



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

First Session

Number 56

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Monday

[Preliminary Transcript]

18 December 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, over the last number of weeks there have been times in the House when we have had nothing but doom and gloom preached. But today I would like the House to send a telegram of congratulations to a young Newfoundlander who is the first, by the way, ever to make the Canadian Junior Hockey Team, Dwayne Norris of St. John's. This young Newfoundlander is a student at Michigan State University and is presently in Helsinki, Finland, to represent this country. Because of the fact that he is from this Province and the first to do so, I think it would be in order for this House to send him a telegram of congratulations. We feel he will be a worthy participant in the tournament from this Province. Honourable mention goes to John Slaney, another Newfoundlander, who at only sixteen was one of the last to be cut from that particular team. So I would like the House to go on record in doing this, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, we would like to be associated with those remarks as well. There is no question that both those young hockey players have done well on the mainland with their Junior teams.

We would have hoped that both John Slaney and Dwayne would have made the Canadian National Junior Team, but we are very fortunate that at least one of them made it and I understand he is doing quite well. So we would like to be associated with those remarks.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to announce that planning will begin immediately for the establishment of a university campus for Central Newfoundland. During last spring's election campaign, I stated that access to post-secondary education, and in particular to university programs, must be increased in our Province so that post-secondary participation rates can be brought to the national level.

It is the intention of Government, Mr. Speaker, to continue expansion of post-secondary opportunities. Today's announcement is in keeping with this commitment. Government plans to establish a new campus of Memorial University in a central location in the Province. The new campus will initially offer first and second year courses in the faculties of Arts and Science similar to those offered at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook. Establishing this campus will make it possible for students in Central Newfoundland to be able to pursue university studies in

these faculties close to their home towns. As part of the planning process, Mr. Speaker, Government is studying various locations for this campus in the central area and will make a final decision by about mid-February, 1990. Any community in Central Newfoundland wishing to make a presentation to Government regarding the new campus site may do so by making a written or an oral submission directly to the Minister of Education before January 31, 1990. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, in the 1990-1991 fiscal year, we propose that funds will be provided for acquisition of a site and the necessary planning and design of facilities. Mr. Speaker, this model, as you know, has worked extremely well in Corner Brook in the form of Grenfell College and I am delighted to make this announcement today. This expansion of Memorial University to Central Newfoundland will also mean increased opportunities for adults who wish to further their education or begin university studies.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker during last spring's election campaign the Premier stated that access to post-secondary education and in particular to university programs must be increased in our Province so that post-secondary participation rates can be brought to the national level. Well certainly, we agree with that statement and that was evidenced by the initiatives of our

Government in the previous Administration with respect to expanding the university programs already to Grand Falls and to Lewisporte in particular and plans we had to do it in other areas, so we certainly agree with that statement. I am a little bit surprised to hear that planning will begin immediately, according to the statement. I, for one, thought planning had been well underway now for the last eight months since the Government has been elected, but obviously not. I would have thought that site evaluation would have been a very significant part of the process for planning, and that in fact should be done before planning begins. Perhaps I am wrong but I would have thought that site evaluation would have to be done. That is the way we understood it. Where he says the new campus will offer initially first and second year courses in the faculties of Arts and Science, I would assume that the Premier is aware, that already you can get first and second year courses in the Arts and Sciences in Grand Falls. You can get full first year course credits and you can get a fair number of second year courses, but the Premier shakes his head, he is not even aware of it. I would suggest that he talk to his Minister and he will find that this is indeed a fact - it is true. Mr. Speaker, I would like to know how many students this new campus will accommodate, what size are you envisaging, what cost, and are we really talking about basically establishing a campus of sorts, a residence or something of that nature, because already the course programs are available out in the Grand Falls/Lewisporte area for first year. You can get full first year credits and you can get some second year credits already.

MR. BAKER:
(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:
That is a fact. The Member for Gander does not think so, but it is a fact.

With respect to location and planning and all the rest of it, and acquisition of sites and design of facilities and so on, I guess we are probably looking at something like two or three years down the road before something specific is in place, probably in time for the next election, Mr. Speaker.

In any event, that is all I have to say.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I want to remind the hon. gentleman his time is up.

MR. SIMMS:
I am finished.

Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. the Premier. According to Public Service sources and media sources over the last couple of days there seems to be some indication that Government is moving to put in place in various Government Departments people

under the job title Information Directors. Can the Premier tell the House whether or not Government is, in fact, moving to hire information directors for various Government Departments?

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, one of the things we did after we took office was a complete assessment of a system where every Minister had his or her own press secretary, or virtually every Minister, so that we had twenty-three press secretaries - well, a fair number of the Departments on top of that had information officers. We thought this was an extravagant waste of public funds. But there is a need for information officers to ensure that information is disseminated. We thought the most appropriate way to do it was to establish information officers for those Departments that need them, and not every Department needs an information officer.

We thought we would establish information directors or officers, however you call it, for those Departments that need it. And, yes, that process is underway. And they can do whatever is necessary. Anything any Minister wants to put out can be put out through the information officer. He or she does not need a separate press aide travelling around with them, the way most of the former Ministers did. So we have gone that route, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Leader of the

Opposition, a supplementary.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows full well that not all Ministers or Departments in the old regime had press secretaries; some did, some did not.

Will the Premier tell the House whether or not the former News Editor of the Evening Telegram, Ms Cheeseman I believe it is, has been hired as an information director by the Government in one of those positions; what department or what agency of Government that individual has been hired by; what salary is being paid; whether or not competition was held for the position; and whether or not the hiring was done through the Public Service Commission?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

There are quite a few questions, and let me try and remember some of them. Who has or who will be hired will be announced in due course. The salary to be paid will also be announced in due course, when the time is appropriate. It is not proposed to fill these positions through the Public Service. These are contractual positions and they will be filled as such through the normal means.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier confirm for the House that those new media barons, now that the Government is proceeding to hire, will, in fact, be paid more than

double the salary that was paid to press secretaries to Ministers by the former Administration? Can the Premier confirm that, Mr. Speaker? And what is going to happen to the public information officers in the various departments who are in union positions, are all those going to be disbanded and those positions left unfilled so that the new directors of information will take over from them? Is that what the intention is?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker. There are two questions there. I am just trying to remember what the first one was. I got lost in -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Salary (inaudible) press secretaries used to get.

PREMIER WELLS:

Absolutely not. I do not remember the detail of them, but I remember one got \$74 000 in the Premier's office, and that certainly is not going to happen. I can tell you that is certainly not going to happen. The Minister's press secretaries, I have forgotten what the scale was. Some of them were \$30,000 plus.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER WELLS:

Well, anyway, there is no trouble. We will find out what they were. The answer is no, Mr. Speaker. There is not going to be a doubling of the salary of press secretary. I do not even know, but I will check and bring the information back to the House tomorrow.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Tomorrow?

PREMIER WELLS:

Well, if we are not going to sit tomorrow I will bring it back the next sitting day, and if that is tomorrow it will be tomorrow. The first question was salaries. What was the second question?

MR. RIDEOUT:

(Inaudible) information officers in the Departments?

PREMIER WELLS:

There is only going to be one information officer, information director, whatever it is, for any one Department. That is quite adequate. We do not need any more than that, and that information director or information officer can do whatever any Minister needs. Because all the Minister should be doing is what is proper for the Department anyway, so that that is going to be done through that means. In some cases, they are already in place and will stay in place. I think there are maybe four or five instances where they are already in place and they will stay in place.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows that there was only one press secretary per Department where there was a press secretary anyway, and the salary was on a scale of \$26,000 to \$29,000 a year. Now, is it a fact that those information directors who are on a scale of \$40,000 to \$50,000 a year will be in addition to public information officers in the Department, and is the Government not in fact doing what

it said it would not do, and that is building up another gang of media barons in the Public Service, which the Premier said was wrong when he was over here?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker. But I will tell the House what I will do. I will make a list of everybody who was a press aide, or secretary, or information officer, or whatever there was under the former Administration. I will make a complete list of exactly what was done and then I will table a comparable list of what we propose to do in the future so that we can all have a fair examination of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Fisheries. I understand that on the weekend the Minister met with his federal counterpart, and I wonder if he is now in a position to tell the House what the quotas will be for this coming year, especially as it relates to the northern cod quota?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, yes, we did meet with the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on Friday. It was a

Minister's Meeting of the Atlantic Provinces. No decision was taken with respect to the total allowable catch or the disposition of the northern cod allocations. Discussions centered around some changes that were contemplated to the Fisheries Act, having to do with penalties for certain breaches of the Act; it had to do with the Minister's plans for maybe utilization of otherwise underutilized fish and the processing of that fish, and a number of minor things, Mr. Speaker. But in answer to the question, no final decision was taken with respect to northern cod or the allocation of it.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, in discussions held following the meetings held by the Federal Minister he left the indication that certainly discussions had taken place. In fact, he talked about the allocations not being changed except in certain areas, to any great degree. If a final decision was not taken, I wonder if the Minister could tell us if the topic was discussed and if he feels any more positive towards what will come down than he did before he went to the meeting?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

