as a result of the phaseout over three years of about 10 per cent. Hydro will be making representation to the Public Utilities Board in a sitting that starts, I believe on March 26, at which they will be asking for a rate increase that will accommodate the change. However, to soften the impact on the ratepayer, they will be asking that this increase be phased in over a five to seven-year period. We are phasing out the subsidy over a three-year period, but we want to phase in the increases as a result of that phaseout over a five to seven-year period. So, the PUB will be telling us the amounts.

MR. HEWLETT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

Okay, so we have a rate increase of 10 per cent in general terms over, say, five years. You have your normal inflation raises that power companies normally go for, probably in the range of 4 per cent a year, or so, and we have the federal menace of the GST coming down on us. Would the Minister care to confirm that possibly over the next four or five years we are into, probably, a one-third jump in power rates to the consumer?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, if the Federal GST is brought in on January 1, 1991, that amount will apply to electricity as it would apply to everything else. It is

unfortunate that that 9 per cent, or 7 per cent or whatever the amount that would come in, would also be added to electricity and other energy costs in the Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

DR. GIBBONS:

That is correct.

Obviously, also, there will be increases over time with regard to inflation, and these will have to be accommodated. There will be other effects on rates as a result of the changing price of oil and the amount that is burned at Holyrood, and over time all of this will have to come into future rate increases. It is difficult to say at this time exactly what that will be. Obviously, we can make estimates.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

A final question to the Minister, Mr. Speaker. One of the things that is common throughout the entire power situation in the Province is that up to 700 kilowatt hours everybody's rates are the same, but in the area covered by the PDD, once you go above 700 you are into a higher rate situation. Given what probably rural Newfoundland is facing over the next few years, would the Minister indicate that that sort of a rate going above 700, which probably would apply to small business, is going to hurt small business in the rural areas of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

It is certainly difficult to address whether it would hurt or not, what is above 700, but I could say this much, that in our first few months in office we have increased the base from the 600 kilowatt hours to 700 kilowatt hours a month that is charged at that low rate.

I am sure that in the future, as we address the implications not only for the small businessman in outport Newfoundland but also for the ratepayer in that particular area, where there is presently now a 700 kilowatt limit, we will also be considering future changes.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I asked the Premier in the House some time ago about the proposed rate increase with Newfoundland Light and Power, wherein the more you burned the less you paid, at least per unit of energy, and here we have a situation where the Government's own Hydro Corporation is into a situation where after you go pass 700, the more you burn the more you pay. Would the Minister not think that there is some inconsistency in this regard?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, the problem is not as simple as that. We would love to have it so that all ratepayers in the Province are paying a consistent rate. But, because of these areas being on diesel generation, there is a problem

with capacity and there is an outrageous cost at increasing diesel capacity. We want to see more and more of these areas get on to the interconnected grid where they can avail of the general power that is available at better rates.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes, and this time I am right.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Fisheries. During the last few days we have heard a lot of discussion on the closure of plants, and mainly the blame has gone either to the companies or Ottawa and the Government has said it can do very little, which is factual. However, it can do something about keeping a number of other plants open. Those are the small inshore plants, many of which might have to close also, for different reasons. I ask the Minister if he could give us an update upon the status of Universal Fisheries. That Company has applied to Government for Assistance. They operate five plants in the Province and employ a lot of people, and they are in a precarious position I think, to say the least?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, yes, we have taken some initiatives to help Universal by paying off the \$2.6 million loan that was owed to the bank, for which we were responsible, of course. We have paid off that loan. It is going to remain on

our books as a loan to the Company, but certainly it will relieve them of interest payments now. Instead they will accumulate, and hopefully it will be paid off at a later date.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

I thank the Member for his answer. He clarified the point that the loan stays on the books, and I presume if the Company turns a profit down the road they will be expected to pay, which is fair.

May I ask the Minister, then, in light of statements he made some time ago that the Government would look very carefully at providing guaranteed loans to any company, that the company would have to be a solid type operation, does his Government and Department still stand by that philosophy?

MR. SIMMS:

A good question.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, it does.

MR. HEARN:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. Mary's
- The Capes, a final supplementary.

MR. HEARN:

I ask him, then, can he guarantee the House that the Government will not provide loans to companies which have gone out in the past to undermine legitimate companies by jacking up fish prices, by putting themselves in a poor financial

situation, whereby they have to come to Government for loans to go back out and operate the next year? Can he guarantee that he will not put legitimate companies out of business by providing guarantees to fly-by-night companies?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

I am not sure if I heard the hon. Member's question correctly. Is he saying that companies that go bankrupt and then come back under another company, will we guarantee that second company? Is this what you are saying?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

I will try to explain more clearly for the Minister. I am just asking, in light of their policy to provide loans only to legitimate companies who are credible and who put something into the fishery, and I presume who can back up the loans they get, will he guarantee loans will not be given to companies who get in trouble by going out and jacking up the price of fish, paying more than they can afford to pay and jeopardizing other legitimate plants, and then coming to Government expecting a guaranteed loan so that they can continue to operate? - and it is happening.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, that is hypothetical. I do not know if the hon. Member is leading up to a

final question, but certainly I find it difficult to respond to that question. But if he has a final question or a more definitive question, I would be glad to hear it.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will ask the Minister a direct question then. There are fish companies in the Province who go out into areas where there is competition for buying product, and they cause a price war by jacking up the price of fish to a point where many of the smaller companies have problems paying for the fish and then turn in a profit. The companies who do that, who breeze in and breeze out, leaving the fishermen and the workers up in the air, quite often put themselves in a position where they cannot continue to operate on their own, because they do not make a profit either.

I know one company at least has approached the Government looking for a guaranteed loan so that they will be able to operate next year. The same operation, if it continues, will put legitimate companies who operate on their own money out of business. I ask the Minister, does the Government consider a company who gets into trouble by doing that a legitimate case for giving a guaranteed loan.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, that sounds like something that used to happen under the previous

Administration. I can name a few, by the way, if you want me to sometime, under the previous Government.

I am not aware of any situation similar to that described by the hon. Member. I know of one company that had financial problems and went bankrupt, another company took that company over, but there has been no funding requested by the second company.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice. In view of recent happenings and occurrences, the Montreal situation for example, concern has been expressed to me about security matters, in particular security matters in, of all buildings, a courthouse, of all the public buildings that we have, and from that perspective a courthouse is probably high priority from a security perspective.

Can the Minister advise what plans his Department has for the provision of fixed and permanent security at the new Courthouse in Grand Falls, which, I believe, is finally going to open next week?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. DICKS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Most of the issues of concern arising from the incident in

Montreal have not related to security for courts, but arose in other areas which the Member is not addressing.

However, I point out that there are many areas we can probably indicate, as a system of justice, which would require some beefing up, courts being among them. However, I think the courts have a much greater degree of security in the sense that with most criminal proceedings, where any sort of danger might be seen to arise, there are usually individual RCMP or RNC members present, so that to the extent that security is required, I think in most instances, at least when I have been in court, and those that have been reported to me, there is a much greater number of security personnel around to cope with any problems that might arise.

So to answer the Member's question specifically, we do not intend at this time to introduce any greater security measures in Grand Falls at the court than we do have in the Supreme Court in St. John's, or in Provincial Courts throughout the rest of the Province. I do not see any specific need at this point, or any particular threat that would justify giving greater security to that court than to any other.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, the point is there is no security at the court. That is the precise point. Maybe I can direct my supplementary to the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, who probably knows a bit more about this, having been the one responsible.

I do not suppose, as the Minister's says, there is a court in the land which does not have some kind of security. I do not suppose.

Will the Minister of Works, Services, and Transportation, if it is true, confirm that in fact the Government plans to have no permanent security located at that courthouse, and all they plan to do is simply ask the custodial workers located at the provincial building out there, who now are responsible for that building, the museum and the arts and culture centre, to simply add courthouse to their custodial responsibilities?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I will take the Member's question under advisement and give him an answer later on.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, Mr. Speaker, since neither Minister seems to be taking it too seriously, perhaps I will redirect my final supplementary to the Minister of Justice, and I will tell him succinctly. If I were to tell the Minister that recently an individual walked into the present courtroom area in Grand Falls with a package wrapped with a blanket under his arm, unwrapped it after he got through a group of people and showed a group of people a 22 calibre rifle - simply trying to make a point - would the Minister then consider this matter serious enough and treat it as high priority and instruct his

colleague, the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, to place permanent security personnel at that new courthouse? I can tell him it is a very big concern of the judiciary and of the lawyers and legal profession out in Central Newfoundland. It is a major concern.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. DICKS:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Member for Grand Falls seems to be mixing together two different types of security. There is, of course, security of the person, which we recognize as being important, and also security of property. Now, he posed a question to my learned colleague, the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, and I understood his question to be that which he has come back to, security in terms of the people in the court. The fact that he raised with my colleague, and I seemed to have misunderstood his question, personal security of the buildings, and I, personally, in the Department of Justice do not have any difficulty with the situation of one custodial person being in charge of several buildings, but my learned colleague will be giving a more detailed answer to that.

On security of the court, Mr. Speaker, I do not think we should take any particular group out of society and afford them greater security. The previous Government obviously had a higher degree of paranoia. For instance, our Premier does not have a bodyguard. Perhaps that form of paranoia carries over into Opposition, as well, Mr. Premier.

MR. SIMMS:

Is is no joking matter.

MR. DICKS:

I am serious and I would like to give the Member a serious answer. This House of Assembly, the question has been put to me whether or not we need additional security here. What I point out to the hon. Member is that the courts, by and large, have a much greater degree of security than any other institution in the Province. You can make a greater case for security for hospitals, for our schools, for women's centres, for any number of institutions you care to mention. This particular incident in Grand Falls, I am not familiar with. If the court considers it to be of great significance, or posing a threat to them, I am quite certain that the Chief Judge of the court will be onto my case, as would the Provincial Court Judge in Grand Falls. I point out to him that neither have been in touch with me. Should I see a significant need arise in Grand Falls or any other Provincial Court, I will address it at that time. If this incident happened, and I do not know it to be the case, if the judges treated it as anything more than a prank, I am sure I would have heard. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I can assure the hon. Minister it was not a prank. It was an individual who was trying to make a point. He got in there undetected and the people who saw it were members of the judiciary themselves. Can I ask the Minister this? Is he saying that if he receives representation from

the judiciary out there, from the legal community and so on, that indeed he would ensure that there will be security placed at the new courthouse? Is that what he is saying?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. DICKS:

Mr. Speaker, I brought my briefcase in here today and no one checked that. I did not go through a metal detector. If this incident occurred, and I do not know that it has -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. DICKS:

We have an obligation as a Government to provide an appropriate level of security to each institution in the Province. If there is a significant danger in any particular one of them, then obviously we have to place more security at its disposal. The difficulty I have with the hon. Member's question is, no, I do not intend to place five additional policemen and metal detectors at the courthouse in Grand Falls, because this may have come into it. What I pointed out to him is that when trials are in progress and you have people who may have some particular grievance before the court, there are almost invariably members of the police around. I do not see what additional measures of security would be necessary in this circumstance. I also point out that notwithstanding, in most cases additional security will not detect the type of thing the hon. member mentioned. It is very easy, other than having metal detectors, like they have at airports and security guards all

over the place, to prevent people from carrying weapons in to other places.

I recognize the problem, and what I would like to say in conclusion is that if there is any significant danger, I would expect the courts to point it out to me. This particular incident is one that has not been drawn to my attention. It is not an incident that could not occur here, that could not occur in any other court in the Province, that could not appear in a transition house, that could not appear in a school, and that being the case I do not see how we as a Government can take precautions to ensure that that can never happen anyplace. Would we like to do do? Certainly. But we do not have the means at our disposal to place police and metal detectors over every institution, every home, and everything else.

