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FORTY - FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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***VERBATIM REPORT***  
*(Hansard)*

*Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush*

Friday

[Preliminary Transcript]

8 December 1989

The House met at 9:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):  
Order, please!

### Oral Questions

MR. WOODFORD:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister responsible for Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight). Could the Minister inform the House if he has had any meetings with the top officials of Corner Brook Pulp and Paper, more commonly known as 'Kruger' in this Province, within the last few weeks?

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

MR. FLIGHT:  
No, Mr. Speaker, I have not had any meetings with them.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT:  
Hang on a minute, Mr. Speaker. Yes. First when the Member asked the question, I considered that he meant did I personally meet with them. Yes, I was present at a meeting with Kruger top management within the past three weeks.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:  
Could the Minister tell the House, Mr. Speaker, specifically if the topic of any possibility of downtime in 1990 was discussed? Could he inform the House?

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

MR. FLIGHT:  
No, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member will know that there are any number of topics this Government would discuss with Kruger, the operator of a major woodlands operation. There was a whole range of issues discussed. I cannot say specifically the topic he alluded to was discussed.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:  
Mr. Speaker, my concerns are legitimate and they are confirmed, to a certain extent, with regard to the cutback in the logging operations in the area, all along the Green Bay/Humber Valley area, and even out west, to a certain extent.

So I ask the Minister if within the next short while he would specifically ask Kruger if there will be any downtime in the mill in the upcoming year, because the loggers have been notified, and some of their operations on the west coast have been cut drastically for the next season?

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

MR. FLIGHT:  
Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have no problem in giving the hon. Member

a commitment that we will be discussing that particular issue with Kruger. I might remind the hon. Member also, of course, that this time of the year both the major logging companies cut back. Abitibi-Price laid off most of their loggers a month ago, long before any announcement on the mill operation, and I would presume the same thing is true with Kruger.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

I realize that this time of the year the logging operations cut back, but I just want to make it clear to the Minister that this is something new, that in their annual allowable cut for next year, they have been cut. Again I would ask him to address those concerns. I am not trying to press on any panic button or anything like that, but just address the concerns with Kruger and probably they will be up-front with the Premier and say, whether there is a possibility or not. Could he ask the company to address those concerns?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for his question and I can assure him that we will address those concerns in the next days. If I might qualify, I might say to the Member that whether there is a cutback in Kruger's logging operation or not, it will have nothing to do with Kruger's annual

allowable cut, because it is the Province which sets the annual allowable cut, and there is not a difficulty with their annual allowable cut as far as their wood supply is concerned.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Premier. Earlier this week the Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen) announced in the House that because of unexpected increases in Federal Government payments to the Province, he is projecting an improvement in the Provincial Government's Budget for this year. He said he is now projecting a current account surplus of not \$5 million as originally predicted, but now \$52 million. My question for the Premier is whether the Premier and the Government will share this windfall revenue with the people in our Province who are needy, with people who have low incomes and who are disadvantaged for other reasons? Will the Premier share this windfall revenue with disadvantaged people by funding programs for victims of crime, by increasing the Legal Aid budget, by increasing the social assistance payments, by boosting the child welfare budget and, among other things, by opening beds in hospitals and chronic care institutions which are now not being operated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me correct the misstatements in the hon. Member's representations. There is no surplus. There is no windfall revenue in surplus. The deficit on the Government's operations will be smaller by reason of a couple of things, largely additional revenue primarily because of the superb performance of the Ontario economy. It is the biggest single factor in this.

Secondly, we have reduced our expenses somewhat. So the overall shortfall in the Budget will be down significantly below what was expected.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Down by about \$200 million.

PREMIER WELLS:

It will be down in the vicinity of \$200 million. Instead of having to increase the total debt of the Province by \$250 million to meet the needs this year, we will only have to increase the debt of the people of this Province by \$200 million. So that is not exactly a windfall situation. The Government has something which the Government has and is using for its benefit that you want us to share with the people. The money belongs to the people of the Province. The question is, how the Government intends to manage the financial affairs of the people? And the question that we have to decide is whether we will still borrow and greatly increase the public debt of the Province, bearing in mind that we are already the highest per capita debt in the Country, whether we will increase that still further or whether we will allow the savings that have been realized, due to the increased revenue and some savings on expenses, to

enable us to reduce the debt somewhat?