I can tell the House and the hon. gentleman that at the meeting I presented Newfoundland's position on inshore allocation, on total allowable catches and on a variety of things that affect this Province in terms of fishery development. The Minister

indicated that it would probably be early in the new year before any final decision would be made on the TAC and the disposition of that TAC. In fact, he is proposing a further meeting of Ministers sometime in the new year, to brief us on what the Government's plans are in that respect.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

A final supplementary. I wonder if the Minister could confirm, then, that the TAC for the coming year, as rumoured at least, would be 180,000 metric tons and that the Federal Government with the encouragement of the Provincial Government intends, also, to tamper with the middle-distance, the resource short and, if necessary, the inshore allowance?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I can say no, no, no to all the 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 Premier. Last night I attended a meeting on Shea Heights which was well attended by Members of this House of Assembly, and well received by the people on Shea Heights, I might add. I guess the thing most well received by the people on Shea Heights was the

Premier's statement that he will do anything in his power to keep the fish plant on the Southside Road open for the workers of this Province. Mr. Speaker, I might add that I too appreciated him saying that, and I only hope he was sincere about it.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier tell this House if his committee on fisheries, headed by the Minister of Fisheries, and the Federal committee on Fisheries, headed by the hon. Joe Clark, have had any discussions on using underutilized species in Canada's Food Aid Program.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The two task forces have had discussion. The Ministerial committees have not had discussion; but the two task forces of public servants have had discussion about the matter.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask the Premier will he now direct his Ministers on the highest level, his Minister of Fisheries and the other Ministers who are on his committee, to immediately arrange meetings with the federal political committee CIDA and the local group called FADA - I believe that is the name of it - to put in place some type of program in which underutilized species of fish may be used in Canada's Fish Aid Program.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The Minister of Fisheries knows more about that aspect of it than I do. He dealt with the matter in Ottawa on Friday, I believe, with the Federal Minister of Fisheries, so that he could probably give the hon. Member better information on the matter.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, yes, I alluded to it in my reply to the hon. Member for St. Mary's - The Capes. At the meeting in Ottawa, on Friday, Mr. Siddon, the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, did outline in very brief detail some of their thinking with respect to underutilized species. There are plans to encourage further harvesting and processing and marketing of otherwise underutilized fish, and, in fact, I came away from the meeting quite encouraged. I think that if the hon. Minister follows through on what he said at the meeting it might hold out some promise. And he did mention, by the way, CIDA as being a possible source of marketing that product. I do not want to build up expectations, but I am reasonably optimistic, cautiously optimistic is maybe a better way to put it, that something can be done in that respect.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear that and I would like to make a suggestion to the Premier, or ask him a question, which I have to now, on something that is within in his power, as he promised the people on Shea

Heights last night. Will the Premier make a commitment to the people on Shea Heights and the people who work at the National Sea plant that he will try and get control of the National Sea fish plant, which is for sale now, so it will not be sold outside the fishing industry? Will he try to either lease it or purchase it from National Sea in order that a program can be put in place, Mr. Speaker, to process the underutilized species, to prepare that fish for food for the Canada Food Aid Program, and would he undertake to take the money from the Federal Government, which they are going to put up to keep people from working, to encourage them not to work, and try to get the Federal Government to commit the unemployment insurance money that will be used for people not to work and put it all into one development kitty and purchase trawlers that are necessary, and the fish plant on the Southside Road, and provide the jobs for the next two or three years to keep that fish plant open so that when the stocks rebuild, that fish plant can go back to normal operations, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, we have been working on a better method for the last number of weeks, in fact. We do not think Government buying it is the right approach. But we have proposed, and we proposed to Federal Government as early as August, a proposal to find the funds necessary to enable not the Government but the people working in the fish plant to buy and take

over and operate the fish plant as a co-operative, with money from the Provincial and Federal Governments to aid them, and to use the diversification funds, to use the money they would otherwise pay out in unemployment insurance, to enable this to take place. Now that is one of the proposals that we have had before the Federal Government for some time and, frankly, we think that is a preferable proposal to having the Government buy it out and do it. So we have gone in that direction rather than the one the Member is now suggesting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I find it passing strange that this option has been on the go since early August when the Government did not know that the St. John's plant was going to close in early August. As I understand it, they did not know. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, they said that, and it is a good proposal. If they have talked to the Federal Government on that, it is a good proposal.

Mr. Speaker, when the question was asked last night, why did the hon. Premier not tell that this option is in place and that they hope to be able to put it in place for the people of National Sea? The question was asked last night, could we form a co-operative? and the Premier said, yes, it was a good idea. But he did not suggest that he had been talking to the Federal Government about it. Last night was the best time to say

that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The hon. Member could not have been there last night because I did, in fact, say it last night and explained clearly to the people concerned that what we mentioned to the Federal Government in August was if there are to be fish plants closed, these are some of the alternatives to look at. Do not just pay people not to work, use the financial resources you would otherwise use to pay unemployment insurance and pay other things, and put more money with it and the Provincial Government will help in the process, and find a means of providing alternative employment, and use of underutilized species is one of them. As I mentioned to an individual last night who raised the question specifically, this is what I proposed to the individual as one of the means that could be done to implement this program. That is one of the means that we have looked at. Do not just look for others to do it, use the funds to help the people directly involved in the fishing industry to achieve it.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the Premier, also. What plans does the Government have to expand Sir Wilfred Grenfell College in Corner Brook in the short-term, say in

the next year or two, and in the longer term?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

There will be a detailed announcement on that some time in the not too distant future. I do not know exactly when. But I am not giving away anything that I should not be, or making any statement that I should not be making at this stage when I say to you that the thinking of the Government is that over the next few years we should expand the academic courses available in Corner Brook to include third and fourth year level university training to the point where, in a few years from now, any student who wished to could really get a full Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science Degree in a good liberal arts college. I do not mean Liberal in the political sense, in the conventional use of that term, a good liberal arts university.

I am delighted to see what has in fact happened in terms of the Fine Arts College at Grenfell. Over time, I could foresee Grenfell developing as a good liberal arts university with other attached facilities, like the Fine Arts and in other speciality areas as well. The time will come, I guess, in the not too distant future when we are going to look at establishing a forestry facility in this Province, so that a person could get a degree in forestry or a degree in other areas. There are a variety of other areas to look at, but I just point to that by way of example. Those are sort of the long-term thinking of the Government at this stage. The plans are not yet in

final position, but they will be announced in due course.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, what the Premier just said he said repeatedly when he was campaigning for election in Humber East last year, last fall, last winter, so what he is saying in the House today is nothing new. Disappointingly, there has been no sign of action on his part since he became Premier in implementing those plans, so that is really what I was getting at when I asked my question.

I will ask the Premier now, specifically, does he agree with the recommendations in the Staveley Report, the Report authored by Dr. Michael Staveley, one of the Vice-Presidents of Memorial University, which called for significant expansion of both programs and facilities at Grenfell College?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The position of the Government on the detail of that will be made known in the not too distant future. I am not prepared to take stabs at it now. I just do not mind outlining for the House and for the hon. Member at this stage the general thinking, the general thrust of the Government in that direction. Now there may be some variation from that: We may advance it a bit, we may retard it a bit, we may vary it a bit, but the detail of the Government's plan will be made known in the future and I am not prepared to speculate now on what it will be.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will ask my supplementary to the Minister of Education.

The Premier's statement about an announcement coming in the not too distant future gives the impression that there is some specific action within the Government, within the Department of Education, laying the groundwork for this announcement.

Would the Minister of Education say specifically for the benefit of people throughout the Province, especially in Western Newfoundland, who are concerned about this and who are trying to make plans for their studies or their children's studies, what is going on leading to some expansion at Grenfell College? What groundwork is being laid for the Premier's announcement?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, in the past six months we have been reviewing many aspects of Government. One thing we are reviewing thoroughly is the post-secondary system in the Province. When the time is right, we will announce our decisions in that regard.

I might say that a week or so ago I said here that this Government has a triple-E educational agenda, which applies to both the post-secondary and the elementary and secondary: We want to provide greater equality of educational opportunity, we want to ensure

excellence in our educational system, we want to provide education as efficiently as possible, and that will apply to the post-secondary as well as the elementary and secondary.

MR. PARSONS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. PARSONS:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Education. I know Government is under some pressure, including from the Board of Trade, to change our denominational education system. Would the Minister tell this hon. House if he is contemplating any changes? What is his position?

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

DR. WARREN:
Mr. Speaker, does he want the long answer or the short answer?