So to say that it occurred in Grand Falls, it could have occurred elsewhere. But I am satisfied as Minister of Justice that an appropriate level of security has been provided for the courts. We hope we have an appropriate level of security here at this House of Assembly, but to go beyond that and give an absolute guarantee that no particular incident can occur in the courts or elsewhere is beyond my control, the powers of the Government, or the means at its disposal.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Environment and Lands. Over the last number of years the Wilderness and

Ecological Council held a number of meetings with the Peckford Government on the last unscathed wilderness area of the Province - the island part of the Province - the Bay du Nord wilderness area. There were a number of public hearings at that time, and there were changes made into the initial plans for the wilderness area. My question to the Minister is has the Wilderness and Ecological Council met with the Social and Resource policy sections of Cabinet re the immediate setting up of a wilderness reserve area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

A good question, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Member for it, because that is an area that we have been actively discussing and reviewing, as the previous Administration had done. It goes back almost ten years, actually, from the first time it was put in the process of being considered a wilderness and ecological reserve area, the Bay du Nord middle ridge. Most recently, as the Member suggests, the WERAC Committee did provide a briefing to a joint group of the Resource Policy and Social Policy Committee of Cabinet, and subsequent to that, although I do not have a specific time frame, Cabinet will be called on to make a decision on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Members of the WERAC Council have argued strenuously for a total wilderness area, where there

would be no future hydro development, no mining, no forestry, no development at all, whereas the local residents in the area have recognized and argued for a wildlife reserve where the wildlife and fish would be preserved, but it would give the Government the right sometime in the future to say that there could very well be some development there. Can the Minister tell the House the position of his Government on the proposals presented to him?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

I again thank the Member for the question, but I really cannot tell him what our position is until the decision is made by Cabinet. I guess that would be obvious. However, within that total picture there are two sections, and the recommendation following public input is that one section, the larger section, be a wilderness reserve which would not allow certain developments, and the other section would be a wildlife reserve in which, let us say, mining exploration would be possible. Until such time, of course, as Cabinet makes the decision, I could not give you a comment on the Government's position.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

The southern part of the wilderness area affects the residents of Fortune - Hermitage, and the Minister and his Government is fully aware of the economic plight of that particular

part of the Province and the need for diversification of the economy. Will the Minister give assurance to the House and to the people of Fortune - Hermitage that they will be advised of the Cabinet's position before the final decision is made to make it a total or partial wilderness area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My understanding is that there was a substantial public input from various communities affected, Mr. Speaker. I would think that the input has been made by the various sections of the island part of the Province that are affected. I would think now, based on the briefing provided to the Resource Policy Committee and the Social Policy Committee, that the next stage in which Government would be actively involved would be a Cabinet decision, but, unfortunately, I cannot give a time frame at this stage of the game.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

My final supplementary. There is real concern out there with the people in my part of the district that the Government could very well go with the total wilderness area, and that would be against what they are asking, or what they are proposing because they are directly affected. My question is, will the Minister, and I want a yes or no if that is possible, advise the people of the decision you are about to make before it

finally becomes law?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot very well do that. How could I possibly advise anybody of a decision before it is finally made? But I do not think the Member intended to be facetious or be ambiguous in any way, shape, or form. Input has been allowed and input has been encouraged, no question about that. I think the final decision of Government, as with any question, would be for the greatest benefit to the most people. Now beyond that, until such time as Cabinet does make a decision, there is very little I can add, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Fisheries. Recently, in Newfoundland, there has been quite a lot of talk about the salmon fishery, both the commercial fishery and the sports oriented fishery. A meeting was held in Corner Brook recently, I think, with both parties in attendance. Since both commercial fishermen and the sports fishermen and fishing lodges have to gear up for the fishery, can the Minister tell this House what, if any, representation was made to DFO, and has the Department yet adopted a position with respect to the salmon fishery and management?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, an official of the Department of Fisheries did, in fact, attend that workshop held out in Corner Brook some weeks ago, sponsored by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and he pretty well outlined the position of the Province in terms of the salmon fishery. We fully recognize the need for better protection for the salmon stocks. We fully recognize that where enhancement is taking place, as was the case in Rocky River, I think, up in St. Mary's Bay, that the mouth of the river must be protected. I understand that last year, right at the mouth of that river, where a lot of money was spent on enhancement, certain people went up there and increased their salmon harvest by 4,000 or 5,000 salmon over what would have normally been a 200 or 300 salmon harvest.

So given all these problems, Mr. Speaker, we fully recognize the need for better conservation measures and we are hoping that we can help and work toward having both groups agree on a better management plan for that resource. We recognize too, of course, that the commercial salmon fishery has a very important role to play in the economy of our Province. In fact, in places like Labrador, I am told that about 40 per cent of their total income is derived from the commercial salmon fishery.

So before we would ever be able to agree to a moratorium or a long-term moratorium on the commercial salmon fishery, we would have to be pretty satisfied that, first of all, it is

absolutely necessary, and secondly, that the fishermen whose livelihood will be affected will in some way be compensated.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader, two minutes.

MR. SIMMS:

Two minutes?

MR. SPEAKER:

Two minutes.

MR. SIMMS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get back to the Minister of Justice once again, because I really had difficulty understanding -

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, is that so? Mr. Speaker, I will forego my place and defer to the Member for Humber East (Ms Verge). Go ahead.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage) about the Capital Works Budget for next year and the Town of Pasadena. I would like to ask the Minister if, in responding to the application from Pasadena for about \$2 million financing to complete the sewage treatment lagoon and to install a modern sewage treatment system for Pasadena West, the Minister will,

number one, consider the fact that Pasadena is now discharging improperly treated sewage from Pasadena East and untreated raw sewage from Pasadena West into Deer Lake; number two, consider the fact that Pasadena West long ago outgrew septic tanks and that the ground there is saturated with raw sewage; and number three, apply the standard he stated in the House yesterday, namely, give top priority to Pasadena's application because of the health and environment factors?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member makes a good point. Certainly I am aware of the problems with the Pasadena situation. The request for water and sewer and roads funding from the regional offices have now been received in my Department and my officials are presently reviewing those requests and reviewing the priorities as established by the regional managers. And later this week, on Friday, I have a meeting with my officials and we will be starting to prioritize the various requests for water and sewer and roads. I am already aware, and I have had some discussion about the Pasadena situation. And your point is well made, that certainly priority will be given to situations such as that. I cannot say where they are going to rank in the listing on a priority list, but they will certainly be considered.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

Order, please!

Yesterday, the Chair undertook to

look into a matter referred to it by the Leader of the Opposition, when the Chair asked the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw a parliamentary utterance. The Leader of the Opposition made reference to an incident where the Premier had used an unparliamentary utterance and the Chair undertook to look into that. Hon. Members all know the definition of parliamentary language, and also unparliamentary language, and I think the most succinct definition is the one given by May. May says that the characteristics of parliamentary language are good temper and moderation and obviously unparliamentary language is the opposite of good temper and moderation. Also, hon. Members will know that it is very difficult to say that there is any particular list of words which comprise an unparliamentary list, because there are other factors; the tone of voice, the context, all of these factors that hon. Members know about in the Speaker's determination of whether an utterance, a word, a phrase is unparliamentary. With respect to the Premier's reference yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition had asked a question respecting Dr. House, and the Premier started off by saying: 'What we really need, Mr. Speaker, is an Opposition that will tell the truth, and not just part of the truth, and so to cause deception, that is what we really need'. Now it is very difficult to determine that that is unparliamentary. By the same token, a Member of the Opposition could say what we need is a Government that will tell the whole truth and not part of the truth. Normally, an unparliamentary utterance is levelled at a Member, a particular Member rather than at a Government

or at an Opposition collectively. Hon. Members know that it is acceptable to make accusations against the Government or against the Opposition which one would not make with an individual, and therefore this is not an accusation any more than a definition of what a good Opposition might be. The Chair did not react to that in terms of it being unparliamentary. It might have been the tone of voice that the Premier was using, but the Chair certainly did not react to that and does not consider it to be unparliamentary. The Premier went on to say that he was trying to make a statement, he said: 'Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to report to the House, if hon. Members want it, but it is obvious that they only want to hear a distorted version, they do not want to hear the truth', and then some hon. Member made an utterance of 'tell the truth', and the Premier said, 'I am happy to report the truth', and some hon. Member said, 'nothing but the truth', and the Premier said, 'that is right, and it is no mistake that the oath that you take in court swears you not simply to the truth, but to the whole truth and nothing but the truth, because, Mr. Speaker, if you do not, you cannot deceive more effectively by telling a simple portion of the truth than you can by telling a lie', so obviously the Premier then, was reacting to a comment from a Member to tell the truth, and was elaborating upon what the oath really meant, and elucidated upon that and was making no accusation and obviously was not in a situation of using unparliamentary language.

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was asked a question by the Leader of the Opposition with respect to the intentions of National Sea Products in terms of its long-term mothballing of the plant in St. John's. The question of the Leader of the Opposition was as to whether or not it would really be brought back into operation once the stocks recovered. I told him how soundly based their plans were. Whether they have other plans of mothballing it - and selling it if they could find somebody to buy it - I cannot say with certainty, but I will undertake to find out and advise the House. I did so, Mr. Speaker, and I received a written indication this morning of their position. It says this: "The question has been asked: What happens if the stocks recover? This is not a simple question to answer because any decision National Sea might make would depend upon the rate and timing of recovery of the stocks, which species recover, and the fishing areas in which the recovery takes place.

The plan that National Sea announced on Monday will give us the flexibility to respond should the stocks recover and our quotas increase. First, we will still have significant capacity in our plants to handle increases that might occur, both in Newfoundland and in Nova Scotia. Second, the plants in Canso and St. John's will be mothballed to protect the equipment and the buildings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was not satisfied with the answer, because I had asked them specifically when

I telephoned to advise me of what their productivity level was proposed to be. I know that Fishery Products were talking about operating at about 65 per cent of capacity.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order, the hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I was waiting to see if the Premier was going to clue up his answer, but obviously, it is going to be a lengthy answer and, according to Standing Order 53.(4), on Wednesdays, Private Member's Day, the daily routine of business shall end no later than 3:00, now, and at that time the private Member's motion has to be called. So he can do it tomorrow, perhaps, or table it, or whatever.

MR. SPEAKER:

The point of order is well taken. I am sorry, the Chair did not observe.

It being Private Member's Day, we shall now call upon the Member for Grand Bank to introduce his private Member's motion.

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the beginning, I say that I would like to have heard the remainder of the Premier's answer, because I guess it is all pertinent and tied into this very important resolution that we are going to debate in this House

today.

Over the last four or five weeks in this House, the fishery - and very justifiably so - has taken up more time than any other issue or topic in the Province.

MR. SIMMS:

Right on! It has dominated.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, it has dominated debate in this legislature, and rightfully so, for a number of reasons.

A couple of weeks ago, we had a resolution debated here, a private Member's motion, where, in essence, one of the 'Whereas' clauses in the resolution called for an all-plants-open policy, which we saw voted down.

So, to get a more succinct and to-the-point resolution, so that all Members of the House could support it we have brought in this resolution: "BE IT RESOLVED that this Honourable House call upon the Provincial Government to provide whatever assistance is necessary to keep all fish plants open in the Province." Now, that is short and to the point. I suppose the amendments being considered will probably be developed and seen later on today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this, by far, is the most important resolution, the most important debate, overshadowing everything else that has been said in this House to date. We have a very serious crisis in our fishery, both deep-sea and inshore, but particularly the deep-sea fishery. The deep-sea plants owned and operated by National Sea Products and Fishery Products International and, of course, a lot of inshore fish plants that

are relying on the Resource Short Plant Program, fish from the middle-distance fleet, are very seriously threatened over the next number of weeks and months, in the Province.

It goes without saying that, as these plants and people are threatened, so threatened are the very communities in which they are located. That is why we saw fit today to bring forward this private Member's resolution, to ask all hon. Members of the House to support it.