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, it is a decision we will be taking over the course of the next few months, and we will be making the right decisions based on needs at the time. And it is not a question of having cash that we can hand out at will, that is a total misrepresentation of the reality.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, it is a generally accepted accounting principal to separate current and capital accounts. And no matter how the Premier wants to characterize it, the fact of the matter is that the Provincial Government now has \$47 million more in revenue than the Minister of Finance predicted back in the spring. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier why, in light of his analysis, he calls himself a Liberal?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I could take a few hours to explain why I call myself a Liberal. There are thousands of very good reasons why I call myself a Liberal, one of which is, in addition to having concern for the day-to-day needs of people, we have concern for the future of people.

We do not want to burden our children and grandchildren with a debt that they cannot bear and put them in a situation where they will not be able to operate hospitals and schools five and ten years down the road. That is one

of the reasons why I call myself a Liberal. Because we have a sense of responsibility, not only to the immediate political future, what will make us politically attractive in the meantime, we have a sense of responsibility for the longer term future. That is one of the reasons I call myself a Liberal.

MR. HEWLETT:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Forestry. The forest industry in Green Bay is running out of steam. The cutbacks to the Grand Falls mill affect us, the Kruger Company has cutback as well with contractors on its wood requirements, and the Crown limits, the amount of wood available is actually shrinking. Silviculture is one way of addressing this problem. It is an investment in the future of our forest, and it is also highly labour intensive. I would ask the Minister if unemployed loggers in Green Bay, in the upcoming season can expect increased silviculture activity in the Green Bay area?

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

MR. FLIGHT:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. the Member for his question. The hon. Member will know the Province's ability to carry out a silviculture program, and it is our hope that we can carry out an expanded

silviculture program next year. But he will know our ability to do so will depend on our success in signing a new forestry agreement with Ottawa. That agreement is now being negotiated, and it is our hope that it will be an agreement with the kind of dollars there that will permit us to expand a very much needed silviculture program, both in Green Bay and the rest of Newfoundland.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In Green Bay, the Crown limits, as I said, are shrinking. But there are some forest lands that have been in the hands of Kruger really, way back in the Bowater days, for many, many decades, I suppose, and sometimes some of these lands can be freed up on a plot basis to assist smaller contractors in the area. Is the Minister aware of this situation? Has he any plans to free up more wood of this nature to help small contractors in the area?

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

MR. FLIGHT:  
Mr. Speaker, I can tell the hon. Member the limits are not shrinking, the wood is being cut. The timber limits are roughly the same size as they were a long time ago.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member will know that last fall this Government negotiated with Kruger an exchange of land known as Chouse Brook. That is the type of thing he is talking about. We

were successful in doing that. And the purpose for the transfer was to provide sawmill stock for the people who lived in the Chouse Brook area. Every opportunity we get we talk to the company about the possibility of transferring or exchanging land so that we will have the timber supplies we need to maintain a viable sawmilling industry.

And I must tell the Member he is right, and I suspect nobody knows better than he does that it is getting very difficult to maintain a timber supply to the various sawmill operators and private operators, in the Green Bay area in particular.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:  
Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister.

I have one further question, but I will put it to the Minister of Development. Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Development indicated in a debate on the Economic Recovery Commission that this Commission had visited many groups, businesses, industries and so on. The Commission has visited such -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. HEWLETT:  
- an industry in Green Bay, Mr. Speaker, Superior Wood Products. That particular company is in the secondary processing of wood products, kiln dried lumber, hardwood flooring, panelling, mouldings, and custom-fit logs for building housing and cabins. But visits are not enough, Mr. Speaker. This is a struggling company, a fledgling, a pioneering

company, and I would ask the Minister is the Government he is a part of going to continue to support, yea nurture such an industry, so that we can diversify our rural economy?

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

MR. FUREY:  
Mr. Speaker, the Economy Recovery Commission has been, as the Member has rightly said, travelling all over Newfoundland and Labrador consulting with a great wide variety of groups, particularly small businesses, and, in particular, the business the hon. Member referred to. And I think, in fact, that Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, of which the Economic Recovery Commissioners sit on the Board of Directors, are currently in discussions with that particular company to see how they can help this company get through some difficult times they have come upon.