Mr. Speaker, twenty years ago we made some major changes in the organization of education in this Province, when integration took place. The Government's view is that now it is appropriate to make some more changes. We will be examining ways of rationalizing the elementary and secondary educational system in the Province, and one way is to promote greater inter-denominational sharing. That is our policy, and that we will pursue. In due course, we will announce actual specific programs to achieve that goal. We are working very closely with the churches, with the teachers and

with the school boards in the process of developing that policy.

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

MR. PARSONS:
To put it into laymen's terms, he is having nothing at all to do with the denominational education system.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What is your opinion?

MR. PARSONS:
What is my opinion? You all know my opinion. I do not have to state that.

Would the Minister now, because of the offer from the town of Flat Rock of four acres of prime land to build a shared facility for the cost of \$1, and the two larger school boards involved, encourage this and perhaps use it as a pilot project for this area?

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

DR. WARREN:
Mr. Speaker, I have been interested in this proposal for Flat Rock. I have already contacted the school boards concerned, and I have been encouraged, very encouraged by the actions they are taking to consider projects such as the one he mentioned, and I certainly as Minister, and this Government, will encourage that kind of co-operation in the future.

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

MR. PARSONS:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My final supplementary is to the Premier. Because of my questions last week to the Minister of Environment and Lands and because of the statement made by the hon. John Crosbie, that if the proposed project at Prosser Rock is delayed the monies could be withdrawn in the near future, would the Premier now direct his Minister to immediately set the wheels in motion for the start of this project? Because, as far as I am concerned, the Environmental Impact Study, the EIS, is the only thing that is holding it up right now.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I am not sure it is a supplementary to education, but I will try and answer it anyway. Whether it is appropriate for me to take the action the hon. gentleman now takes, or whether his presumptions or assumptions are accurate, I do not know. But I will take a look at it, and I will get back to him on the question. I will get the answer for him.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

I have a question for the Minister of Social Services. Last week the Provincial Homemakers Association publicly criticized the Government for going back on its promise to improve homecare services as outlined in its own Throne Speech in June. Can the Minister confirm that indeed changes and cutbacks have been implemented?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the wrong information got out to the St. John's Homemakers Association. This Government does not intend to cut back on any services, neither to the disabled nor to senior citizens. We are very concerned about the amount of money that is being spent per family, and I will give you an example. For six months of this year we spent in excess of \$1.2 million for twenty-three families. What we are doing, Mr. Speaker, is asking the families of those senior citizens to share some of the responsibilities wherever possible, but we are not cutting back. Families can help, whether it be financially or helping take some of the responsibility in providing care. When they cannot help, the Department of Social Services will always make sure that senior citizens come under the plan and nobody will go without service.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister says he is not cutting back, yet he says he is limiting costs. What is limiting costs if it is not cutting back? Asking old people to go and live with their relatives regardless of the suitability of that arrangement? According to the present Minister these changes were implemented by the Minister of Health while he was Acting Minister of Social Services. Does the Minister now

agree with the decision of the Minister of Health? Does he agree with it? Is he at loggerheads with the Minister of Health, or is this just a shell game and a setup?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that the Member for Port au Port does not understand what I said in my answer to his first question. I said very clearly that we are doing an assessment, and where relatives can help a senior citizen we are asking them to. If a relative cannot help, the senior citizen will be provided all possible services they are allowed under the guidelines of the Department of Social Services. That is very clear. Nobody in the Province is going to go without proper care. All we are asking is some shared responsibility wherever possible, and there is nothing wrong with that.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Port au Port is wrong in saying that the Acting Minister of Social Services -

AN HON. MEMBER:

You said that Friday.

MR. EFFORD:

What I said Friday in the news media was that it was not a news release, it was a directive which was sent around the Department but some how got out to the public. The wrong information was on that particular directive. I explained very carefully what was on that directive. It was the wrong interpretation, because it said disabled people when it was not supposed to be disabled people; it was supposed to be directed to

senior citizens. It does not affect the disabled community whatsoever. What I said was the wrong interpretation got out. It had nothing to do with the Acting Minister of Social Services, and it had nothing to do with the Minister of Health. This Minister of Social Services incorporated that new assessment of all services to senior citizens, not to the disabled community.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister says it is not the disabled. No, it is disabled old people. Government is now beating up on the old people of the Province. This policy is a backward step. It has been termed an unfair hardship on the families of seniors, and has been criticized by the National Council on Aging as well as the Provincial Homemaker's Association. I would ask the Minister if he would not immediately cancel these draconian measures?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker, probably it is my Port de Grave accent that the Member for Port au Port does not understand, but let me say very slowly that we do not intend to cut back on any services to any senior citizens in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. All we are doing is a re-evaluation, an assessment, which is done periodically, it is done every year. If a senior citizen's family members can help, can share some of the responsibility, as

everybody wishes to share the responsibility where they can, then we will ask them to. It may be financial help, and it may be in doing some respite work on a day-to-day basis, maybe only four or five hours a week. Let me give you an example of the cost, Mr. Speaker. The cost went from \$1.3 million last year to \$5.7 million this year. Now, that is a tremendous cost. What we want to do is take that same amount of money, and spread it among more senior citizens instead of just giving it to a small group of people. We have a lot of people in the Province who need some sort of service, and we are asking the community to share the responsibility.

In fact, if the Member for Port au Port would check with some of the families he would find out that they are only too glad to help when asked. Do not say we are picking on senior citizens. Senior citizens will be provided with the best possible care while this Government is in office, and that is going to be for a long, long time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

On behalf of hon. Members I would like to welcome to the galleries today fifty Grade XI students from Queen Elizabeth High School, Foxtrap, accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Don Sparkes.

I would also like to welcome to the gallery twenty-four Level I, II and III students from Persalvic High School, Victoria, accompanied by their two teachers, Mr. Dan Burke and Mr. William Riddle.

Orders of the Day

On motion, the following Bills were read a third time, ordered passed and their titles be as on the Order Paper.

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs. (Bill No. 29).

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Fisheries." (Bill No. 26.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Education (Teacher Training) Act." (Bill No. 48).

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Works, Services And Transportation." (Bill No. 33).

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Local Road Boards Act." (Bill No. 34.).

MR. BAKER:

Order 13.

MR. SPEAKER:

Committee of the Whole on a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Electrical Power Control Act," (Bill No. 54).

On motion, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on said Bill, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

We have had a significant amount of debate on this particular Bill on second reading, but this is an important piece of legislation and I do not believe that the real significance of this piece of legislation has come to be understood by the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Minister of Finance glossed over this particular initiative in the June Budget, and now Bill 54 is giving effect to what the Minister of Finance announced in the June Budget, and that is simply this, that under the authority of this Bill, the rural electrification subsidy paid to the Power Distribution Districts of Newfoundland Hydro throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, which amounts to, I believe some \$30 million, will be eliminated. The subsidy will be eliminated in increments, I believe, of ten million dollars a year for the next three years, so, it must be clearly pointed out, Mr. Chairman, what this means. It means that people living in those PDDs, in those Power Distribution Districts, which is the major part of the rural parts of Newfoundland and Labrador - with a couple of exceptions in Labrador West and Happy Valley, Goose Bay - it means that everybody else, including those people, will have to find \$30 million, because the same amount of money will have to be collected by Newfoundland Hydro. It is not going to come from the Treasury of Newfoundland and Labrador now and be paid over to Newfoundland Hydro, so it means that the rate for electrical users, all electrical users in this Province, will increase by \$30 million or the equivalent of 30 million dollars over the next three years, starting in increments of \$10 million a year starting in January 1990. Now

that is the effect of this particular piece of legislation. Now, Mr. Chairman, if on the other hand this legislative action by the Government meant there would be a uniform rate of electricity in every community in Newfoundland and Labrador, that would be one thing, but Mr. Chairman, this Bill does not provide for a uniformed rate of electricity to every electrical user in Newfoundland and Labrador. Even though the subsidy is coming off, the \$30 million subsidy is coming off, there will still not be a uniform rate for those people who are on diesel generated electricity in Newfoundland and Labrador. They have the amount of their basic consumption increased, I believe, from 600 kilowatt hours to 700 kilowatt hours or something of that nature, but the price per kilowatt hour will still be significantly higher for those on diesel generated sources of electricity than it is for those getting electricity from hydro source. So on the one hand, while the Government is moving to eliminate the subsidy and transfer the subsidy from the general taxpayer, everybody who pays taxes to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, whether it is in the form of retail sales tax or whether it is in the form of income tax, or whether it is in the form of driver's licence fees, or whether it is in the form of birth certificate fees or whatever form it is in, the Government is now transferring that burden of \$30 million from all of us collectively to those rate payers of electricity. That is what they are doing. They are transferring the \$30 million from everybody - that was shared generally by everybody - to those users of electricity. That is one thing. But to do that, Mr. Speaker,

without having a uniformed rate of electricity implemented throughout Newfoundland and Labrador is another thing. Because there are still people out there who believe that as a result of this move by the Government, there is going to be one uniform rate of electricity for everybody, and that is not the case.