What we have already seen happen this week, and we will see happen over the next few weeks, is going to have very severe consequences for thousands of people located in hundreds of communities around this Province, and we should not lose sight of that. I think, a lot of people - and I guess we are as guilty as anybody - become preoccupied with the number of deep-sea plants operated by Fishery Products International and those operated by National Sea. But the consequences of what is about to happen in the fishery is far more drastic than that. By the Provincial Government's own admission and by statements by the Premier and Minister of Fisheries there has been consistent talk about some 6,000 people being displaced in all sectors of the fishing industry, both deep-sea and inshore fishermen, part-timers, on and on it goes. Of course, as well the comments of the Chairman of the Economic Recovery Commission, Dr. House, and particularly his comments over the last twenty-four or forty-eight hours, to me personally have been very, very disturbing. I say that having listened to the tape which Dr. House did with CBC radio yesterday

morning. It became very, very clear that what he is talking about when he refers to a mobility program indeed is people moving out of the Province. Indeed, he did say that maybe the best option for the people who are directly affected negatively in the fishery is to move out. That is very, very disturbing.

There is one thing that has become very, very clear to me in this whole fisheries issue over the last three or four weeks, and it is that we have two levels of Government, the Federal and the Provincial Government who agreed, working together, on a plan to downsize the fishery in this Province. It is the first time in our history that we have seen the Federal Government and the Provincial Government working together to downsize the fishery. That is what we have in this Province. It is very, very disappointing that we see the two Governments taking this particular action and thinking this way about our most important and vital industry, but that is what is happening.

I think the fish companies have seized on an opportunity, a resource crisis as it is called, to get both levels of Government on the same wave length to accomplish what they wanted to accomplish now for a considerable number of years, and that is to shut down fish plants in this Province. They have taken the conflicting scientific advice that has gone from a recommended TAC of, I think, it was 295,000 tons two years ago, recommended for this year that it go to 125,000 tons but stayed at 235,000 tons, strong indications and every indication is that it is going to 190,000 tons this year. The fish

companies have seized on this opportunity and have been successful in their dealings with both levels of Government to say that in order to address the problem that we now have, we have to shut down plants and eliminate a lot of our overprocessing capacity.

What is very disturbing is that both levels of Government have accepted it. Not one level of Government, the Federal or the Provincial have objected to that particular action, or to those suggestions or proposals from National Sea Products or Fishery Products International. They have swallowed it hook, line and sinker.

The Federal Government, there is no question, have to take most of the responsibility for the problems in the fishery in this Province today. There is no question, the Federal Government has to take the responsibility. They are as guilty as sin about the mismanagement of our fish stocks and our resources. There is no question about that. But what surprises me, that even though, and I guess to a degree, they have admitted that it is their problem by what we see and what is being said, but as well by the programs that they are going to implement to try and take care of this problem for the short-term. So to me it is sort of an admission of guilt. But it is very disturbing as well.

The other thing, of course, is that there is no way for me, or for us as a party, to know what went on in the discussions between both companies and the Provincial or the Federal Government. But I am wondering just how hardball, how hard was it the Province played with National Sea and

Fishery Products International. I am wondering. Did they play hardball or did they very willingly accept both companies proposals? Maybe even the seeds of doubt were sowed long before we got to this particular situation. I do not know.

But I really did expect that the Province would have put up a very strong fight to prevent the situation that happened in St. John's just a few days ago, and the very bad news that we are expecting about a number of other plants over the next, well I do not know when, but we are expecting it within the next few weeks, I suppose. That just how hardball did they play with the companies to try and prevent that?

And, of course, we will hear today, Mr. Chairman, all kinds of comments of why the Provincial Government and the Federal Government would not or could not get involved financially? And in a meeting with the Premier yesterday, with a delegation from Grand Bank, we had a very wide-ranging and a very direct discussion about it. I was extremely pleased with the meeting, I must say that, and I guess the note we finished on was that we just wish that it all could be a little more pleasant. But it was a good meeting. And, of course, a number of factors were discussed pertaining to this whole issue, one of which was countervail. And what free trade has done? And what countervail did exist before free trade and free trade did not give protection as it should have and all this kind of discussions that went on.

But there is one thing that have occurred since the meeting with the Premier and discussions last

night with colleagues from both sides of the House about politics and the fishery particularly, I guess, it sort of predominated the whole discussion, the fishery and Meech Lake I guess were the two things that sort of almost took up most of the night for some of us. Is wondering what would have happened if the Federal Government had gone to talk, to discuss this situation with the Americans? What would have happened if they had gone and very clearly outlined to the United States people the situation we are in in this Province, in Atlantic Canada? It is not supposed to be an overly long period of time situation. It is suppose to get better once the stocks rebuild. I wonder what the affect would have been then? I wonder if that was suggested by the companies? I do not think it was, because I think the companies, as I said before, are getting what they wanted for a number of years. I am wondering if the Province thought about that? I am wondering if the Federal Government thought about that?

I do not know what the consequences would be, and to be very honest with you I do not know if there is anything in the free trade agreement which sort of precludes that from happening. But I think, based upon the situation in the Province today, I am sure that the Americans would have been sympathetic to the situation, knowing that we are only trying to keep people that have traditionally worked in this industry, trying to keep them there until our fish stocks replenish so that they then can work for longer periods of time, earn more money and so on. I somehow feel that they may have been sympathetic to that.

So it is my own feeling that all parties were a little too ready to accept what the fish companies have proposed, and that is very, very disappointing. It is the first time, I guess, in our history on an issue so vital as this that we have seen it. Because ordinarily we would have one level of government disagreeing in some way with a proposal along this nature.

The other thing, I guess, we have to very seriously consider, and I said it publicly a few weeks ago is that, and I said it, I guess, getting close to 100 times in this House in the last month, fish is a renewable resource. And in a search for a solution to this problem we have to be very careful that we do not cause long-term pain and take actions that will disrupt, displace people from communities in which they live, in a hasty search for a solution. I hope that is not what we do and that we look back within two, three, four, five years and say, you know, we really did not have to take these drastic decisions, fish plants that were closed down could have stayed open for a number of reasons, the stocks have rebuilt faster than we anticipated that they would, and that is another unanswered question. And nobody can be definite about how long it is going to take the fish stocks to rebuild. But with the scientific expertise that exists, and it is critical as we read about them in times, there must be a time frame talked about now with all the studies and task forces and the scientific people that are in place and with the people at the Federal Fisheries and Oceans and people with the Department of Provincial Fisheries, there must be some time frame in mind when we can expect our stocks to start to

replenish, and when we can expect our stocks to be, hopefully, significantly replenished, so that the total allowable catch can be increased, and people can then consequently work for longer periods of time, and the Province gets rolling again in a more meaningful fishing industry. These are very serious and sincere concerns I have. I realize it is not easy to come up with solutions to such serious problems. I realize that as well. That is one benefit of having served in Government and having been a Cabinet Minister, you know that you face situations that are sometimes horrendous and very difficult to deal with, but you cannot be too hasty when you make decisions such as this. Before I forget, having watched what the scientists have said about the resource and the stocks, in the last two years who knows what they are going to come back and say to us next year, or the year after, about the biomass and what is there? I guess a lot of it comes down to a judgement sort of call, and I just hope that what has happened to the Southside fish plant, and what we anticipate is going to happen to anywhere between two and four more fish plants in this Province in the deep-sea, and a number of others for sure that are dependent upon the inshore fishery Resource Short Plant Program, that we are not too hasty and that we will regret what we have done, and that we did not take enough caution in trying to deal with this issue. I realize as well how foolish fish companies can sometimes be. They try to use all kinds of measures, as again, we discussed yesterday in our meeting with the Premier, and which we discussed as a Caucus. I am sure you have discussed it as a Caucus of the Cabinet as well,

they use all kinds of means to try to get their way. It will not surprise me again, in talking about the factory freezer trawlers, that they again, once this issue becomes sort of tight and the pressure comes on, that we will not see something coming out of National Sea that will sort of be a little bit threatening, well, if you want to do this to us, we have to look at the whole situation again and maybe it will not only be St. John's, but Burgeo will have to go, too. The same tactic they used on another matter we discussed yesterday as well and which the Premier, very rightfully so, made public a couple of days ago, on what I refer to, and I think you refer to, and all of us agreed that it was nothing short of blackmail that National Sea used. I would not be surprised to see National Sea use that tactic again when it comes to the suggestion to cancel the license of the factory freezer trawler, because they have now said publicly, according to my colleague who sits behind me, that in their decisions the involvement of the factory freezer trawler, that it was very strongly considered that that trawler should be kept in the system.

There is just one question I want to ask, and I am sure the Premier or the Minister of Fisheries is going to respond to this particular resolution. We saw the Minister today with a statement and a copy of his letter that was sent yesterday to the Federal Government. Did this issue of the factory freezer trawler raise its head at all in the discussions with National Sea Products, in discussions with the Province about closing the St. John's fish plant? Was that addressed with the company? It is conceivable

that it had been with the Federal Government and if there was a consensus and an agreement by the Federal Government to cancel the license of the factory freezer trawler then maybe the St. John's plant could have been kept open. I am sure you will answer that when you speak, if that issue was addressed with National Sea Products and with the Federal Government. Were they told, you must cancel that?

Of course it would be quite interesting to see, and I am sure the information is available, what effect that fish that is caught and processed on board that factory freezer trawler, what that would translate to on shore. And I understand there are approximately 90 employees on board or whatever - 80 employed by the factory freezer trawler, and how much fish they can handle and so on. I am not sure of the method they use myself. I do not know how effective it would be - if it is more effective - what they are doing at sea or how it would translate to jobs on land. That is another question, so, I was very interested in hearing the Minister of Fisheries and the Premier addressing that particular issue. Was the possibility of cancelling that license addressed with National Sea, and more so, has it been addressed with the Federal Government who had the ultimate authority to cancel the damn license the same way as they had to approve it?

So, Mr. Chairman, this is a painful sort of experience that I am sure all of us are going through in the Province today, politicians, Government, Opposition, plant workers, fishermen, trawlermen, and people

involved with all types of business in communities that sense there is going to be a down-turn in their only industry, and that is going to put them out of business and on and on it goes. And as I said before, I really did not think that I would be back in the situation so soon again after what we went through in the early 1980's. I thought that we were sort of out of the woods then. The fishery is so cyclical, it is the very nature of it, I guess. It almost seems that every six, seven or eight years we go through almost like a cycle of some sort of down-turn, and I suppose it has almost been ever thus with the fishery.

But it is very agonizing when you sit with friends who were employed in fish plants, when you live on the same street with people who work in a fish plant, who fish or own longliners, or own small boats, or when you have members of your own family, like I have one who is a trawlerman. He has a home and small kids, and his future is not secure. FPI are going to tie up at least 15 trawlers. He is very, very concerned, and of course once you are one of the people, it affects you even more so. It is a very serious situation.

What this resolution, Mr. Speaker, is all about is asking the Provincial Government to provide whatever assistance is necessary to keep fish plants open in this Province, because I believe we will get over this resource crisis. I think for once in our history we are all determined, everyone is determined to do that. And I think we may come out of it a little sooner than we expect, but, of course, you have always got to take the worse sort

of case because you cannot prepare for anything earlier, I mean that is life. So, I think we will come out of it faster than some people are suggesting, and the main concern I have is that we do not take decisions and actions in the next few weeks that we will live to regret later on. So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I will conclude my remarks for now and finish up the resolution later on. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I think the first thing I should do is express my admiration for the manner in which the hon. Member presented the resolution, and for what I think is a fairly straightforward and sincere commentary on matters that are of grave concern to Members on both sides of this House, and I am happy to do so.

There is one thing, however, he did say that I would just like to correct, because I think when he referred to Dr. House's comments, he gave the impression that this was the policy or the approach of Dr. House or the Government - to move people out of the Province. Well, what Dr. House said, in fact, makes it abundantly clear that that is not the case. So I want to correct any mistaken impression that might come out of those remarks. I have the precise transcript of the interview with Dr. House, and here is what was said. The interviewer, Mary Lynk said, 'So, what would your advice

be to somebody who just got laid-off from the St. John's plant?' It was a pretty direct question. 'What would your advice be to somebody who just got laid off from the St. John's plant.' Here is Dr. House's answer. 'To somebody who just got laid off from the St. John's plant, I think - particularly if it is a young person - he or she should insist on taking full advantage of whatever retraining programs are going to be available. I know they will be available through the industrial adjustment system, and get some counseling as to what the prospects are in what areas for jobs in the future, and get themselves retrained and get on with life,' which is not bad advice. Mary Lynk then says, 'Yes, but how about somebody in their forties?' Dr. House said, 'I think you are kind of hitting on a most difficult age there, that is people who are not old enough to qualify for early retirement and are a little bit beyond the age when we normally think about people getting involved in retraining. Well I think they will just have to recognize that is what they are going to have to do, that is get involved with retraining, even though it is perhaps more difficult for them.'