But in response to the general question are the Commissioners and is the Commission helping companies that come and knock on the door and seek their assistance in terms of information, whatever data is available, market supply, and general business plans, and financing and refinancing, the answer is yes, yes to that company, yes to every single company that wants to expand and wants to have help, and yes to every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian no matter where they live, if they have a good idea to come in to start a new business. The answer is yes on all counts, Mr. Speaker.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I rise on a point of order, to bring myself to order and apologize to the hon. Member. I thought he was asking the question of the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight). I was speaking to the Minister, and I sincerely apologize to him. It was an error on my part, and I ought not to have done it. I certainly would not have been speaking with him had I thought that. But I am impressed with the quality of two ears. He must have two brains, too, he got both questions. I apologize to the House and to the Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

The point of order is well taken.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. DOYLE:

Harbour Main.

MR. SPEAKER:

I am sorry, the hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms Cowan). The Minister will be aware that the Federation of Labour recently presented its brief to Government and it made a number of recommendations it wishes Government to consider and possibly implement. One of those recommendations deals with the

minimum wage and the Federation's wish to have the minimum wage raised in annual increments of fifty cents an hour until it reaches 60 per cent of the average industrial wage for the Province. Could the Minister give the House some indication of how Government is dealing with that request and if the request is going to be granted?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

Mr. Speaker, the matter is being considered, as are all recommendations put forward in that particular brief.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

It is the Federation's belief, I believe, that the way the current minimum wage is divided up, the way it is structured, it discriminates against people who are employed as domestics or people who are involved in the babysitting end of employment in private homes and what have you. Is it the Government's intention to allow for the inclusion of domestic workers in the category of workers who are subject to general minimum wage provisions and that all rights and privileges accorded to other workers be likewise applied to domestic workers, as well?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

As with the first question, Mr. Speaker, the matter is being considered.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

As usual, Mr. Speaker, I am not getting too many answers from the Minister. Could the Minister give the House some indication of how the present two-tiered approach to the minimum wage fits in with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms? Has Government sought out any legal counsel as to whether or not the present system is discriminatory? And since most of these domestic people are female, is it possible or even probable that the minimum wage as it is set up right now is discriminatory?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

Yes, we have sought legal opinion and the matter is being considered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 (Dr. Warren). He stated that as the Minister of Education he does not see the school tax being abolished, contrary to their election promise. I want to ask the Minister, has it been taken into consideration that the

amounts of money to be collected if added to our personal income tax would amount to approximately 8 to 9 percentage points, and the rich, because of loopholes in our Income Tax Act, in many instances may not be obliged to pay school tax, and that the poor of our people are exempt, and rightly so. It has to be remembered that large corporations pay 30 per cent of the money that is collected. Did the Minister take into consideration that if Government were to adopt this scenario, the whole liability would fall on the shoulders of the workers of our Province, the middle-class?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I know the answer to that question, but I feel like taking notice of it. I will try to answer it this morning, if you will forgive my hoarseness. I did not say, Mr. Speaker, that the party promised to abolish the school tax. Mr. Speaker, in the election we promised to review it with a view to either abolishing or reforming the tax. All options are being considered, Mr. Speaker. We are very actively pursuing that promise. We are reviewing it, and all options are being considered. I can assure the hon. Member that this party has a triple E educational policy - a triple E policy, equality, excellence and efficiency, and we are going to review the school tax within the context of that policy.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Because of the Minister's answer to the question, Mr. Speaker, I am



led to believe that Treasury Board and Cabinet are at loggerheads as it pertains to the school tax being abolished, and Cabinet cannot go along with school tax being abolished. I would like to ask the Minister to tell this House if he believes that the money collected by the school tax is essential for the schools to retain their status and give teachers, pupils, and school boards a means to maintain and improve their facilities and programs?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I will not comment on the debate that is ongoing. It is an important issue, and I am sure in the Province there is quite a debate. The hon. Member knows that quite a lobby is underway now. Letters are being written and I have received them for some time on this issue, on both sides of the issue. So it is an important matter on which there is widespread debate. Secondly, is the money essential? Certainly, and much more is essential if we are going to provide equality of educational opportunity in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to ask the Minister of Education would he agree that if either of the alternatives were brought into play and the monies derived would end up in general revenue, because of changes in Ministers, changes in Government, emergency needs of other

departments, how could the Minister say to this House that he could guarantee these monies collected would go to the school boards?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

The answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, is very simple. This Government has a firm commitment to education as a high priority in this Province, and we will live by that commitment.