So up to 700, yes, it was increased by 100 kilowatt hours. A big deal!

AN HON. MEMBER:

A big deal!

MR. RIDEOUT:

One hundred kilowatt hours. The people, you know, who operate in the areas where there is diesel generation will get no direct benefit from this, but the Government is going to get a direct benefit, Mr. Speaker. The Government is going to save \$30 million out of their current account revenue or their current account expenditures. The Government will at the end of three years, in increments of \$10 million a year, be able to slash \$10 million out of their current account budget. That is what they will be able to do. And that \$10 million which will be \$30 million at the end of three years will be tacked directly onto the electricity bill of every user of electricity in Newfoundland and Labrador. Every single person, the old, the aged, the sick, the infirmed, the rich and the poor, every single person, Mr. Speaker, will have to anti up another \$30 million, no matter what your annual income is, no matter whether you are on social assistance or whether you are in a \$100,000 a year bracket, everybody will have to anti up what I have been told will be a 10 per cent

increase on electricity bills. That is what this particular Bill does, Mr. Speaker.

So it saves the Government money and transfers the responsibility from the general tax payer to the rate payer. So the Government, Mr. Speaker, should tell this for what it is. The Government should be men and women enough to admit to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that this is a budgetary move meant to save \$30 million for the Treasury. And it is transferring the responsibility for that \$30 million to the backs of the rate payers in every community in Newfoundland and Labrador. That is what the Government should have the fortitude and the will to do. But they have not done that, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the Government has done the reverse. The Government has tried to downplay the effects of this particular piece of legislation on the ordinary consumer, Mr. Speaker. When you get Newfoundland Hydro which has to be guaranteed a rate of return on the sale of its electricity, when you get Newfoundland Light and Power which has be guaranteed a rate of return on its electricity, when you add in inflation, when you consider that neither of those two distributors of electricity have had increases over the last two or three years, when you consider the inflationary cost of 3 percentage or 4 percentage points per year, and when you take this 10 per cent on top of it, Mr. Chairman, it means that the rate payer in Newfoundland and Labrador is going to get hit anywhere from a low of 12 per cent or 14 per cent to a high of 18 per cent to 20 per cent over the next three years for electricity. The subsidy is eliminated in three, so you have

to find \$30 million in three years. So, Mr. Chairman, that is what this Government is perpetrating upon the electricity rate payer in Newfoundland and Labrador, let there be no mistake about it.

Now there is nothing we can do, Mr. Chairman, only raise the point. We have raised that point repeatedly in second reading debate. We are raising it here again today in the Committee of the Whole. The Government has the numbers and the Government will get the Bill through. The Government will get their hand, Mr. Chairman, into the pocket of the ordinary individual around Newfoundland and Labrador who use electricity, to the tune of \$30 million, as a result of this piece of legislation. The Minister of Finance will get his greedy fingers into the pockets of ordinary Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and haul out another \$30 million as a result of passing this piece of Legislation. The Minister of Finance, the Scrooge that would steal Christmas, and steal the coppers off a dead person's eyes. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Chairman, is the same Minister who got his hands into the Newfoundland taxpayers pockets at the first opportunity in his first Budget and hauled out \$100 million. Ebenezer Kitchen, Mr. Chairman, hauled \$100 million out of the taxpayers pockets the first opportunity he got to get a grab, he took a pound and a half of flesh where he only had to take a pound, Mr. Chairman. Now, Mr. Chairman, Scrooge has got his hands back in again and this time he is going to take \$30 million. This time he is going to take it from the widows, the poor, and from everybody right across the Board. He does not care whether

they can pay or cannot pay. He does not care, Mr. Chairman. Where we all shared the burden in a social way in Newfoundland and Labrador, now the Minister of Finance is going to make sure that the rate payer takes it on the nose. No, Mr. Chairman, he takes it in the pocket book. And that is what this Government is doing with this piece of legislation.

I am saying this now, Mr. Chairman, because as I said we cannot do anything about it. We cannot stop this piece of legislation from going through. All we can do is stand up and point out the downside, the other side of what this is going to do to people in this Province. We have a responsibility to do that. We can only beg the Government to listen, and if they are so callous, Mr. Chairman, and uncaring that they do not want to listen, then at the end of the day, some day or other this Bill will pass. Thanks to this Government the ordinary individual in Newfoundland and Labrador will have another \$30 million hauled out of his or her pockets, Mr. Chairman. That is what this Bill does. And it does it without even attempting to establish a uniform electricity rate in Newfoundland and Labrador.

So it is highway robbery, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance has got the Government befuddled over there. He has them talked around his finger, anyway that you can knock \$30 million of my current account revenue, let us do it. Anyway that I do not have to find \$30 million, let us do it. Anyway that I can transfer the burden from the taxpayer to the widow in Newfoundland and Labrador I want to do it. That is what this Minister of Finance is up to,

Mr. Chairman. Therefore, this piece of legislation is a direct attack on the poor of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is a direct attack on the poor, Mr. Speaker, it takes \$30 million out of the their pockets. The Government will have their way because they have the numbers to demand their way, but they will not have the support of this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. They will never get the support of this side of the House for beating up on the poor of Newfoundland and Labrador which is what this is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen) is the King of Scrooges, Mr. Chairman. The King of Scrooges got his hands in the pockets of the taxpayer again and he is determined to keep his hands in there until he totally wipes out, not only the current account deficit, Mr. Speaker, but also the capital accounts deficit. The Minister of Finance gets up in this House and does not talk about a current account deficit, he talks about the global deficit. Most governments in this country who could find a way to make a contribution from current account to capital account would be clapping their hands, Mr. Chairman, but not this particular Minister of Finance because he has got too much of a love affair going between his hand and the people's pockets. He cannot keep his hands out of the people's pockets. He is a pickpocket, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

He would pick the coppers of their eyes after they pass away if he had his way, Mr. Speaker. So therefore the Minister will get his way, the Government will get their way, but they will not get their way with the support of the Opposition, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion, clauses 3 - 10 carried.

MR. RIDEOUT:

No, Mr. Chairman.

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

On this particular Bill, we want it called clause by clause, please.

On motion, clauses 11 through 21 carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill without amendment, carried.

MR. BAKER:

Order 11, Mr. Chairman.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act." (Bill No. 36).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the Bill without amendment, carried.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Fisheries Loan Act." (Bill No. 37).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the Bill without amendment, carried.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Mining Grant No. 11 (Conveyance of Minerals) Act, 1966." (Bill No. 46).

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the Bill without amendment, carried.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend And Consolidate The Law Relating To Public Utilities." (Bill No. 44).

On motion, clauses 1 through 40, carried.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Chairman.

There are a couple technical errors in the Bill that need to be amended. I move that subparagraph (b) of Clause 3 of Clause 41 be repealed and the following substituted. The cost of the lease is in excess of \$5000 in a year of the lease with the prior approval of the board.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I just want to make a few brief comments on the amendments. From what I understand of them I suppose you could almost call them housekeeping amendments because it was something that was left out of something and it was just put in somewhere else, with respect to the first one and the same with the second one, I guess. With respect to the amendments being proposed we have no real difficulty with the amendments, the thing we have difficulty with is the Bill itself so whether we support the amendments, or do not support the amendments, is irrelevant at this stage. The Government will pass the amendments, of course, because it has the majority but I will take

the opportunity, if I may, to speak on this particular clause and just to talk in general about the entire Bill with respect to public utilities. I will try to review the arguments briefly that were being made by Members on this side of the House in the last days we debated this particular Bill. The points that were made by Members on this side of the House were along the lines that whilst we recognize that some changes should be made we also recognize and understand the abuse of consumer advocate groups who have been speaking out over the last few days, since this legislation came to light. They have expressed the view that they have not had the opportunity to properly have some input into this particular piece of legislation, so for that reason in particular, we raised the concerns of those consumer advocates in the last day's debate. We felt it would be appropriate for the Government to be wise on this piece of legislation, in view of the fact that it is high profile, with some major changes, I guess, to the operation of the Public Utilities Board. And, in fact, the operation of the Public Utilities Board should have, at all times, concern for the consumer. And so we felt that maybe the Government would be wise, since there is no urgency in having this piece of legislation passed. The Government would be wise in referring the Bill to the appropriate Legislative Review Committee, a Committee that was put into place this year in June by agreement, so that it could go around the Province and hold hearings on major pieces of legislation such as this particular one - the Public Utilities Board. The Government now has said quite clearly and

categorically and emphatically that it will not do that. It will not provide the consumer advocate groups with an opportunity to have some input into this particular piece of legislation. They told us that on Friday. So, as an Opposition, I do not know what else we can do. We have raised the concerns of those people. We have also expressed our own reservations. We have also put forth our suggestions with respect to the appointment of a consumer advocate. I think it was just today as a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, I heard today publicly, I think it was on CBC's morning show, a reference to Mr. Andy Wells's role as the consumer advocate on the Public Utilities Board. A reference made by, I believe it was the Consumers Association or whatever it is called, of Newfoundland, who said that the only time that there has been some opportunity for consumers, some protection for consumers has been since Mr. Wells, himself, became a Member of that particular Board. So we made the point in the last days debate that if the Government is going to appoint a consumer advocate, we suggest that Mr. Wells has certainly qualified himself. He has received high commendation from outside interest groups, consumer groups -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Perhaps he does not want it.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, maybe he does not, but we were just saying, you know, perhaps he does not, that is fine too. But certainly he would be a good qualified individual and we made that point in the last days debate, so, other than expressing the views that we expressed on Friday in particular, Mr.