Then Mary Lynk said, 'Do you think when you were talking about the mobility option, does that mean actually moving from the Province?' That is a pretty direct question. Here is what Dr. House said, 'Well, it could mean movement within the Province.' It hardly sounds like announcing a policy to move out of the Province. 'Depending upon what a person's background and skills are. I think in some cases it is going to mean mobility out of the

Province which is not unusual for Newfoundland families.' Well, I think that Dr. House was simply recognizing and acknowledging a fact, not encouraging it, not stating it as Government policy, or any such thing. He was just dealing with it in a very honest way. He went on to say, 'We have been sending people away and having them come back.' which is an important point, 'you know for centuries, and that may be the only option for some people or the best option, let us put it that way, for some people.' Now that is what Dr. House said. I do not think that is announcing a policy of Government or Dr. House to say to people the answer is move away. Dr. House gave all of the other answers and when he was asked if it might mean moving away, he said, for some, yes, but think first of mobility within the Province. So with that exception, I think the hon. Member's remarks generally speaking were very fair and I am happy to make the comments I did with respect to them.

The other thing that he noted very clearly, and I am happy to endorse, is that this problem that we are in is clearly Federal Governmental responsibility.

Now the responsibility for the financial consequences arising out of this situation clearly rests with the Federal Government. I do not mean to say by that, that they did anything that we would say would be blameworthy, that they callously said, 'We do not care what happens to the stocks, we are going to increase the TAC.' They acted, I believe, in good faith on the basis of the information the scientists made available to them and they made decisions on that basis. They were telling us that

we were going to have 400,000 tons TAC in a year or so. So I do not blame them in the blameworthy sense but I say it is nevertheless your responsibility. It was your responsibility to have the right scientists making the right decisions giving the good advice. That is one of the responsibilities of an employer, when your employees do something wrong, you have to take responsibility for the consequences. And, in fairness to the Federal Government I have to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that they are doing just that. And I accept that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this resolution, with great respect to the hon. Member, is a motherhood resolution. There is nobody in this House who is opposed to this resolution, nobody, me included, except to the extent that it does not state the whole case. What we have to do is state the whole case to make it totally acceptable. Because it would be irresponsible of us, maybe the Opposition can do it because they are in Opposition. But the Government cannot do it. We cannot afford to be irresponsible with the future of this Province because it is our responsibility to do it right. So it would be irresponsible, and I believe it would also be misleading to the people involved, and it would create false hopes for the people involved to say the whole House agrees no matter what, keep all the fish plants open, an all-plants-open policy. There is nobody in this House who would not like to be able to endorse that, but we have to look honestly at what are the consequences. How can that be achieved? What would be the consequences of it?

First, one way to achieve it is to

force the companies by threats to their licenses and to their quotas, say, 'If you do not keep every plant open we are going to reduce your quota by a certain amount for every plant you close.' So you could sort of play hardball, pressure and browbeat the companies into doing it. That is one way. The Federal Government has that means I believe at its disposal to do it, and the Province to a lesser degree, but we do licence the fish plants. So we are not going to help any if we say we will close the fish plant, we will not permit you to use it. But, in any event, we could play hardball with the companies and bring pressure to bear, but what would be the result? National Sea Products would be in bankruptcy within two months, no doubt about it whatsoever in anybody's mind, and then all the plants of National Sea would be closed. Fishery Products would be in bankruptcy within two years.

I talked to Mr. Young this morning and he said, 'You would be more accurate if you said one year.' Well, I said, 'I do not want to overstate the case.' Be in bankruptcy within two years. Why? Because, the information Fishery Products has given us, in order for them to keep the plants open it would mean that they would have about \$34 million loss this year. That is assuming everything went well in the markets and assuming that the Canadian dollar dropped three or four cents or five cents as against the U.S. dollar. If it stayed the same or improved, then the loss could go up toward \$40 million to \$50 million for FPI alone. That is why it would happen. So clearly you cannot do that. Clearly that is not a solution.

There is another possible solution. Why do the Governments not take over the fish companies, take over all the plants and operate them, or, as an alternative, provide and pay the subsidy directly or provide a subsidy to the two companies? That is another alternative. It does not matter whether you buy shares or what you do, however you acquire it. You may be able to acquire it at a relatively low cost by buying the shares in the market these days; they are down to \$6 or \$7, and they went to the market originally at \$12.50.

MR. HEARN:

You would balancing your budget five years down the road.

PREMIER WELLS:

That is an interesting thought.

But, Mr. Speaker, if the Government bought the shares, nationalized it in any way, or subsidized it directly, two other problems arise. One is, the countervailing laws, and that is a massive problem that we cannot overlook. Now let me say I am not pointing to the free trade agreement as creating this problem. It did not. It exacerbated it, though, it made it worse, but it did not create it.

What happened was those countervailing laws were in effect anyway. Then, when the free trade agreement came along, the two countries said, we will not do this kind of subsidy. We will not create unfair marketing or financial assistance from Government. These will be prohibited. We will not do them. Now, then, if Government interferes in the fishery and subsidizes it in this way, the U.S. authorities are almost

certain to envoke the countervailing deal. And, Mr. Speaker, the big problem with that is that it threatens the entire industry. Every other fish plant in this Province will be threatened if that occurs. So that is not a very happy prospect.

The third possibility is to say to the fishermen and to the fish plant employees, look, this is a serious problem, governments cannot subsidize, the fish companies will be bankrupt if we keep on going the way we are going, would you help in the thing by accepting reduced wages and reduced prices for fish? You would avoid countervail, you might or might not avoid bankruptcy of the company, but, Mr. Speaker, the wages paid to the fish plant workers are so low now that nobody with a conscience could ask them to accept lower. So that is not a practical solution.

MR. TOBIN:

You are right on! If FPI did that (inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

I know. But they are so low now that we cannot practically ask the fishermen to accept less. So that I do not foresee as a practical solution. But if the fishermen and the plant workers wanted to contribute that to some other thing, well, everybody would have to consider it, but I cannot as a matter of conscience suggest they should, because their wages are too low now. So that does not seem like a viable alternative.

There is a fourth way to do it, and the fourth way is to increase the TAC from 235,000 tons, which it is now, up to maybe 250,000 or 260,000. That is a fourth alternative. There is no other

way that I know of to achieve the full operation of these plants other than one of those four methods, and each of them has their disastrous consequences. To increase the TAC would be unconscionable in the circumstances, because we would be destroying our future and the future of every fish plant in this Province, and perhaps in Nova Scotia too. As a matter of conscience, you cannot possibly do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, yes, we are all for keeping all plants open provided that the Federal Government can pay the necessary subsidy in such a manner that it will not result in countervailing duties that will threaten the economic viability of all other fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to support the resolution. I have talked to my colleagues on this side of the House and they are happy to support the resolution if it has those words added to it, because we cannot otherwise do it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

I am going to give it now. Provided that the Federal Government can pay the necessary subsidy, and it has to be a subsidy, in such a manner that it will not result in countervailing duties that will threaten the economic viability of all other fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador, and I am going to move that amendment, seconded by the hon. Member for Bonavista South.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Before you sit down (inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

With respect, Mr. Speaker, I do not think it does.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the action that the Government is taking at this stage is to explore all other possible alternatives, and there are some potential alternatives with the development of a Community Diversification Program and the programs of adjustment for the workers involved.

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if it is possible to see a copy of the amendment.

PREMIER WELLS:

I am sorry. Here is a copy for the hon. Member. I thought he had it.

MR. SIMMS:

We would like to reserve the right to make a comment on whether or not we consider the amendment in order, eventually.

PREMIER WELLS:

I agree. Let me go on and you reserve that right.

MR. SIMMS:

Okay.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the approach we are fairly certain of now is the one originally proposed by the Provincial Government, to develop immediate programs, worker and community adjustment programs that will ensure that the fish plant workers and the fishermen who are adversely affected by the reduction in the TAC and the consequent plant closures will have a means of income to provide them with adequate income in the interim, until we can rebuild the fish stock or provide other

alternative employment opportunities.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are also suggesting that there are other things that we can do through this diversification program. We can increase our secondary processing activity, there is opportunity there to seek other markets in Europe and Japan by having more people employed in producing fish products with a greater local input. We are also looking at using underutilized species and using these funds to help the development of underutilized species for other markets in Europe and Japan that will not be affected by the countervailing duties. So that is another possible avenue that is open.

We think that now is the right time for the Federal Government and the Provincial Government to get heavily involved with aquaculture promotion and development in all species in the Province, Mr. Speaker, and this is a good opportunity to put people to work effectively in that area. We also decry the fact that Newfoundland produces virtually none of the gear used in its fishing industry. Little Iceland, with 270,000 people, produces all that it uses and exports to markets throughout Europe, Japan and Canada. Fishery Products alone bought a million dollars worth of fishing gear from Iceland last year, and we produce nothing here, or virtually nothing. Well, there is an opportunity for employment for a significant number. It is not going to solve all its problems. There may well be subsidies involved in -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:

No, but we are not involved with going into the US market and countervailing duties and the Free Trade Agreement in this case. The other activity that we want to engage in, Mr. Speaker, is the general diversification of the Newfoundland economy to relieve the pressure there is on the fishing industry generally, because, Mr. Speaker, society in Newfoundland put such pressure on the fishing industry to provide income for its people, and it has so many involved, that the income of our people on average, of the people involved in fishery, is ten thousand dollars per year. In Nova Scotia, it is twenty-three thousand dollars per year, and that is what is wrong with our fishery; we have so much pressure on it because there is no other alternative economic opportunity. That is why we took the position with the Federal Government what you have to do is provide other alternatives for job opportunities in the Province, and that is why we say, Mr. Speaker, that this is the right approach.

Now, the Minister of Fisheries when he speaks will, no doubt, address other aspects of it, and so will the Member for Bonavista South.

MR. MATTHEWS:

(Inaudible) on the possibility of talks being held with the Americans about countervail?

PREMIER WELLS:

Yes, I meant to do that. I am sorry. I think that is a possibility we can explore. I did not hear it for the first time from the hon. Member, but it is worth pursuing and we will be taking this up with the Federal Government, because they have to

do it directly.

The other thing I have to say is that other alternatives are being looked at, as well, in terms of the impact of the decision that FPI has to make, and this matter is ongoing, it is not stop (inaudible). It is a massive problem. I appreciate the responsible way in which I believe the hon. Member treated the matter, and I thank him for it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Before I recognize the Opposition House Leader, the Premier's time was extended because the hon. the Member for Grand Bank asked him a question and wanted clarification. That is why there was overtime on it.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader, on a point of order.

MR. SIMMS:

Before the next speaker is recognized I would like to raise the point of order I was contemplating when the Premier moved the amendment, and I would put forth to Your Honour the following argument, that generally speaking this amendment takes the onus off the Provincial Government and places it on the Federal Government, which is completely contrary to the intent of the resolution put forth by my friend from Grand Bank. That is point number one.

Point number two: In reading the amendment, it is a totally

separate initiative and probably a totally separate resolution. If Members opposite want to put forth some form of resolution in this manner, dealing with the words contained in this amendment, then that is another matter.

I refer Your Honour specifically to two references in Beauchesne, Page 176, the Sixth Edition, Paragraph 579.(1) and 579.(2); number (2) first: "An amendment may not raise a new question which can only be considered as a distinct motion after proper notice." Now, Mr. Speaker, this amendment clearly is a new question. There is no question about it, it is a new question. We are talking about the Provincial Government's responsibility here. So, "An amendment may not raise a new question which can only be considered as a distinct motion after proper notice."