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. The Minister is aware that back in 1988 a proposal was being seriously considered to develop a new facility for the Provincial Art Gallery, and that that would be combined with a mid-sized theatre as a multicultural facility. At the time, the previous Administration had made a commitment to examine the feasibility of this project, and set up a committee of bureaucrats from three departments to look at it. Of course, the timing was such that the Government changed, and I would like to ask the Minister now if, in fact, he is seriously considering this proposal, if he has discussed it with the Minister of Development and the Minister of Education, who would also need to be involved, and if, in fact, the committee of

bureaucratics has been re-established? It was to have been headed by Mr. Bill Frost.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, indeed the Assistant Deputy Minister, Bill Frost, and officials from other Departments as well as my own Department, have been examining the feasibility of such a gallery and potentially another arts and culture facility, if you like. That Committee has been ongoing now for several months. We are also looking at the problem we have with the Archives. So there is a potential for a facility that would incorporate the Archives, the Art Gallery and another arts and culture facility.

To answer the question, the Committee is still operating.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

The Minister is also aware, I think, that at the time the City of St. John's made an offer to the Province to donate a piece of land worth \$2 million in the downtown - our interest in it would be part of the overall Downtown Revitalization Program - and that the Committee that was originally set up had representation from the senior bureaucracy at City Hall. I would like to ask the Minister, if the Committee has been re-established, is it now his intent to exclude the representation from City Hall and to drop the idea of putting this facility in a downtown location? In other words, turning down the

gift of the City. If not, why has he not responded to letters from the City over the past number of months asking if he is still interested in the proposal? In other words, is this proposal now dead in terms of the Province's considerations?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

No, Mr. Speaker. We have, in fact, two pieces of land made available to us. One is available from the Provincial Crown Lands within the City, the other piece of land is, indeed, adjoining City Hall, next to City Hall. We are aware of the deadline, if you like, established by the City. We do have to deal with the matter, and make a decision as a Government as to whether we want to proceed with accepting the gift of that land and looking at potentially a facility on it. So we are looking at that. I am well aware of the fact that I have been written on it, and I have had conversations with officials at City Hall.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Would the Minister please undertake to write officially to the City and indicate that he is still actively interested in that offer of land? I think it might not be a bad idea, also, to include, as was originally intended, representation from the senior bureaucracy so that the City is aware of the Province's interest in that land, because the deadline was May of 1989, and there is other interest being

expressed in that land. So, I would ask the Minister, would he undertake immediately to write the City and indicate that the Province is still interested in pursuing this proposal?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can certainly write a letter and incorporate in that letter all of the detail that has been talked about in conversations and in letters between my officials and City Hall, and also conversations that I have had. I am well aware of the deadline. We are pursuing the matter with diligence, and hopefully we will have a solution and a recommendation to Government as quickly as we can so we can decide whether or not that land will be used by the Government or otherwise.

We are working on the matter. The Committee is working quite hard. Bill Frost is responsible for this particular area of my Department. He is working on it, and he has conversations and correspondence back and forth between City Hall. I will incorporate all of that correspondence in a letter to the Mayor.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

The Minister has now been back

from Ottawa for some days, where she had meetings with the Minister of Employment regarding the Emergency Response Program. Can the Minister now inform this House what new changes came into effect? What affect has it had on the people of the Northeast Coast of Newfoundland generally? What does she intend to do with those who do not qualify, other than her previous suggestion of resorting to social services?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

Actually, Mr. Speaker, the member is not very up-to-date on my comings and goings, because I have been back in Ottawa again this week further pursuing concerns we have regarding unemployment in the Province. There is no answer I can give the hon. gentleman further to what has been given in the past. We are doing everything we can to meet these people's needs. They make up part of the unemployed of this Province, a great group of people for whom I have genuine concern and for whom I have been putting considerable time and effort into the last few days trying to do something about Bill C-21, which everyone seems to have forgotten about.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister has said there were to be some changes. My question was, what were the changes announced in Ottawa last week?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister for

Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

I think if you double-check Hansard you will see that I said the hon. Barbara McDougall said there would be no changes in the actual regulations but that she was trying to -

AN HON. MEMBER:

She wants them to go on welfare.