Chairman, there is not much more I can say about it. I wish the Government had reconsidered and put it out to public hearings and gave the public an opportunity to have some input. I wish the consumer advocate groups had a chance to have some public input into this legislation, but apparently the Government decides, or has decided it will not. Therefore we will not be supporting the Bill on that basis, and we will be voting against it on that basis.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have listened to a number of speeches from Members Opposite concerning this particular piece of legislation, and as I believe I have indicated before, there have been some good points made in terms of consumer protection in the Province and so on. There have been, what I have considered to be, some bad points made as well.

If I can sum up the concerns of the Opposition and try to deal with them. First of all their concern is that there has not been enough input from a variety of groups who may be concerned. Some time ago we released the report that dealt with the structure of the Public Utilities Board, that has been public for quite some time, and has been available to any groups who wish to make submissions. I believe I indicated to this House that I, myself, have received submissions from present Members of the Board

including Andy Wells. I have talked to Mr. Sexty and to the Consumer Association. So, there has been a fair amount of contact. The Opposition is quite right that the Government is concerned that these changes be made now so that new Board Members, if there are new Board Members, have time to prepare themselves for the hearings that are coming up. There are some rather important hearings coming up in the near future. We would like to get this thing through in a hurry. But I can understand the Oppositions comments about it.

But, Mr. Chairman, the main reason that Members of the Opposition are giving is that they are afraid of a hidden agenda, and that hidden agenda is they are afraid the only reason we are bringing this in, in spite of the fact that it was recommended by the group who was studying it and so on, the only reason we were bringing this in was to get rid of Andy Wells. Now that is the main concern that I see coming from over there. They are concerned about us getting rid of one of their buddies. They are concerned about us getting rid of one of their buddies, one of their Tory friends. Now you might as well be honest and open about it, that is the concern that I am getting from speaker after speaker after speaker in the Opposition. That was the concern. Now, Mr. Chairman, let me deal with it. Andy Wells is a very capable individual. He is Tory, but there are some capable Tories. A very capable individual. He has been sitting on the Board as a consumer advocate. In our proposed structure we propose a board of three permanent members and up to three part-time members, although there may be none or one whatever, three permanent members. And in

addition we make allowance for consumer advocacy. We feel that that is the best and fairest way to go about it. Now I will admit I listened to the radio this morning and heard part of what the hon. Member opposite referred to and I heard Andy Wells, for instance, who is the first one to say that there was nothing there until he got there. He is the first one to say that. I heard Mr. Sexty indicate that they were making no headway until Andy Wells got there. I was with the Federation of Municipalities when Andy Wells was an active participant and represented the Province. I was a very strong supporter of that process, insisted that it be kept in place, over the objections, I might add, of an awful lot of the Members of the Federation of Municipalities because a lot of people thought it was a waste of money. However, I was one of the people in the Federation who advocated putting more into it to make sure that the research was done, to make sure that the research capabilities were there, to make sure that proper representation was done. And I was a supporter of Andy Wells in that position. So I just want to say that. However, I do believe and we believe as a Government that it is wrong to have the consumer advocate as a Board member, and we are making appropriate changes.

Mr. Wells, from the time he has been on the Board, has gone from being a periodic intervenor representing the Federation of Municipalities, to a consumer advocate sitting on the Board. Presumably he is doing this job full-time. He has made strong cases, he has stirred things up a little bit, no doubt about it. He has developed a certain amount of

expertise in terms of public utilities and their demands and their structure. As a matter of fact Andy Wells was one of the ones who said we have to insure fair return for the utilities. That is his position. Okay. So he has gone away and studied and he has developed a certain amount of expertise. Now I do not say that Andy Wells is the only one in the Province that has that expertise. I do not say that. But what I say to Members opposite is this, that they are prejudging the whole situation, the whole bill on the basis of a fear that we are trying to get rid of their buddy. They are prejudging it on that basis. And I would say to Members opposite we are going to set up a proper Board and then let us see what the membership of that Board is and let us see what happens with the consumer rep in that process. There may very well be room for some present members of the Board. There may very well be room for Andy Wells. If that is what you are worried about. And that we are not eliminating Andy Wells because he is a buddy of yours.

MR. DECKER:

But he is a Wells, eh!

MR. BAKER:

We may not eliminate him. That is entirely up to the process. He has developed expertise and I believe he has developed a lot of expertise and it would be difficult to find somebody in terms of a consumer advocate who would immediately be able to start and do a better job than Andy Wells. I agree with that, I agree totally. But just wait until you see us put the process into operation. I can assure you that the object of this legislation is not to get rid of your buddy.

That is not the objective of the legislation. The object is to make it more sensible, to make it more logical, to have a board that does not have an advocate for Newfie Tel, that does not have an advocate for Hydro, that does not have an advocate for Newfoundland Light sitting on the board and does not have a consumer advocate sitting on the board either.

The Board is independent, but we will make sure - we do not have to make sure that the companies do their presentation, they will spend lots of money doing that - but we will make sure the consumer advocacy side is also adequately represented and properly taken care of under this particular piece of legislation.

Mr. Chairman, I believe it is a good piece of legislation. Very shortly there will have to be some regulations dealing with the consumer advocacy side. As soon as we have them ready we will be making them public. These regulations will have to be ready in terms of any changes in the Board because we cannot have the Board created without the consumer advocate position being taken care of. All of that will be taken care of in due time. I can assure the House that this is a good piece of legislation brought in with the most sincere of intents.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to beat this to death. But I have to raise on the point that the Government House Leader made or tried to make throughout his ten minute presentation. It became clear to me in listening to him in the sense that he said, I think at

least four times maybe five times, that this is not a Bill to get rid of your buddy, Andy Wells, and implied that he supported me in the leadership.

DR. KITCHEN:

All the more reason to get rid of him.

MR. SIMMS:

Contrary to what the Government House Leader has just told us, the Minister of Finance has just told us the real story, 'all the more reason to get rid of him', that is the words he used.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say this. I want to make it absolutely and abundantly clear that it is unfair and unfounded for the Government House Leader to somehow imply and suggest the only reason why we are debating this Bill and making a bit of a fuss over it is because they may be getting rid of Andy Wells. That is not fair, that is totally unfair. It is inaccurate. It is unfounded. Unfair, inaccurate, and unfounded among other words and other adjectives I could use but I will not use them here. But it is obviously for the Government House Leader, a great way to overshadow the other points that we made in the debate.

The Minister of Finance wants me to go through them all again. I would expect him to, of course, he would not listen or read anyway it does not really matter. I am not sure if he can. We made points on Friday about the public hearing process. That was our major concern. Not whether or not this is to get rid of Andy Wells or not, anymore than we are concerned that the Government might try to get rid of Gordon MacDonald, the Chairman of the Board, who I

believe was a member of the transition team for the Premier, was he not. I believe it was reported that he was. He is the Chairman of the Board of Public Utilities. So we are not concerned about Andy Wells or Gordon MacDonald or anybody else being eliminated by this legislation, that is up to the Government. They will decide who they want to appoint so it does not matter what we say in that respect. But it is totally unfair and it is, as I say, a great way for the Government to overshadow those larger concerns.

The larger concerns are the public hearings for the public, for the people. The Government says what they are doing is sensible and logical and we want to know what the people say? What are the consumer advocate groups saying? We do not know because they have not had an opportunity for input into this legislation, and that is the point that we were trying to make. It is unfair to somehow now try to suggest that the only reason that we are kicking up a fuss is because we are somehow concerned that Andy Wells might lose his job. That is not true, not accurate, and as far as I know Mr. Wells is not all that concerned because he probably fully expects to get the axe anyway. If I tell him what the Minister of Finance said today he will be sure of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not want to be unfair to Members opposite at all. What I said was that there were some good

points brought up and I addressed the concerns the Member mentioned. But I said it seemed to me as if the main concern, not the only concern, but the main concern - because they kept coming back to it time after time, and looking up in the gallery, and nodding to the gentleman concerned and so on - it was coming across to me and I am sure to the general public that this was the major concern. I am just trying to help Members opposite and let them know that this was the impression that is out there in the general public and maybe they would care to correct it a bit. But it seems to me that concern is out there in the general public.