But, more telling is Paragraph 579.(1): An amendment setting forth a proposition dealing with a matter which is foreign to the proposition involved in the main motion is not relevant and cannot be moved." Mr. Speaker, it is clear, I think, to anybody who takes the time to read it that the amendment proposed by the Premier is certainly a proposition that is foreign to the proposition we proposed in our resolution, which says, 'we call upon the Provincial Government to provide whatever assistance is necessary to keep all fish plants open...' The amendment is totally foreign to that proposition, and I submit to Your Honour that it is out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

With great respect, it is not out of order. It does not do anything different, it does not contradict anything. It says, yes, we support the proposal on this condition, otherwise, we cannot endorse it. So, it assists us -

MR. SIMMS:

Why do you not vote against it?

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me make the argument. We do not want to vote against it because we are in favour of it, but on this condition: We are adding words that enable the resolution to pass, and that is clearly what an amendment is designed to do. These are words that will enable the resolution to pass, Mr. Speaker. It is not at all matters that are foreign. It deals with the manner in which it can be achieved and provides a means whereby it can be achieved. And I can assure the hon. gentleman that the Provincial Government will provide whatever assistance is necessary, in co-operation and working with the Federal Government, to enable this to be carried out. But, as the hon. the Member for Grand Bank noted when he moved the resolution, it is a federal responsibility. I quote his words. It was a federal responsibility and they are prepared to accept that responsibility, as both of us have acknowledged, and clearly, Mr. Speaker, what is provided -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER WELLS:

Now, if I can go back, it was admitted by the hon. the Member for Grand Bank that this is a federal responsibility. They have

acknowledged it as I have acknowledged it. This is completely consistent and we have put forward a condition on which we can willingly support the motion, and we will be glad to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier tried to make the point that the purpose of an amendment is to modify it in such a way as to make it more acceptable. But clearly, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you this amendment has not made the resolution more acceptable to this side of the House, therefore, that wipes out that argument totally.

PREMIER WELLS:

More acceptable to the majority.

MR. SIMMS:

No, it does not say more acceptable to the majority. It does not say that, it says the purpose of an amendment is to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability, and that does not work in this particular case.

Secondly, with respect to the Premier's comments quoting my friend about this being a Federal matter, he is referring to the management of the fishery. I presume that is what he is referring to, but what we are saying in our resolution is that the Provincial Government have the social responsibility to ensure that communities are kept alive and fish plants are kept open.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Is this a point of order?

MR. SIMMS:

It is still to the same point of order. So, Mr. Speaker, I submit again, based on the references, because the Premier did not use any references very clearly, those two references, 579.(1) and (2), I think make it very, very clear that this amendment is totally out of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I understand what the Opposition House Leader is doing, and he is drawing out some references and trying to twist the proposed amendment to try to fit his interpretation. Mr. Speaker, I would simply refer you to Sir Erskine May, Treatise on the Law, Privileges, Proceedings and Usage of Parliament (20th ed., 1983) p.395. as quoted in Beauchesne, p. 175 paragraph 567 which simply points out, Mr. Speaker, that "The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability or" -

MR. SIMMS:

I just quoted that.

MR. BAKER:

- if the hon. Member would just listen now to the lot of it " - to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original question". So, either, Mr. Speaker, is acceptable. I refer to this as an enabling amendment that indicates how the original proposition can be satisfactorily carried out. It does not change anything at all to

do with the original Resolution, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I am ready to rule on it.

MR. SIMMS:

You are ready to rule now?

MR. SPEAKER:

Yes.

Under our Standing Order 36 'A motion may be amended by leaving out certain words, by leaving out certain words in order to insert other words, or by inserting or adding other words.'

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, on a point of order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

No, he has finished. Is Your Honour finished?

MR. SPEAKER:

Based on our Standing Orders, the amendment is in order.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect I must ask -

MR. FLIGHT:

You are challenging the Chair.

MR. SIMMS:

I am not challenging the Chair, but I will tell the House the ruling Your Honour has just given tells how to make an amendment. We are not arguing about how to make an amendment by leaving out words or adding words. This is a very serious matter, and the references I proposed have nothing to do with the Standing Orders, it is the references in Beauchesne

dealing with whether an amendment is in order or out of order, contrary to the Resolution or not. And I would beg Your Honour to take a moment to confer with Legislative Counsel or Clerks at the Table before finalizing his position on this particular ruling, because that really has nothing to do with the -

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, it is a shameless comment on the part of the Opposition House Leader. Your Honour is quite correct, and the ruling is quite consistent, it is quite consistent with the ruling the Speaker made last week, Mr. Speaker. It is quite and totally consistent with it, and it is quite improper for the Opposition House Leader to now challenge Your Honour's ruling in this way.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I did not challenge Your Honour's ruling. The Premier is trying to influence the Speaker himself by saying I say it is right, therefore, the Speaker will rule for me. That is all he is trying to do. I have not done that. I have not challenged Your Honour's ruling. I have asked Your Honour to take a look at it again, because I believe the ruling he gave was relevant to how an amendment is proposed, not whether it is in order or not, Mr. Speaker. That is the only point I am making, and I am asking Your Honour to take another look at it. That is fair ball.

MR. SPEAKER:

Based on our Standing Orders, I rule that the amendment is in order.

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, there have been many serious debates since 1949, and I guess today this resolution, and what we have said over the last number of weeks, will probably go down in the annals of history as some of the most serious since Confederation. As a new Member, in standing in the House to speak on a resolution that affects the residents of your town, your community and the Province as a whole, the thing that disturbs me is how we can get into points of privilege and barb back and forth across the House on rules that are made when we are dealing with people's lives and things are so important. I think it goes to show that we should really put aside partisan politics and come to grips with the crisis we are facing in this Province, which is probably one we have faced since 1497.

I have reflected time and time again over the last six or seven months on where the people in my district are actually heading. What I see is a scenario that is not encouraging. If I may reflect for a few moments, I see myself as a young person growing up in an isolated community on the south coast and being on the stage head with my mother and asking her for a nickle so that I might buy something at the store, only to have her reply, 'I do not have any money, but we will drain off a gallon of cod liver oil and you can take it to Freeman Crewe Limited and you can buy a pack of Cracker Jacks.' Or at recess time, rather than having a quarter to spend it was a slice of molasses bread or a blue potato that had been roasted in the

oven. We lived what the sociologists would term, I guess, a subsistence living, where we made it with what nature provided from the land and from the sea, and, in my case, primarily from the sea.

Things improved during the 50s, 60s, 70s and the 80s. We gained dignity, we gained respect, and we made our contribution to society. People moved from what was known in the fishing industry as a barter system to one of cash currency. With the help of the social network of programs, family allowances, UI, old age pensions, we have been able to carve out for ourselves "a comfortable lifestyle," not a utopia, not a zenith, but an upward mobility, and the people gave everything they had to make it so.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what we have gained over a lifetime can be taken away by the stroke of a pen and that is not right. I want to make it crystal clear to everyone in this House today that we could very well be in this Province, and I think of my district in particular, hitting back to that same scenario as we did in the late 40s and the early 50s, and if that is the situation we will find ourselves in, it would be a human catastrophe. Because what we have been accustomed to over the last number of years is a situation where we do have dollars and cents to buy the things we have needed. To hear a lady on the phone, from one of the communities, whose father had a longliner and had not come into the fisheries on the coattails of someone else but who was a bona fide fisherman, and to have the family say that the only money they had received since November 15 has been \$30.00, and 'we have no money because we have

dipped into our savings and our savings are just about depleted, but because we have an extra thousand or \$2 thousand still in our savings account, we are not eligible for social services,' that I find to be repugnant.

And the people in the winter fishery, and I have talked to the Minister about that, he is aware of it and no doubt will act on their behalf over the next little while, these people are out there day in and day out trying to make a living, trying to make it work, but it is not working. I had a call this morning from a fisherman in Belleoram who is prosecuting the winter fishery and he said, 'I have nine stamps. I was with a group of people in a boat and now, because of the scarcity of the resource, I am in a situation where I do not have another crew I can go to. I need one more contribution to make it possible for me to draw U.I.' And there is no recourse, because the U.I. regulations are so redundant, are so absurd to the particular lifestyle of this Province that that particular individual and his family need food and they just cannot find the means to be on the fisheries response program. That, to me, is wrong.

Let me go back to the earliest times of our history, if I may, for a few moments. From the coming of the Fishing Admirals to the first resident Governor of this Province, Sir Henry Osborne, in 1792, the fishing industries have made it or broke it on the backs of Newfoundlanders. Many times my grandfather, after having cured his fish to what he thought was prime quality, carried it to a fish merchant and saw the fish merchant take it and break it in two and say, 'You have the lowest

quality of fish there,' known as dun. My grandfather said his reaction was, in fact, to probably behead the individual, but because he had a monopoly on the fish landings and the fishing industry in that particular area, 'I had to grin and bear it.' In tears and frustrated, he had to say yes, Sir, knowing full well that man would make a killing in the market in later years.

My point, Mr. Speaker, is that the fish companies, one of the options the Premier outlined, should be asked to subsidize and to make it work, along with whatever level of Government. I do not care if it is Provincial or Federal as long as it works. The people of this Province and the people of Canada have put millions and millions, and I am sure if Premier Smallwood were here today he would say hundreds of million, probably even to the point of billions of dollars, into the fishing industry. They have the people's dollars, and they have made money year in and year out.

Mr. Speaker, over the next number of years, or two or three years, and let us hope that it is not for a long time that times are not good, we are going to find that these people in the isolated communities are going to find themselves high and dry, and that, Mr. Speaker, is not right. And not only is it not right, it is morally and ethically wrong.

I think of asking to have the fish plant in Gaultois kept open. You have heard me speak in the House before, for example, and you know it is an island. Over this past weekend, the people on that island, some 500 or 600 people, were fully aware of where they were in the geographical schemes

of this Province. A large part of the community was without electricity for 32 hours, and it was because of the action of the Minister of Energy and the people with Newfoundland Hydro that these people were able to get power restored to them after 32 hours. But they live in a precarious situation. It is an island, and because of the wind storms they found themselves not able to get a fuse, I think it was, for one of the light poles installed in that particular community.

That is the situation we are talking about here. I want to remind the Members of the House and the Government in particular and FPI, when the decision is made, that Gaultois is not within commuting distance to other communities. I would not get up here in this House today and argue that FPI maintain all its plants as a status quo as it now exists, for me that would be wrong. I would not argue that. That is not fair because I know that the status quo really can be improved and when the improvements can be made then we have to seek the right to make them. The people of that particular community of Gaultois have asked, 'Do away with our management team. Do away with our fish meal plant that is not productive. All we want is the rank and file people in this community to be able to find four or five months work as they now do.' They are not worried if the manager comes from the plant in Harbour Breton. They are not within driving distance. They are not able to commute.

So, Mr. Speaker, to take a particular community that is isolated on the particular coast, and I think we saw it with FPI where they looked at the community

of Burgeo and they looked at the community of LaScie and saw that National Sea was their only resource and made that particular decision that way, then I am sure that the same thing can be made for this community. And not only for this community but for the other communities.

Where we are finding ourselves here, Mr. Speaker, in this particular situation is, we are going to change the fabric and the social structure of this particular Province. To go back to the point I made earlier, we have to be cognizant, we have to be fully aware that we have to sit and think before that particular decision is made where any fish plant in this Province would be closed after all necessary means have been taken to restructure, to cut cost and to do everything that is humanly possible so that it would remain open. To destroy a community cannot be justified. There is just no way that it can be. And as Richard Cashin, the President of the Fishermen's Union said last night on the 'Journal', and I just caught the last part of it, he said, "We will not stand for that."

I want to assure the Members of this House that the District that I represent and my people, and I am sure that the other people as well will not stand for it either. We want to maintain our way of life. We are not looking for something different. We are not looking for something better. We are asking at this particular time because of the situation that we find ourselves in, to maintain what we have with whatever reservations or changes that can be made to make it viable. I do not think that is too much to ask. Whether it is, as we said a

few moments ago, the fish companies, the Provincial Government, the Federal Government, I think we have to find some particular common ground, some commonality between all three, and even probably the municipal government itself has to work closely with the Federal Government and with the Provincial Government.