MS COWAN:

Do you want to hear the answer to the question or not?

AN HON. MEMBER:

She wants them all to go on welfare.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I want to remind hon. Members, hon. Members should know our Standing Orders state quite clearly that no Member is to interrupt another Member. I believe that just happened, and I ask hon. Members to extend to all Members common courtesy when they are speaking and not to interrupt, please, particularly when it is known that that particular Member does not like to be interrupted. I am sure all hon. Members should now know the styles of the various Members.

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

The Minister should check with CEIC and find out what the new regulations are, because indeed there are some. The Minister might also be aware that new entrants into the fishery this year, first time entrants into the fishery, many of them were only successful in getting ten or eleven UIC contribution weeks. In

view of the fact that the Fishery appears to be on the verge of being downsized, can the Minister now tell us how she intends to help these people, and does her Department have any new training initiatives, or programs in place to facilitate these people?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

I am not sure if the gentleman is talking about the immediate response or the long-term response, Mr. Speaker. As far as the long-term response is concerned, which I believe is what he was saying, although I am not sure, my Department is heavily involved with the Department of Fisheries and Federal Government officials in trying to develop diversification programs and so on that will meet the needs of anyone who is displaced due to the limited fish stocks.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A final question to the Minister of Fisheries. Can the Minister now tell this House what, if any, plans his Department has made to facilitate fishermen who will not be able to make payments to the Fisheries Loan Board, either the payment or interest this year, because of the disastrous fishery?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, if there are fishermen out there who cannot make payments, legitimately cannot make payments on his or her boat, then they are required to make

that known to the Fisheries Loan Board, provide whatever other documentation is necessary, and I am sure consideration will be given.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

Presenting Reports by  
Standing and Special Committees

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like, today, to table the reports of the Department of Social Services for the years 1986-87, 1987-88, and I have the current report, 1988-89, to show what an efficient Administration we are running over here. Thank you.

MR. RIDEOUT:

(Inaudible) over the last month, how did you get the reports ready?

Answers to Questions  
for which Notice has been Given

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday, the Member for Kilbride asked questions concerning our policy with regard to the awarding of tenders and concerning the POA

Act. I told him I would table that part of the Act today.

Also, he asked questions about a contract not awarded to Rideout Transport because of the lack of a POA number. The project in question was for site drainage improvements to the Newfoundland School for the Deaf, in St. John's. Tenders were called and received for this project on November 15, 1989. The lowest bid was submitted by Rideout's Transport Limited but the company did not have a POA number. The tender was analyzed as per the guidelines of the provincial preference policy, so the fact that the company did not have a POA number was taken into account. In keeping with those guidelines, the second bidder was the preferred bidder.

However, due to the fact that all tenders received were substantially above the figure the department had budgeted for the project, the project was cancelled.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

That was the easy way out of it, eh?

O O O

MR. K. AYLWARD:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Stephenville, on a point of order.

MR. K. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with Orders of the Day, with the drastic event which happened in

Montreal within the last couple of days, I would like to ask if the House would go on record and send telegrams to the University of Montreal and to the families of the victims. I think the tragedy which has occurred is something that has hit home with everybody in Canada, and I think we should go on record as a House of Assembly and send a telegram.

MS VERGE:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of the Official Opposition I would like to endorse the suggestion of the Member for Stephenville. I think this tragic criminal act should make all of us reflect on the extent of violent crime against women and children in our society.

MS COWAN:  
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:  
The massacre in Montreal is but an extreme example of every day acts of violence against women and children. I think those in the Legislature responsible for Justice and for Social Services should reflect now on how we can preside over changes that will get at the root causes of violence. Perhaps education is the sector which has the potential to do the most good in terms of addressing the root causes of violent crime against women and children. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:  
Order 11.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Motion, second reading of a Bill "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission." (Bill No. 40).

The hon. the Member for LaPoile.

MR. RAMSAY:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, having approximately twelve minutes remaining, I would like to get a little further into some of the Members opposite and their analysis of Bill 40, some questions they had about the Bill.