So I am just trying to help Members opposite and I can only accept what the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Simms) says, he assures us that is not their main concern and I will accept that.

On motion, Clause 41 as amended, carried.

On motion, Clauses 42 through 90, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Shall Clause 91 carry?

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:
Another technical change. Subclause (1) of clause 90, I move we amend that by deleting the word 'within' and substituting the following phrase 'in more than'.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Shall the amendment carry?

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Chairman, just a brief comment.

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

MR. SIMMS:
As we understand it the amendment really deleting the word 'within' and substituting the phrase 'in more than' is in keeping with the old legislation where the words 'in more than' were the words used rather than the word 'within'. They want to use the same words that was in the old legislation, as I understand. So from a technical point of view we have no objection, but we do object to the legislation, in total, because it has not gone through the public hearing process. If Members opposite would like I will elaborate on the reasons why once again.

On motion, Clause 91 as amended, carried.

On motion, Clauses 92 through 122 carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the bill with amendment, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Bill No. 40.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission". (Bill No. 40).

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Shall Clause 1 carry?

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I just want to try and get a point of information at this stage from the Government House Leader, if I may. I have not had a chance to speak to him about Order 12, the Co-operative Societies Act, which we agreed to do second reading on on Friday even though we agreed on that. Is that not going to proceed today, in this session or whatever?

MR. BAKER:

We need a few more days. There are some slight problems that come up with some interpretations of a clause in there.

MR. SIMMS:

I see, so you may just hold it or whatever.

AN HON. MEMBER:

We will do it on Thursday.

MR. SIMMS:

Pardon?

MR. EFFORD:

We can do it on Thursday.

MR. SIMMS:

We can do it on Thursday.

MR. BAKER:

Whenever we can get around to it.

MR. SIMMS:

We can do it on Christmas Eve while we are carving the turkey and passing out the eggnog here on the Clerk's table, if the hon. the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Efford) wishes.

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

My hon. friend has to go out of town.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to say a few words on this Bill obviously, this piece of legislation. The Economic Recovery Commission, and we might as well say it now under Clause 1, because as the Leader of the Opposition has pointed out on a number of occasions and I have as well, the Government will get it's way on all of this. And I guess we are serving no purpose by delaying it other than making the points that we need to make. And I know that there are a considerable number of concerns out there about the establishment of the Economic Recovery Commission.

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

I am well aware of it, and I say to the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Efford), he should listen not only outside to concerns, but listen within to concerns. That is what I say to him. Now I will say nothing else, but leave it at that for now.

Mr. Chairman, the establishment of this Economic Recovery Commission is a complete abdication of the responsibilities of Government, of the Cabinet, and of the Ministers. And it is becoming clearer every day, every time we hear Dr. House on radio, or in the public news media it is becoming clearer and clearer. But all you have to do is look at the legislation itself, look at the auses in the legislation and you will see clearly that there are greater powers afforded to the Chairman and to the Economic Recovery Commission itself then you will find in many of the pieces of legislation governing Government Departments, there is

much, much, more power. And, I made the point in previous debate about the expenditure that is going to be involved in the establishment of this Economic Recovery Commission, and I say this to the Minister sincerely, there are a lot of concerns out there because this is an abdication of your responsibility as a Member of the Cabinet. You have given powers to this Commission that some Government Departments do not have, many Government Departments do not have. The Chairman of the Commission himself has said publicly that, for example, it is not his role, it will not be the Economic Recovery Commission's role to lend funding, or to lend money.

MR. EFFORD:

Did you hear him say that?

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, I heard him say that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Rumours.

MR. SIMMS:

No, not rumours, he confirmed it, Mr. Chairman. But the Legislation itself clearly gives the authority to the Economic Recovery Commission to make loans and grants, I think this is what it says as a matter of fact, to lend money and also to grant money. Subsection (e) and (f) of Section 9, so that is another indication of the power and the authority that this Economic Recovery Commission is going to have. Initially, our big concern with this, Mr. Chairman, was the fact that it too is another piece of significant legislation, perhaps one of the only pieces of significant legislation brought in by this Administration in its

short eight months or whatever it is in office, that did not go through the committee process, and it would have been an ideal candidate, I believe, for the appropriate Legislative Review Committee to deal with. This is exactly the kind of legislation we are talking about for the Member for Carbonear (Mr. Reid) to take his committee out on the road and have some public hearings on, or maybe the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy), whoever the committee would have been under, I believe perhaps the Member for St. John's South - an ideal candidate. It is going to cost, and the Government itself, the Minister of Finance, I think, has estimated in the Budget this year \$3 million. It may be less than that, as we read some news stories, but obviously next year it might be \$3 or \$4 million, or whatever, but over the period of the eight or nine years that the Premier has publicly said it will take to turn around the economy, the Premier publicly said that, then you are looking at an expenditure of \$24 to \$27 million. Now, that may be a wise expenditure over a nine year period, who know, the only thing is that in all of this process the Cabinet itself is giving up its own responsibility, its own interest, by shuffling it all of to this Economic Recovery Commission. Now, the Chairman of the Commission has also said that it is not his role to create jobs. He said it is not his role to create jobs, it is his role to encourage business to create jobs.

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

I wish the Minister of Social Services would go out and sit down

somewhere, maybe out in that wing of the legislative floor.

The other thing, Mr. Chairman, is that this Commission's Chairman reports only to the Premier. Now I wonder what role the Minister of Development plays in all of this? Where is the Minister of Development in all this? Why is there a Minister of Development because the Minister of Development has nothing else to do anymore.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) Tourism.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, he is in charge of Tourism. Well, maybe that is it. So, you should call him the Minister of Tourism and call the Premier the Minister of Development. We have some concerns about the mandate, as I said, Mr. Chairman, without going into a lot of the details.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do you want me to speak on it?

MR. SIMMS:

I could not care less if the Minister speaks on it. It is up to the Minister. If the Minister wants to speak I will be happy to stay in debate with him until the cows come home. It will be up to him. We will see how he responds to that challenge. I say to the Minister of Finance, who has been closely following my comments, many of the duties and I do not want to read them off, I say to the Minister of Finance, who has been closely following my comments, many of the duties and I do not want to read them off, but there are some there, if you will read them, you will find them mostly on page 5 of the piece of the Bill. A lot of those duties sound so much like the duties and

responsibilities of various Government Departments and other agencies, like the Department of Development, the Loan Board, Rural Development Loan Board, NLDC, Department of Employment and Labour Relations, The Economic Council itself. We have an Economic Council in the Province that we have not heard a thing about, since this Government established The Economic Recovery Commission and joined APEC. What has happened to our own Economic Council? More importantly, Mr. Chairman, the mandate itself as outlined in the legislation is precisely the mandate of a Government - the mandate of a Cabinet. That is what is most worrisome about it, because it is now relegating all of its authority and responsibility to the Economic Recovery Commission and having it report solely to the Premier and to no other Ministers. There are lots of questions that could be asked, all kinds of them, I asked a lot of them in second reading debate, and did not get any responses. We talked about the need for the agency, we talked about the Budget, possibilities of the Budget exploding or getting greater as time goes on, everything goes up, inflation, all the rest of it, maybe, who knows, three years from now the Budget for the Economic Recovery Commission might be five million dollars a year, we do not know that, but there are a lot of concerns with respect to that, and, Mr. Chairman, I have other concerns, but I guess the ten minutes will probably be up pretty soon, so I will wait and collect my thoughts and see if there is any further discussion or debate on the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bill 40, An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission, is a very important Bill. I would like to deal with some of the comments made by the Opposition House Leader with regards to his concerns. I would like to, first of all say, Mr. Chairman, that we are very concerned and this is one of the reasons why this Bill is introduced. We are very concerned that there be a good solid look at economic recovery in this Province. We are very concerned that something be done, in addition to what Cabinet will do and can do, and we feel this is the way to provide extra input. At some point you have to say to yourself, we have to make a supreme effort, we have to make an effort beyond the normal running of Government. We have to make that extra effort to try to bring about economic recovery, particularly in rural Newfoundland. That effort must be made. We promised the people of this Province during the election campaign that we would set up the Economic Recovery Commission. A team of people, who, I suppose in one sense, are asked to carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment. To carry out a lot of these recommendations that were touched on, some of them were touched on by the previous Government, granted, I will recognize that, but the whole report was never dealt with as it should have been dealt with, so we have to ensure that we make every effort to bring about economic recovery of this Province. This will involve an extra stimulus to small business, because that is