It is not my intent here today to pin the sole responsibility on the Province, that would be ludicrous for me to do that. It would, I think, be the same situation if I were to pin it entirely on the Federal Government. There is a combination of wills, we have to make it work. Once the Federal Government or the Provincial Government takes a stand and says that we will destroy the fabric of a community, the community itself, to me personally it is wrong. We cannot do that. We have to find some way in which to make it work. I am sure that we can. It should be the responsibility of both Government and Opposition Members to make it work, to make it possible.

I have argued the situation time and time again in this particular House since I have been here, that the very nature of the Southwest Coast itself, and I think some of you understand the difficulty that I find myself in as the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, my geographical District itself is the worst in the Island and probably one of the worst in the whole Province, and the communities are sparsely populated. It is something like the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation in his community of McCallum, his community of Grey River, his community of Francois, they are

not Ganders and they are not Grand Falls, they are not urban areas, but they deserve a way of life that has been theirs. They have contributed to the economy of the Province, and I have told my hon. colleagues here many, many times in caucus and they will understand that over the past number of years, the communities in my District, the Gaultois and the Hermitages and Harbour Bretons have been neglected, over the last seventeen years, they were neglected, and before that, they were neglected. I think of Gaultois as a community that needs water and sewer. There is not one inch of water and sewer in that community, neither is it in Seal Cove and neither is it in many others. We have to initiate a program of fairness and balance so that whether we are Government Members or Opposition Members, we have to treat the people in this Province as equals. If we are not prepared to treat the people as equals, then we should not be elected representatives in the House of Assembly. And, if that is the case, then I am sure the people in my District of Fortune - Hermitage will receive due consideration because of the geographical situation they find themselves in. The school board finds itself in a precarious situation. They just do not have the numbers to make the programs work, and we have to find new ways to provide grants, based on considerations other than population, and to change the fabric of the whole situation in rural parts of the Province.

I wanted to go home last weekend, to drive up to Harbour Breton, but it would take eight hours from here under good driving conditions, and because of the snowstorm, I could not do it. If

I were to take a plane to Gander, I would have to drive 200 miles in wilderness area to get there. Conditions are difficult.

The people in Gaultois were isolated, without transportation, without electricity. It is a way of life, and these people have sacrificed for hundreds of years to stay where they are, but they have been satisfied with that way of life. So I think it is incumbent on us, not only for Gaultois but for other communities, as well, to find a way to make it work. We have heard the expression, 'Where there's a will, there's a way.' Probably we have forgotten the will and just thought about the way. If there is a will, we will find a way. It is incumbent on every last person in this House to make sure that the fabric of the society we have built for the last 400 years is not only maintained, but it can be improved. I am all for diversification of the economy. I wish somebody could tell me today what we could put in Gaultois to substitute for the fish plant, or to put in Wreck Cove or in Coomb's Cove or in Rencontre. I wish we could put something in those places, and probably, in time, we will. But there has to be, I think, a period of grace to span from what we have to what we have to become. We cannot go from point A to point B without any returns. And that is the point I have made a number of times with respect to the fisherpeople in my District and all over this Province. There are problems in the fishing industry. There are probably too many people in the fishing industry, some who are there on the skirts and coattails of somebody else, but you cannot take them from here and put them there without a program

that will make sure a standard of living for them is achieved and maintained until an alternative is found. That is where this whole debate is coming from.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker - I probably have not taken up twenty minutes, but I do not want to beat a dead horse - I think the point has been made that, with the will to do it, we have to find some way to maintain the economic, social, moral, religious and ethical culture we had in this Province, and not only maintain them, but enhance them, so that as we go into the 21st century, we will not be looked upon by Ontario and Quebec as being the (inaudible) and takers of handouts, but rather in a position where we can stand on our own two feet and be able to tell the rest of Canada that we as people have ingenuity and we do have what it takes to be a contributing factor to the Confederation of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to have a few words on this motion and on the amendment, and I support the amendment, of course, because I believe it makes a lot of sense, Mr. Speaker. But let me say this before I get into my discussion on the motion and on the amendment. I believe the present situation we are going through and the crisis in the fishing industry, presents

Newfoundland and indeed Atlantic Canada with a golden opportunity to maybe do for the fishing industry something that should have been done for it many, many years ago. We all know that the Newfoundland fishery at times has never been really good. People were engaged in the Newfoundland fishing industry as a job of last resort in most cases. Even then when people prosecuted the fishery seldom did they get enough money to provide themselves and their families with the kind of life style that most other Newfoundlanders and Canadians take for granted. Indeed the latest statistics show that the average per capita income of a Newfoundland fisherman now is about \$10,000 compared with about \$29,000 for his counterpart in Nova Scotia and about \$30,000 for other average earners in the Province.

So, Mr. Speaker, that does not do very much for the fishing industry, an industry that has been around now for, I suppose, hundreds of years, and despite all that is being said about it, and I suppose there is never an industry or a subject in Newfoundland that has ever been studied more or debated more, and I suppose to carry it to its full conclusion never more abused than the fishing industry. But the unfortunate part about it, Mr. Speaker, is that given the state of the Newfoundland economy and the fact that we do have a fragile economy with very little flexibility to manoeuvre, certainly we do not have an oversupply of jobs in this Province. Then both Governments will be prevented from doing the things that should really be done for the fishery and instead we are going to have to maybe once again pay more attention to the social

aspects of the problem rather than the hard, cold economic aspects of it. And that I believe is unfortunate.

We have heard stories in recent days about the possible closure of plants now operated by Fishery Products International. Just a few days ago we saw what happened, of course, to the NatSea plant across the Harbour. And most Newfoundlanders have pretty well resigned themselves now to the fact that nothing but bad news can be expected from any announcement forthcoming from Fishery Products International. Because you do not need to be a genius to understand that the cod quotas are going to be drastically reduced, as indeed they are. The latest projections are that the cod quota will be reduced from a high of 266,000 metric tons in 1988 to 235,000 metric tons in 1989 down to certainly not more than 190,000 in 1990. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there is no guarantee, we have no assurance that the 1990 quota will be 190,000 metric tons. In fact rumour has it that certain gentlemen who are charged with certain responsibilities in terms of assessing the stocks are inclined to agree that maybe 190,000 metric tons would be excessive. It would certainly endanger the future rehabilitation of our northern cod stocks.

Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, basing it on a TAC of 190,000 metric tons we all know that that will entail a reduction of 45,000 metric tons from 1989 and about 76,000 metric tons from 1988. That, of course, is not to mention the cumulative effect of certain quotas that have been given to the French in return for which they have agreed to sit down to the bargaining table to iron out an agreement with respect

to the Canada, Saint Pierre-Miquelon fishery and boundary dispute. Then, of course, Mr. Speaker on top of all that we fully understand the implications of what is happening on the Nose and Tail of our Grand Banks where foreign fishing nations are setting their own quotas, doing what they like, ignoring scientific assessments, thumbing their noses at NAFO and other countries, and certainly at Canada, and it appears that we are unable to do anything about that situation. All in all, this year there will be a total reduction in the allowable catch, under all headings, of well in excess of 100,000 metric tons. We will have to admit, realistically, that with that big a reduction in our total allowable catch it must follow that something must give. Fish plants cannot process fish to which they do not have access.

You can spread it out, as has been suggested, you can take all the plants and rather than achieving maybe a 55 per cent operating capacity, spread it out to all the plants and end up with 25 or 30 per cent, or even less, probably, operating capacity. I suppose a person who is unemployed, unable to get a job, not trained enough to enter another vocation, that kind of an approach would make all kinds of sense. But, Mr. Speaker, there are some very real problems that will have to be met head on in that kind of an approach.

First of all let us look at the effect that will have on the economics of the companies concerned. The Premier has elaborated on that point and he has stated that in the case of NatSea, the company that owns the plants in Burgeo, Arnold's Cove, and St. John's, that company has

told us that under that kind of a scenario, that is an all plant open scenario, their company would be bankrupt in months.

MR. MATTHEWS:

They are probably bankrupt anyway.

MR. W. CARTER:

As my hon. friend for Grand Falls (Mr. Matthews) says, they are probably bankrupt anyway. Well, you might have a point there. In the case of Fishery Products International, their financial position is much sounder than that of NatSea. In fact FPI, thanks to a number of very favourable circumstances, and I might add considerable help on the part of both Governments, they are in a reasonably healthy position, but projecting the losses that they are projecting, if they are forced to continue and maintain the status quo, that of keeping all plants going, they too tell us that as healthy a position as they are in, that they cannot see themselves weathering more than a year or two before bankruptcy befalls that company as well.

Now, let us look at the alternatives, the alternatives, by the way, that were alluded to by the Premier. We can talk about the subsidization of plants. In fact under the Privatization Agreement that Government has with FPI that kind of an arrangement is necessary. In fact provision is made in that agreement whereby both Governments, either/or of the Governments, one or the other, could in fact, having gone through a certain procedure, require the plants to remain in operation providing a subsidy were provided sufficient to compensate the company for any losses by virtue of having to keep their plants in operation. Now, that agreement,

of course, only applies to FPI. There is no such agreement with NatSea so consequently the Government does not have the authority to deal with NatSea as it does with the other company, Fishery Products International.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose, very few of us are experts on the free trade arrangement, or the intricacies of countervailing tariffs, what the laws say in terms of countervail and that sort of thing. The advice that we have been getting from people who are in the know in that respect, at least to some extent, tell us that there is a very real danger that if those kind of subsidies were provided that countervail would rear its head. Of course, if that were to happen then not only would the product of the company that contravened the tariff regime would be affected but in fact all of the fish in the whole of Eastern Canada would be subjected to a countervail tariff by virtue of the subsidies that were given possibly to one company. So there is a very real threat that if we were to provide a subsidy or subsidies to any number of plants or a plant, that it could have dire consequences on the future viability of a lot of other plants. Certainly those that are marginal in terms of their fiscal capabilities. So we have to be very careful when we talk about (inaudible).

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. W. CARTER:
Pardon?

There might be a way around it I suppose if enough people got their heads together they could probably find a way around the problem.

But certainly it is one that no solution has been found to date on the information that we have as to how to get around that countervailing problem.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Members must understand and realize that since the Free Trade Agreement was entered into, there has been a lot more attention focused on the countervail question than there was before, no doubt that will have the effect of precipitating some action. In fact I believe there is an agreement between Governments that no such action will take place, that no such subsidies will be provided.

There are other ways of doing it I suppose, of keeping plants open all year around. One would be to ignore the total allowable catch, to ignore the Dr. Harris recommendations, to ignore the Federal scientists who this year say that 190,000 tons would be a reasonable total allowable catch, even though I believe you will probably find others including Dr. Harris will have some strong reservations about that. That TAC I suppose could be increased to 220,000 metric tons or 210,000 tons or indeed 200,000 tons and thereby provide fish for some of these plants that would otherwise have to close their doors.

But, Mr. Speaker, the question that must be asked, of course is, what will that do to the fishery? At best it can only be called a short-term solution to a very long-standing problem, a band-aid solution to a very serious problem. So this Government would have to be convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that by increasing the TAC to 200,000 metric tons the future rehabilitation of the fish stocks

would not be imperiled. We would have to be assured of that. We would also have to be assured that a reduction this year of say 35,000 tons down to 200,000 tons would be the first of maybe a series of reductions that would bring it down to a level where the scientists believe it should be.

Another option that is being thrown around, and one that is totally unacceptable to us as a Government and I believe totally unacceptable to Newfoundlanders, especially Newfoundland inshore fishermen, is that the inshore allocation of 115,000 tons be reduced and the amount taken from that allocation be given to the offshore.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before we pursue that any further, let us get a few things straight. Back in 1981 when the Canadian total allowable catch was 185 thousand metric tons, the inshore allocation was then, 7-8 years ago was then 115 thousand tons. Since that period, 1981, the total allowable catch has increased from 185 thousand tons to a high of 266 thousand metric tons over that 8 year period. Keep this in your minds. The inshore allocation has not increased by one pound, so would it be fair to expect the inshore fishermen to agree to take a cut in their allocation given the fact that they have not benefited by one pound the increase that has occurred in that period in the overall total allowable catch? The people who benefited from that catch from the increase are the offshore companies, not the inshore. Not the inshore, but the offshore.