Under Clause 9 of the Bill, the hon. the Member for Humber East mentioned that she could not understand why the Commission had the ability to lend money or grant money with all the other institutions to be availed of. Well, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the Economic Recovery Commission, as I understand it, is to help to bridge the gap. When all other things have broken down, they can, of course, bridge the gap and assist businesses in seeing to it that things move smoothly through and over bureaucracy if necessary, to facilitate business deals being put together. You have to have that ability. To understand business, you have your bridge financing component when you initially are working on a business idea for your capital expenditure or whatnot, and, of course, the basic bank financing cannot always be arranged immediately.

Now, the Commission has to have that ability to tap into some funding in order to bridge finance deals. Also, depending on the

future of organizations, the way the new policies of ACOA may take place through NLDC, we may then require that the Economic Recovery Commission operate its own financial resource base for use to bridge this gap.

Now there would be, in my opinion, no trouble then for the qualification of 9(e), (f) and (g), for them to lend money on security satisfactory to the Commission.

We do not hear them mentioning across the way at all, really, the amount of security required. There has to be a decision as to the amount of security required. As we know, banks these days, in most business ventures of any risk whatsoever, would require very excessive collateral. Now if this is an impediment to business, I am certain the Economic Recovery Commission, as they are devising their policies, would possibly choose to have the amount of collateral required not as high as the two, three, four, five, and sometimes in excess of that, times the amount of actual risk being taken.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a very important component which allows the Economic Recovery Commission to act as if they were an entity within themselves, which, of course, they are, not having to go to other institutions. They can act on their own financially, and this is a very important component.

I refer back to the community of Port aux Basques, which is now operating a similar organization only for a local mandate and not a provincial mandate, the Community Diversification Corporation, which also has a lot of these same procedures available to them.

They have their own pool of capital, which they do use occasionally, although they also access other forms of Government finance and private finance.

So the ability to build, along with your own amount of finance to assist business, as well as the other levels of finance for business which are available, is a very important component.

We will look at some of the other aspects of what the Commission has the power to do under Clause 9: (a) They may "enter into agreements with agencies of the Government of Canada, corporations and individuals to give effect to its purposes and duties;" Well, that is pretty substantial and a very basic requirement.

Also, you may note, in (b) "work with departments or agencies of the government of Canada to carry out or implement on their behalf programs that are in keeping with the objectives of the Commission." Now, this also will allow them to carry out the various mandates on a central basis, I would say, of the various federal agencies to co-ordinate these activities in order to help assist business.

Part (c) "direct the activities of the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation". We have heard some criticism of the way that the Economic Recovery Commission have taken over the Board of NLDC. NLDC and its employees, as I understand it, are a very professional group of individuals, but the way it was run in the past, with a board of directors who possibly had no real handling of any of the functions to do with the actual day-to-day operations, I think the

Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation possibly got away from its own mandate. They were not operating as they could have given the proper type of input from a board, and with this smaller more active Board of Directors, the Economic Recovery Commission, I think we can look forward to a much more productive operation out of Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation. So, unlike Members opposite, I would see that as a very positive aspect of the Economic Recovery Commission in directing the future operations of the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation.

There are some other things which were questioned: To be able to obtain information from Government Departments. Well, this is all very important. And, of course, being employees of Crown agencies and/or the Government, we must have available to us all the information we can obtain in order to assist us in making the right business decisions. And if you feel this is a snub to the employees of the Department of Development, as was mentioned by Members opposite, I think it is not a matter of staking out territory, Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of working together for the best possible end for the Province as a whole, and for business in general. If a Department of Government is doing its part to assist in business development of a larger scale, and I understand the Department of Development will be concentrating on the larger industries, the Economic Recovery Commission should have a bent to help the small and medium-sized industries and small businesses in the Province. So this is not a matter of stepping on the toes of the bureaucrats in one particular department, it is a matter of

concentrating your efforts where you can best serve the public, and where you can fulfill the mandate of the Government insomuch as trying to create business development.

I think that is a very key issue. If you have a department which is handling everything from your basic small business right on through to the larger industries, you then would end up with something that does not have a very solid focus. With this, we focus the requirements of the Economic Recovery Commission on the small and medium-sized businesses, and also co-ordinate the total business activities of the Province somewhat, the direction we want to take with regards to manufacturing, the direction we want to take with regards to entrepreneurship in the Province. And this concentration on small and medium-sized enterprises will assist us in getting younger people and also in getting people who have often wondered, how can I start a business?