the key to our development. It would probably involve a great deal of reorganization of the way we have been proceeding down through the years. Government Departments tend to become compartmentalized and within, for instance, the Department of Development, there would tend to be a compartmental view. Within the Department of Fisheries, a compartmental view, departmental view, compartmental view, whatever you want to call it. Within the Department of Forestry, their concern is forestry and their view is compartmentalized. So, within our Government, we have some excellent Departments, we have some excellent civil servants, we have a lot of expertise, and we have people who are dedicated to doing what they perceive their job to be. We have that. Members opposite can say that the mandate of this economic recovery team, and they have said, is a mandate of Government. It is a mandate of Government, and I tend to agree with that. It is part of the mandate of Government to do these things - it certainly is. But whenever you dare suggest that you would turn something, turn part of that mandate or allow other people to work on that mandate, the minute we suggest that, we get hit over the head with 'well somebody else is carrying out your job'. We are getting somebody else to help us do our job. I think that is acceptable and that is normal. We want somebody else who is not confined by the restrictions of Departments to look at the whole rather than the part. One of the Members opposite, the Member for St. John's East Extern, keeps talking about the commission of Government. Now, obviously the hon. Member needs to go back and have a look at what commission of Government is. He has seemed to

have caught on the word commission, and because commission of Government was bad, every time the word commission is used, he seems to think that that also must be bad. I would suggest to the hon. Member that is a rather shallow way of looking at it. The old, as he is called sometimes, the old anti-confederate over there. Every time the word commission is used, it kind of rankles him. His hair stands on end. His grey hair stands on end, and he does not like the word commission.

Well, Mr. Chairman, we all know that what we have hear is nothing equating to commission of Government. We have an elective Government that knows what its mandate is, that knows what it should do in this Province. It is elected to see that the job is done. Not elected to do the job, elected to see the job is done. I am not elected to do everything in this Province that needs to be done. I am elected to see that it is done, and this is one way to make sure that we take advantage of every possible opportunity to see that the job is done. The Economic Recovery Commission, Mr. Speaker, is that extra step, that extra attempt to make sure that we take advantage of all kinds of ideas, of an approach that is not narrow departmental compartmentalized, an approach that is more broad than what the Ministers and Departments tend to do. It is, I believe, the only way to make sure that broad development in this Province across all department lines is carried out in an orderly way. So, Mr. Chairman -

MR. PARSONS:
(Inaudible).

MR. BAKER:

The hon. Member wants to ask a question.

MR. PARSONS:

You had every talk that the Doctor had in writing in that brief that he made. So, his ideas have never changed. Why did you need them to hire the Economic Commission? You had all that was necessary in his report.

MR. BAKER:

I thought the hon. gentleman was listening. We had the report, the previous Government had the report, the hon. gentleman was a Minister for a short period of time with that Government. He knows that the report was there. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that we need somebody that does not have a narrow compartmental view of development in this Province. We need a group to give us advice, we need a group to do the job. Certainly, our job is to see that economic development is brought about in this Province, and this is the best way to ensure that the economic development across all lines is brought about in the Province. It is a necessity. Now I would like to go one step further though, and say that down through the years we have not done that. No Government has been successful in that part of its mandate down through the years. Newfoundland Governments have basically not been successful in that part of their mandate, and we are trying another way. We are looking for a little help, and we are trying another way. We are saying we do not have all the answers. We are looking for a little bit of help. There is no guarantee that ten years down the road the Province is going to be booming because of this. There is no guarantee that this attempt too

might fail.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. BAKER:

There is no doubt about it, it could fail. But I will tell you something I would rather be blamed for failing than be blamed for not trying.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER:

So, Mr. Chairman, this is an attempt to bring about economic development in this Province. If it is successful, and we hope it is, the whole Province will benefit. If it fails then hon. Members can bang us over the head, but we have to give it a chance to work, and do not expect miracles overnight. Members opposite are quite eager all the time to ask us how come we have not corrected all the problems of the Province in the last six months. We hear this all the time. And that is part of their job, I suppose they are Opposition, they oppose, and they try to hurry us up, they try to give us a little kickstart every now and then, try to make suggestions and so on. And what comes across to me is how come you have not solved all the problems in the last six months? I say to you gentlemen opposite, Mr. Chairman, they are doing their job. That is fine, and I am willing to accept that, but do not expect miracles. Do not expect it is going to work in the next two months or the next six months or the next two years or the next four years. At a certain point we will have to look at it and see if the proper things are being generated. If they are not then fine, they will disappear. And if

they are successful after five or six years they will still disappear because once they have achieved the objective then there is no need to have them.

So, Mr. Chairman, this is a group whose mandate is to try to work themselves out of a job, that is what this group is. And I believe it is -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. BAKER:

- one of the few mechanisms that we have left to bring about Economic Recovery. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. EFFORD:
By leave!

MR. RIDEOUT:

There is no leave required, Mr. Chairman. I am not asking the hon. gentleman for anything today. I do not want anything from the hon. gentleman, and I will speak as long as I wish, including the hour I have if I want to. Mr. Chairman, you know it is unbelievable, I do not believe that so many people have been inflicted so quickly with such an overdose of defeatism as I heard acknowledged by the Government House Leader that time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. RIDEOUT:

The Member is entitled to speak. Is there somebody else over there who has the hon. gentleman for Port de Grave (Mr. Efford) handcuffed, Mr. Chairman? Did they drop a jar of Krazy glue on

his seat and he cannot get up, what happened to him?

AN HON. MEMBER:

They told him to sit down.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman is entitled to speak and let him get up and speak. But I think the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy) has been dispatched, Mr. Chairman, with specific orders to hold the Minister for Social Services in his seat at all costs. I believe that is what has happened.

But, Mr. Chairman, I was not about to rise again on this bill, but I could not resist after listening to the Government House Leader (Mr. Baker), and as I said before on a couple of other bills today, Mr. Chairman, this bill will pass, there is nothing we can do about it. There is nothing some Members on the other side can do about it, Mr. Chairman. There is nothing people out there in the general public can do. A lot of people have a lot of skepticism about this bill. There is nothing they can do about it. Skepticism in the Government ranks about this particular initiative, Mr. Chairman. There is skepticism in the general public about this specific initiative. There is a lot of skepticism about this initiative and it is obvious, Mr. Chairman, that even the Government House Leader is not quite convinced that this initiative will come to anything. I mean he very skillfully laid the groundwork, he laid the defence mechanisms down, Mr. Chairman, very skillfully in the few minutes that he addressed this bill just now. This may not work, but if it does not work we cannot be blamed for trying, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ready to back out.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Ready to back out, ready to jump ship, ready to scuttle Dr. House and the Commission. He has laid the groundwork now, Mr. Chairman, to do all of this.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

They are going to blame us for two years, and then blame Dr. House for (inaudible).

MR. RIDEOUT:

They are going to blame the previous Administration for the next two or three years, for every failure that they can think about. They are going to continue to do that and they can, Mr. Chairman. Then they will try to blame Dr. House and the Economic Commission for a year or so after that. And eventually they will try, Mr. Chairman, to wash it all off their back and say, well, we tried but there is nothing we could do. Now, Mr. Chairman, that attitude coming from a Government that is only seven or eight months in office is kind of ridiculous. And for it to come from the Government House Leader, if it were to come from a backbencher it would be, perhaps, more understandable, but to come from the Government House Leader.

Now, Mr. Chairman, this Government on a number of initiatives over the last several months have taken the easy-out option. The easy-out option, Mr. Chairman, is to get some outside group to study it for us. Get some outside group to look at it for us, set up a commission, set up a committee. Mr. Speaker, I am not afraid it is going to work because I say to the hon. gentleman here today, according to the Chairman of the

Commission, it is doomed. It is not going to work. The Chairman of the Commission has admitted defeat already, Mr. Speaker. Dr. House has already admitted defeat when he indicated that people in this Province will have to continue to exercise the option of moving out, mobility, getting out of the Province, Mr. Speaker. That is what he admitted on the public airways the other day.

So, the Government attempt to govern by commission, to take the responsibility away from where it should be in the Department of Development and put it out to a commission, Mr. Speaker, is already showing signs of less than enthusiasm from Government Members. It is showing signs of less than enthusiasm from Government Ministers. So if the President of Treasury Board, Mr. Speaker, is not overly enthusiastic about this initiative, how does he expect everybody else to jump for joy because the Government is taking this particular initiative? There are a lot of questions about whether this is the right approach to take, or not. There are questions in the Government back benches, there are questions in the business community, there are questions all over this Province but, Mr. Speaker, the Government will have its way. The Government will have its way, and we will only be able to see at the end of two or three or four years, whether it has meant anything. A lot of people have a lot of questions and a lot of suspicion, but the Government will have its way and there is nothing anybody can do about it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

On motion, Clauses 1 through 20, carried.