The inshore quota, Mr. Speaker, has almost been caught at times. In fact, last year I believe they

caught a little in excess of 100 thousand tons, and there was a 15 thousand so called surplus. But do not forget that if that 15 thousand was not caught, I would suggest to you it was because it was not there to be caught because fishermen in this Province have told me, and I am sure that gentlemen opposite will agree, that the fishing effort in the Province has doubled in most cases, and their catches have fallen back. So it must follow that the fishing effort has substantially increased with its new gear technology and bigger boats, better electronic equipment. If the fishing effort has increased and if the whole 115 thousand ton allocation could not be caught, then I would be inclined to suggest that it was not caught because there was less effort, but because the fish was just not there to be caught.

You can travel this Province, I can take my own District as an example where, I suppose there is no District in Newfoundland who are tuned to the inshore fishery than Twillingate District. It has been their past and their present, and hopefully it will be their future. But this year, the owner of the fish plant in Twillingate, who was desperately looking for fish to keep his operation going, purchased 40 per cent less this year over the wharf from the fisherman, than what he purchased last year, which indicates, of course, that landings were down by that quantity. So, Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make is that we cannot allow the Government of Canada, irrespective of what kind of pressure they are getting from the big companies, to tamper with the current inshore allocation. That must be written in stone.

The other benefits, the other programs they are looking at, Mr. Speaker, is the Resource Short Plant Program. There is some suggestion that maybe the inshore Resource Short Plant Program could be reduced, and thereby make more material available for the offshore companies. But there is another problem there as well. We were told that 12 of the plants that avail of that Resource Short Plant program, the 12 major plants that avail of it, 20 per cent of their total production comes from that program. So, what do you do to the viability -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MR. W. CARTER:
May I have another moment to conclude?

MR. SPEAKER:
By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
(Inaudible).

MR. W. CARTER:
Alright, I will clue up.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is not difficult to understand what that does to the viability of those inshore plants.

I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by making reference to the factory freezer trawler owned by Fishery Products International, that is currently out in the northern waters fishing northern cod. When that license was issued, every Newfoundlander, including Members opposite when they were on this side, and the Opposition was on that side at the time, objected to that license being issued for the

very reason that it would take jobs away from the inshore. And, of course, we see now that that is what has happened, and I am delighted, by the way, that the Opposition are supporting our efforts to compel the Government of Canada to cancel that license and to make that fish available, hopefully, to some Newfoundland plant. Thank you very much.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, let me say from the outset to the Minister of Fisheries, we did very vigorously condemn the actions of the Federal Government when they licenced the factory freezer trawler and let me say that we, Sir, on this side of the House are extremely pleased. As a matter of fact we are proud that the Government followed the wishes of the Member for St. John's East (Ms Duff) yesterday when she suggested that you contact the Minister of Fisheries right away and to ask to have that licence revoked.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
And as a result of that, Mr. Speaker, - No, I am extremely grateful that the Minister today tabled the letter in the House that he wrote yesterday evening upon the recommendation and suggestion of the Member for St. John's East. Let us put it this way: as a result of Question Period and debate yesterday, there is now a letter gone to the Federal Minister as suggested by

the Member for St. John's East to provide -

MR. W. CARTER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

The hon. Member cannot do through the back door what the rules will not permit him to do through the front door. Mr. Speaker, this hon. Member has said that that letter was written yesterday before that question arose. Now unless he can prove otherwise he will have to take my word for it. Okay. I know the consequences of lying before the House and I think you should know them too. And I say that letter to which I refer was written yesterday before that question came up in the House.

MR. RIDEOUT:

To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, to the point of order.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, there is no point of order raised by the hon. Minister. But there certainly is a point of order in the hon. Minister's statement in articulating this point of order, and that is accusing another Member of lying to the House. What is a fact other than this is a difference of opinion between Members. But what is a fact is that the letter that the hon. Member tabled in the House today along with his Ministerial Statement was dated yesterday. Now, Mr. Speaker, that cannot be denied and that is all that my

colleague for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) is saying.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

In actual fact I would like to correct the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout). The Member specifically said that the letter was written after the House yesterday after the question by the Member for St. John's East (Ms Duff). I would like to point out in support of the point of order, Mr. Speaker, that Beauchesne, page 151, Paragraph 494 says 'It has been formally ruled by Speakers that statements by Ministers respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted.'

The hon. Member for Twillingate (Mr. Carter), the Minister of Fisheries is quite right in what he says, that this cannot be, he cannot in other words, be called a liar in some other way.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order. I think it is more a point of clarification rather than a point of order.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Let me say to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter) that he will have to take my word for it and that he too should understand

the consequences of what it means to lie in this House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me get on with the debate here.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
I will say what I have to say in this House and I need no -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order!

MR. TOBIN:
I said exactly what he said, word for word.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the Government House Leader, on a point of order.

MR. BAKER:
The reference quoted indicated that a Member must accept statements made within their competence. I would suggest to the hon. Member and to this House that when the letter was written it was written within the competence of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter) seeing he wrote the letter and that the Minister of Fisheries does not have to accept the proposition that it was written after the question.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order!

There is no point of order. It is a difference of opinion between some hon. Members as to the timing of a letter being written. There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, let me say that I am one Member in this House who is very grateful to the suggestions from the Member for St. John's East yesterday to Government that they ask the Federal Government to cancel the licence for the factory freezer trawlers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the amendment put down by the Premier. Let me say that I would like to move a sub-amendment to that. And I therefore move an amendment to the amendment which in the first line of the amendment deleting the words 'Federal Government' and inserting the words 'Provincial and Federal Governments'. So that the sub-amendment will now read 'Provided that the Provincial and Federal Governments pay the necessary subsidy in a manner that will not result in countervailing duties that will threaten the economic viability of all other fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say that today I heard the Premier speak and he said, as it relates to some items, he talked about the countervailing in one issue and I was very pleased that the Premier did not blame it on Free Trade, that he said it was not a result of Free Trade, that it was there before, and it was there under GATT, and the Premier said that it is almost certain it would invoke the tariffs. The Minister of Fisheries, when he was speaking said, 'surely, it could have dire consequences'. I would like to ask either gentleman or both, did the Provincial Government or the Federal Government go to the American authorities and test the market to

see. I would submit that they did not. Both of them, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, played dead on that issue with National Sea and FPI, when they came in to scuttle the jobs in this Province. Mr. Speaker, we are not directly talking about tariffs and subsidies, what we are talking about here is an issue - the Burgeo fish plant and the St. John's fish plant. We are asking the Provincial Government and the Federal Government to tell NatSea that they have to operate both of them six months a year. That is not a subsidy, Mr. Speaker, there is no subsidy involved. We are asking both plants to operate six months a year -

AN HON. MEMBER:

And go bankrupt.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes and they cannot blame that on the Federal Government, and I pull no punches either, when it comes to the Federal Government dealings with the lives of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. But I will not cover the responsibility that this Government has by (inaudible) and invoking it in the authorities of the Federal Government. Neither Government went to National and said operate both of them for six months of the year. Give the people of St. John's the opportunity to work for six months of the year rather than no work at all, that is not subsidies.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did you ask?

MR. TOBIN:

Did I ask? We have asked every day, we have not been given an answer by the Premier, but we do know that they have not done it. Now, Mr. Speaker, we know they have not done that, and the Member

for St. John's South, I am sure, understands what I am talking about. Six months work to the people in the St. John's fish plant is better than no work at all, and their problems, Mr. Speaker, have not been responded to by Government, they have not demonstrated any responsibility as a Government by asking - not by asking, by telling - they control the licence to the plant. Let them tell National Sea, six months in St. John's, the quota is there. Now, thank God, Mr. Speaker, thank God for the suggestion of the Member for St. John's East yesterday, where they would write the Federal Government and revoke or take away their licence, demand they take away the licence from the Cape North factory freezer trawler. Thank God, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member raised it and today we have a letter, dated yesterday, from the Minister, no time on it, but we can all judge when it happened, saying that that action has been taken. Now the Premier talked about FPI and National Sea, they would go bankrupt and all this kind of stuff. I can talk about my own District here. The employees of FPI in Marystown and all other plants throughout the Province, they tightened their belts when FPI was going around saying the employees have to show support for this company, and when the good times come, we will share the profits. They were making millions, Mr. Speaker, tens of millions of dollars and not sharing the profits with the employees when they had to tighten their belts and look for wage freezes and everything else. FPI could enjoy the good times, why can they not be a part of the bad times, and the same with National Sea. These corporations have a role to play in the lives of

Newfoundlanders, that is not something that Governments could do or anything else, but the corporations have a responsibility to their employees whether it is National Sea or FPI, and if they can make millions and millions and millions, Mr. Speaker, when they are asking the employees to stay put in the financial benefits and rewards until the good times come, well then they bloody well should look after the employees when the bad times come and I make no apology for saying that, and I wish, Mr. Speaker, that some of the executives of these corporations, these multi-giants, would come into the House when we are speaking and debating the role and the obligation that these people must have.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

It is 4:40 o'clock and the hon. Member for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews) who opened the debate now has the privilege to conclude it.

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

On the sub-amendment the Chair rules that the sub-amendment is in order.

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

It is too bad that I was not able to give leave to my colleague the Member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) because he was just getting into his speech and making some very, very important points.

It was nice to see Members from the other side applauding some of the things he said. He was concluding on a very important point and one which I intended to make in concluding this debate anyway.

I remember so well when Fishery Products International asked its employees to take concessions, to not have any wage increases. I believe it was for a three year period. I remember when Government and NAPE had the big racket over parity and I remember what people on the cutting lines in the plants at Grand Bank and Fortune were making at that time. I believe it was \$7.23 an hour a cutter was making.

AN HON. MEMBER:
It was \$7.26.

MR. MATTHEWS:
Okay, it was twenty six, three cents more. These employees made that commitment to Fishery Products International to get the company on a solid footing. And, the question that the employees are asking now, and a point that they made yesterday in the meeting that I referred to earlier with the Premier, they made that very point, yes, we made our concession, Mr. Premier, so why cannot Fishery Products International give us a little bit of a concession back? We, for the first chance in our lives, are willing to share with our fellow Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who are in a similar situation as we are, and we would prefer to work for four months a year for the next number of years rather than not work at all. They talked about work sharing. They asked why, in that particular situation, Grand Bank could not work for four months and Fortune work for four

months. They are satisfied to accept that to get us through this crisis period which I referred to earlier. No one has even suggested a time frame as to when that resource will be significantly rebuilt. It may happen faster than we think and we may regret the decisions that are about to happen.

I would like to refer for a moment to what the Minister of Fisheries had to say. I sincerely believe that the attitude of this Provincial Government on this total issue is emanating from the Minister of Fisheries. I have detected that over the last month. When he rose one of the first things he said today, and he said it before, that maybe what is happening today is a blessing in the fishery and it is a golden opportunity, he said today, to do what should have been done years ago.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he did say it. He said it is a golden opportunity to do what should have been done years ago. Now, those on this side remember what the now Minister of Fisheries on that side espoused back then. As a matter of fact, I believe, he had a document done on it, sort of downsizing the fishery back then, but, of course, the Cabinet of the day would not go along with it, would not hear tell of it. Now, that is what the Minister of Fisheries said, so in my remarks when I introduced this resolution earlier today I said, what really surprised and frightened me about the situation is that for the first time we have two levels of Government that are so willing to take this very drastic action, and

the Minister today has confirmed for me why it is happening. He agrees to what is happening and he is doing everything possible to support and see that it happens. The other thing, both the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries, are hiding behind the countervail issue. Countervail was in existence before free trade and the Premier admitted that again today. There are two very, very important issues connected to what we saw happen to St. John's earlier this week, and what is anticipated to happen to Fishery Products International.

One is that the discussion on the cancellation of the license for the factory freezer trawler never raised its head before yesterday. That is very, very obvious. That matter never raised its head in the discussions between the Province, the Federal Government, and National Sea. That is negligent, outright negligence that the impact of that factory freezer trawler license was not addressed by either the Province or the Federal Government. That is negligence because if it had been addressed maybe St. John's would be working for six months this coming year. Maybe it would be. It should never have been put in in the first place and all of us who were here at the time objected vehemently against the factory freezer trawlers. And we still do.

The other thing that has become blatantly obvious again today, Mr. Speaker, is that there was no consideration again. No thoughts of going to the US and speaking to the appropriate authorities about the effect of Government involvement in this issue. That was not thought of again, I would say, until yesterday.

Two very important matters which can have more pleasant consequences result, if the factory freezer trawler issue was raised and if the license was cancelled maybe St. John's would work for six months. If there had been discussions held with the appropriate American authorities maybe there would not have been any threat of countervail, and then both levels of Government could have gotten involved financially and put in place what this Opposition is saying, what the Fishermen's Union is saying, what the people out in the communities are saying, 'Give us a chance to work for some period of time per year because if you close our fish plants, there is no tomorrow.' It is nice to talk about retraining. The Premier when he referred to Dr. House's comments of yesterday - I listened to the tape again today and the question about the forty year olds and so on - well let me say I would go as far as to say 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the employees that are going to be affected in the fish plants of this Province, are between forty and fifty years of age. Those are the people who are going to be affected. They do not have any other skills. And what we are going to see happen to those people is that these very important necessary people skills are going to erode. They are going to erode and be gone.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Nobody can dry fish any more, sure!

MR. MATTHEWS:

And it is one thing to talk about mobility inside the Province. Where are 300 people from Grand Bank going to go in this Province that have worked all their lives in the fish plants, and find

employment? Where are they going? Mobility inside the Province?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

You will be looking for Sprungs next year.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible) Patt Cowan says (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

I mean it is a little more understanding and a little more palatable to hear Dr. House talk about mobility inside the Province. But you have to be realistic. Where are they going to work? They cannot go anywhere if they do not have a job. And you talk about training and retraining and other things. But once you get them retrained you are still up against the concrete wall. If you train the 250 or 300 people that will be displaced in Grand Bank or Fortune, retrained to do something else, I do not know what. People forty or fifty years of age who have worked all their years cutting fish, filleting fish, packaging fish, freezing fish, unloading boats. If you can retrain them for something else where are they going to find the employment that they are retrained for?

So in eighteen months time we are back to square one and we are up against the concrete wall again. All you have done is kept them alive for eighteen months longer. Some form of reduced compensation. That is what you are looking at, reduced compensation. That is what we are looking at for the programs that the Federal Government is offering.

Now the big question, of course, why this resolution is here? All

we have heard is that this fisheries crisis is the responsibility of the Federal Government. And the time has come to remind this new Provincial Government, seven or eight months old, that it has a very serious responsibility to the people of this Province, first and foremost to the people of this Province, and it is time that this Provincial Government told the people all around this Province what you are going to do to overcome this crisis, to help them get through it. And to date, Mr. Speaker, we have not heard one suggestion from this Provincial Government as to what you are going to do about this fisheries crisis.

The people on the Southside have not heard from this Provincial Government, what they are going to do to help them. We have heard you talk about the Federal programs, all of them Federal programs.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

There better be some announcement on Sunday night or you will have -

MR. MATTHEWS:

And on and on it goes.

You have a responsibility first and foremost to the people of this Province, and it is time that you started to accept that responsibility and start to take actions and make decisions that are going to be in the interest of these people. After listening to the discussions, the conversations, and reading the media over the last few days, it has become abundantly clear to me, Mr. Speaker, that the bottom line of the two major fish companies is more important with this Provincial Government than the

livelihood of the thousands of people who are going to be negatively affected out and about this Province. All we have heard is that the fish companies may go bankrupt or they will go bankrupt.

Now, the time has come for this Government to spell out very clearly what is more important. Is it the bottom line figure of Fishery Products International or National Sea, or is it thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who want to make a living from a resource off our shores that belongs to them.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Exactly. Not to National Sea and not to Fishery Products.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is right, it belongs to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. And they just want a small part of that so they can be employed for a period of time, for the next few years until the stocks replenish. But then, of course, they want to work for longer periods of time. But we have to find a way to do that and it is incumbent upon the Government to find a way. That is what Governments are for. And, as I said, people in the communities, the employees, and the union representing the employees, do not accept that it cannot be done. As well, of course, the union is becoming very vocal, and it is sort of hitting hard, about the Provincial Government's lack of involvement in this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, we saw it with the Fisheries Emergency Response Program there was no plan by this Government to deal with that crisis, and there is no plan by this Government to deal with this more serious crisis, no plan

whatsoever. As the editorial in The Evening Telegram today says, there is a lot of empty rhetoric - that is what it is entitled - empty rhetoric coming from the Premier and this Government. You can only blame things so long on what has happened in the past. We have a crisis now staring us in the eyeballs today, and you, as a Government, have the responsibility of dealing with that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do not tell me you (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

I certainly do not. I am not saying that.

The Premier, when he spoke on this resolution, or on his amendment when he pulled his bit of trickery - that is what it was, trickery, trying to squirm out of any responsibility for the Province. With a fishery that is falling down around our ears, the Premier wanted to turn that around and say it is none of our responsibility, none!

In my opening remarks, I was honest and truthful. The Federal Government have to take a fair share of the blame. And, as I said, they have a mission to do that. But by saying that it does not omit the Province from any responsibility to deal with this issue. It certainly does not. And that was the point of the resolution, to ask this House to insist that the Provincial Government get involved in keeping the plants open in the Province. That was the point of the resolution.

The Premier in his remarks said, 'It would be irresponsible to the people of the Province to get

involved and to see the whole industry collapse.' I believe that was the line of his thinking. Again, I would like to say, let us not be irresponsible to the people of the Province by acting and being too hasty on this particular situation with the decisions we make. The stocks may replenish faster than we think. Let us keep that into consideration when we make our decisions.

Let us look at work-sharing, which workers are willing to do for the first time. Mr. Speaker, the Premier said, 'NatSea will be bankrupt in...' - I do not know how quick he said, but very soon if it had stayed as it was, and I made a comment across the House and said, 'Well, maybe they will go bankrupt anyway,' to which he replied, 'That may be a point.' What is going to happen if NatSea goes bankrupt? Will the Nova Scotia Government put money in? What then will be the effect? That is more than likely what will happen. So, will that, then, trigger countervail and stop that from happening?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) Canso.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, I did not say that. It is not bankrupt yet, not officially bankrupt.

So the question has to be asked is the bottom line of the major fish companies of greater concern to this Government than the thousands of people who are going to be displaced from where they have worked, most of them for most of their lives in their very communities, where they have homes, they have families? They have a bit of a future if they can

stay there. If you take away what little bit of the fishery that is left, you are going to leave them with nothing. Absolutely nothing! And a lot of them have gone from twelve month operations, twelve months work down to six and seven months work already, and they are content to do that or to work a bit less if it means their staying where they are in this Province, with their homes, and their families and so on. Because they believe, and again they are willing to make concessions and work for lesser periods of time until the situations get better, the same way as they made concessions to Fishery Products International specifically, where they did not take a pay increase for three years.

And do you know what Mr. Vic Young told the people from Grand Bank a few years ago? He said, 'As long as there is a Fishery Products International, there will be a Grand Bank.' But that was when the employees were being asked to make concessions so the company could get up and get solid. What is going to happen to Grand Bank now? - is the question. Those very same people who made concessions for him and his company, are now going to get the axe. That is the question. Do not blame it on privatization. You are the Government of the Province, you set the fisheries policies for this Province, and it is time someone over there heard that and started to set the fishery's policies for this Province and not have the fishery's policy set and dictated to in the corporate board rooms of two major companies. It is time someone honoured that responsibility. You are the Government of the Province, you set the fishery's policy for

Newfoundland and Labrador, but you are not doing it now.

I guess, Mr. Speaker, before I conclude I would once again like to say that it has not been a pleasant task to bring in this resolution today. It is some what similar to when I have asked the Minister of Fisheries questions over the last three or four weeks; I was hoping I would get a more positive answer, and I say that very sincerely.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:
Yes, I do. I say that very sincerely. But I wish St. John's was not closed, and that other communities in this Province were not going to lose their only industry. I would hope that. And that is not the reason I asked the question, that I am hoping to get negative answers. I would be the most pleased person in the world if you got up and told me no plants were being closed by Fishery Products International. I would be the happiest person in the world, because I am one of the people who is going to be affected. I mean, I am one of them like most of us are here, and it hurts when you are one of the people.

So, I guess what I am saying is that I would like to ask Members opposite if they would support this subamendment that has been put forward by my colleague from Burin - Placentia West. I think it is a good subamendment. We can live with the subamendment. We are asking both levels of Government to get involved, to do whatever they can. I see the Premier shaking his head, no. Again, he does not want to get

involved to do anything for the people of the Province. Anyway, I would like to conclude on that note and ask your consideration in voting for the subamendment.

In conclusion, let me remind a lot of people on both sides of the House that this is a very, very serious issue. Let us not make decisions too hastily which, in a few very short years, we are going to live to regret, because the Province has a responsibility as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the House ready for the question?

• SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Would hon. Members agree to stop the clock at five, because there could be three votes here?

First of all, hon. Members are required to vote on the subamendment. I wonder if the hon. Members would want the Chair to read the subamendments so everybody knows what we are voting for, or, hon. Members, do we not need to read it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Read it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The subamendment is that the words 'Federal Government' be deleted and the words 'Provincial and Federal Government' be inserted, and the subamendment would read as follows: 'Provided that the Provincial and Federal Governments can pay the necessary subsidy in a manner that will not result in

countervailing duties that will threaten the economic viability of all other fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador'.

On motion, subamendment defeated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Division.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:

Call in the Members.

We are now ready.

Those in favour of the subamendment, please rise:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Doyle, Mrs Verge, Mr Simms, Mr. R. Aylward, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Woodford, Mr. A. Snow, Mr. S. Winsor, Mrs Duff, Mr. Parsons.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against the subamendment, please rise:

The hon. the Premier, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. W. Carter), the hon. the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Efford), the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), the hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland), Mr. Hogan, Mr. Reid, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Crane, the hon. the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Baker), the hon. the Minister of Development (Mr. Furey), the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker), Mr. Walsh, Mr. Noel, Mr. Gover, Mr. Penney, Mr. Barrett, Mr. L. Snow, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight), the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs

(Mr. Gullage), the hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. Dicks), Mr. Grimes, the hon. the Minister of Education (Dr. Warren), the hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms. Cowan), the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Dr. Gibbons), Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dumaresque, Mr. Short.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

CLERK (Miss Duff):

Mr. Speaker, 'Ayes' twelve, 'Nays' twenty-eight.

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare the subamendment lost.

The amendment which is, 'Provided that the Federal Government can pay the necessary subsidy in a manner that will not result in countervailing duties that will threaten the economic viability of all other fish plants in Newfoundland and Labrador.'

On motion, amendment carried.

On motion, resolution as amended, carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Division.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:

Call in the Members.

All of those in favour of the motion as amended, please rise:

The hon. the Premier, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter), the hon. the Minister of

Social Services (Mr. Efford), the hon. the Minister for Works, Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), the hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland), Mr. Hogan, Mr. Reid, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Crane, the hon. the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Baker), the hon. the Minister of Development (Mr. Furey), the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker), Mr. Walsh, Mr. Noel, Mr. Gover, Mr. Penney, Mr. Barrett, Mr. L. Snow, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight), the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage), the hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. Dicks), Mr. Grimes, the hon. the Minister of Education (Dr. Warren), the hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms. Cowan), the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Dr. Gibbons), Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dumaresque, Mr. Short, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Doyle, Mrs. Verge, Mr. Simms, Mr. R. Aylward, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Woodford, Mr. A. Snow, Mr. S. Winsor, Mrs. Duff, Mr. Parsons.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

CLERK (Miss Duff):

Mr. Speaker, 'Ayes' forty, 'Nays' zero.

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare the motion as amended unanimously carried.

HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

This House is now adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00 p.m.