MR. BAKER:

I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):

The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. CHAIRMAN (L. Snow):

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred, have directed me to report Bills No. 54, 36, 37, 46 and 40 without amendment and Bill No. 44 with amendment, and ask leave to sit again.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chairman of the Committee of the Whole reports that they have considered the matters to them referred and have directed him to report Bills No. 54, 36, 37, 46 and 40 without amendment, and Bill No. 44 with amendment.

On motion, amendment, carried.

On motion, report received and adopted, Bills ordered read a third time on tomorrow, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

I rise to ask leave of the House to proceed to third readings of Bills that have just have gone

through second reading in Committee of the Whole. There are a number of Bills we can start with. Presently Order No. 7 becomes third reading, I wonder if we can proceed on with third readings of these other Bills?

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, at the urging of the press.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, obviously we have no problem in granting leave for this procedure to take place. I might just ask the Government House Leader, though, if it is his intention to ask the Governor to come in. There is not much point in doing it this way unless he intends to ask the Governor in or else bring the Bills down, if we are going to have to come back again tomorrow simply for the sake of third reading. We would be quite prepared to give leave if, indeed, we are going to finish today.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Somebody has already phoned him, but my intention is to call the Governor and ask him if he can be here around 4:45 - we need to give him some notice - and hopefully at that time we can get Royal Assent.

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Are we reading all Bills?

MR. BAKER:

Bill No. 40, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is it the pleasure of the House that Bill No. 40, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission," be now read a third time?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Nay.

MR. SPEAKER:

The 'ayes' have it.

MR. RIDEOUT:

We would like to have a division, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Division. Call in the Members.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:

We are voting on Bill No. 40, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission."

All those in favour of the motion, 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 of Works, Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), 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. Gover, Mr. Penney, Mr. L. Snow, the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage), Mr. Grimes, the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen), the hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms. Cowan), the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Dr. Gibbons), Mr. Murphy, Mr. Short.

MR. SPEAKER:

All those against the motion, please rise:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout), Mr. Hewlett, Mr. Hearn, Mr. Doyle, Ms. Verge, Mr. Simms, Mr. R. Aylward, Mr. Langdon, Ms. Duff, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Hynes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

CLERK (Miss Duff):

Mr. Speaker, twenty-two for, eleven against.

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare the motion carried.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

I was just trying to find the reference, but I am sure Your Honour will remember it as well as I will, and as other Members in the House will remember, a Member sitting in the House may not abstain from voting. A Member sitting in the House must vote on a particular piece of legislation

or whatever the case might be, especially in Division. I have noticed with some interest that there was a Member on the Government side, the Member for Pleasantville (Mr. Noel), who did not stand to vote either for or against. I am afraid to tell the hon. Member, and I must bring it to the attention of the Speaker, that the hon. Member must cast a ballot one way or the other; he is not able to abstain. Your Honour is aware of the reference. I guess if we had time I could find it, but it is here.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I also cannot find the reference to which the hon. gentleman refers, however, I believe he is correct in his interpretation of the rules of the House.

MR. SIMMS:

It is in our own Standing Orders.

MR. BAKER:

It is in the blue book, is it? Okay. I would ask Your Honour to have a look at the regulations and the precedents and make a ruling on it.

MR. SPEAKER:

It has been the Chair's impression over the years that every Member in the House must vote, but our Standing Order 83, of course, quite apart from what the impressions are, states that, "On a division every Member present in his place in the House when the question is put shall be required to vote." So the hon. Member is required to vote. The Chair can be directed to call the vote again.

MR. SIMMS:

Ask the hon. Member which way he wants to record his vote, that is all.

MR. SPEAKER:

All we need to do is ask the hon. Member if he is for the motion, to please rise.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The Table can announce the change to hon. Members.

The hon. the Clerk.

CLERK (Miss Duff):

Mr. Speaker, 23 for and 11 against.

MR. SPEAKER:

It makes no difference, but I declare the motion carried for the sake of hon. Members.

On motion, the following Bills were read a third time, ordered passed and their titles be as on the Order Paper:

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Mining Grant No. 11 (Conveyance of Minerals) Act, 1966." (Bill No. 46).

A Bill, "An Act To Amend And Consolidate The Law Relating To Public Utilities." (Bill No. 44).

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Fisheries Loan Act." (Bill No. 37).

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act." (Bill No. 36).

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Electrical Power Control Act." (Bill No. 54).

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have received word that His Honour will be able to be here at 4:45 p.m. Could we have a brief recess and come back at 4:45 p.m.?

MR. SPEAKER:

Is it agreed that we recess until 4:45 p.m.?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

Mr. Speaker, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has arrived.

MR. SPEAKER:

Admit His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS:

All rise.

MR. SPEAKER:

May it please Your Honour, the General Assembly of the Province has at its present Session, passed certain Bills, to which, in the name and on behalf of the General Assembly, I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act (No. 2)." (Bill No. 15)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act, 1973." (Bill No. 16)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Quarry Materials Act, 1976." (Bill No. 18)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Forestry And Agriculture." (Bill No. 19)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Justice." (Bill No. 20)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department of Finance." (Bill No. 21)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Environment And Lands." (Bill No. 23)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Development." (Bill No. 24)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Mines And Energy." (Bill No. 25)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Economic Council Act." (Bill No. 27)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Employment And Labour Relations." (Bill No. 28)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Local Authority Guarantee Act, 1957 (No. 2)." (Bill No. 42)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Loan And Guarantee Act, 1957 (No. 2)." (Bill No. 43)

A Bill, "An Act To Give Effect To The International Convention On The Law Applicable To Trusts And Their Recognition." (Bill No. 30)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The United Nations Convention On Contracts For The International Sale Of Goods." (Bill No. 31)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs." (Bill No. 29)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Fisheries." (Bill No. 26)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Education (Teacher Training) Act." (Bill No. 48)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Works, Services And Transportation." (Bill No. 33)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Local Road Boards Act." (Bill No. 34)

A Bill, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission." (Bill No. 40)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Mining Grant No. 11 (Conveyance Of Minerals) Act, 1966." (Bill No. 46)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend And Consolidate The Law Relating To Public Utilities." (Bill No. 44)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Fisheries Loan Act." (Bill No. 37)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Public Service (Pensions) Act." (Bill No. 36)

A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Electrical Power Control Act." (Bill No. 54)

HON. JAMES A. McGRATH
(Lieutenant-Governor):

In Her Majesty's Name, I assent to these Bills.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker, before putting the

adjournment motion I would like to wish a very Merry Christmas, a very restful holiday season, and a very Happy and Properous New Year to all the Staff of the House of Assembly, to Your Honour, to the Commissioners and everybody who work around here; to the gentleman in charge of the microphones who does such a tremendous job, to our friends from the Press who spent many laborious hours here and I am sure are looking forward to a brief respite, also to my colleagues whom I will still probably be seeing a lot of during the next two or three weeks, and last but not least, to my very good friends in the Opposition.

I particularly mention the Opposition House Leader who, I understand, has had a very difficult time with me, but I wish him all the best during the Christmas Season and in the New Year..

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, that is the first nice thing the hon. Government House Leader has said in six months.

I am not sure who the hon. Government House Leader missed, but I made a few notes to try to make sure nobody was missed. In addition to those he thanked for all their help, we should mention the Legislative Counsel and Clerks at the Table, the Constable and the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Pages, all the Staff of the Speaker's Office and the Staff of the Clerk's Office who have been

most helpful throughout this Session for all of us, and particularly Hansard, who have had great difficulty from time to time trying to understand what Members opposite are saying, and, in particular, the Legislative Librarian and her Staff. It would be inappropriate for us to forget to mention them.

I, too, want to add a word of thanks to the Parliamentary Press Gallery who have been extremely helpful. Always behind us, literally, and quite frequently have influenced some of the things we have done in the House, I do not mind admitting, including today's closing. So I thank all of them.

Now that the Government has rammed through its legislation and the Government House Leader has finally cracked a smile for the first time in six months, I want, on behalf of my colleagues over here, to wish Ebenezer Baker and all his colleagues the very best of the Festive Season and we look forward to coming back again whenever it is he decides, the 2nd. of January or the 2nd. of June; who knows? - the way this Government operates. I did not mean that. Sorry!

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow at the call of the Chair, and that this House do now adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before putting the motion His Honour would like to remind hon. Members of a couple of events: Wednesday, the Speaker's Party, 5:00 p.m. in the Collective Bargaining Room. All hon. Members and the press are invited.

I would also like to remind Members of the Internal Economy Commission of a meeting on Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned to the call of the Chair.