Well, Members opposite mentioned about how ACOA, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, is very poorly represented as far as local knowledge of that agency goes. This is the kind of thing we have to make sure does not happen with this. And I said to Members opposite, and on this side, I would hope that they also would make their constituents aware of the availability of assistance from the Economic Recovery Commission, and hopefully co-ordinated so that there is not a plethora of Government programs there, but a few programs that are easy to understand and leave it to the people who have the expertise to assist the business people of



the Province in order to facilitate a prompt and very sharp operation in getting their financing in place and getting their businesses started.

Mr. Speaker, to conclude, I feel that in general the Opposition are opposing this. But we have to look back at the pressure they were putting on us when they said you were going to appoint an Economy Recovery Commission and you have not done it. It was part of your campaign platform, they said, and you still not have done it.

Now that it is done, they are saying, well, we do not know if it is going to work. Mr. Speaker, if we were to look into the future and say we know it is, it would be foolish for us to try to assume that. But we must say that we are willing to give it a try and to get into the mandate of trying to make something happen as opposed to still studying it.

Mr. Speaker, I feel this is very important and that Bill 40 should pass. With that, I will allow someone else to continue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before recognizing another Member the Chair would like to welcome to the House of Assembly, on behalf of hon. Members, seventy-four Grade IX students from St. Peter's Elementary School, in Mount Pearl. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mary Sullivan and Jeff Arnold.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to take the opportunity to participate in this debate on Bill 40 as it relates to the Economic Recovery Team that is supposed to be the saviour, the be-all and end-all of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, some drastic things have taken place since Bill 40 was introduced into this Province in terms of job creation. There was confirmation yesterday, something we had all known for some time, by the Minister of Fisheries that NatSea was going to be closing down a fish plant in Newfoundland and throwing several hundred people out of work. There has been an acknowledgement by the Government, even though it is nothing new to us, that FPI operations throughout this Province are in jeopardy, at least three and probably four according to the President of FPI. You have FPI announcing that they are going to close down a minimum of fifteen trawlers in Newfoundland, so if you put all that together, which happened in the past week, and it is certainly encouraging news, I am sure, for the Economic Recovery Team.

We have a group here, Mr. Speaker, a non-elected group in this Province, which has taken over the responsibility of elected officials. It is obvious the elected officials and the Premier do not share any confidence in his Cabinet nor in his Caucus. If the Premier thought his Cabinet was overworked and they could not find time to deal with the economic recovery of Newfoundland, then why did the Premier not look at his Caucus and see what was there, if anyone there had the material

necessary to make the contribution to the economic recovery of Newfoundland that he promised? Why is it that the Premier has displayed by the appointment of this Commission, not necessarily by the appointment of the Commission, but by the power that he has invested in the Commission - it is something that has to be very degrading. I am sure the Minister of Development must feel dejected by the fact that the Premier has stripped his powers and given it to non-elected persons.

MR. EFFORD:  
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:  
Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services can say what he like. Let me say to the Minister of Social Services that there was an article in the paper recently, Government by Commission, and that article shares the views of the majority of Newfoundlanders. The Economic Recovery Team is out on the street, and you can go out and listen to what the people are saying; the people are talking about the powers that have been stripped from the Cabinet. There is no doubt about that. It is quite clear here. 'It is hard to forget Premier Clyde Wells has stated emphatically that neither his office nor any arm or agency of Government will seek to direct the mandate which the Commission is to carry out. The mandate, it will be recalled, is to renovate the economy of the Province, and in the process provide job opportunities for thousands of Newfoundlanders.'

Mr. Speaker, what does that say in terms of the confidence the Premier has in his Cabinet? The editorial goes on to say, 'Why

should an agency with sweeping powers over the economy report only to the Premier? Does Mr. Wells have so little regard for his Ministers that he does not want them to know or influence what the Commission is doing?' Now, that is not someone on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. It was not me nor any of me colleagues who said that, that is an editorial in a newspaper.

MR. EFFORD:  
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:  
Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has basically let us all know what confidence he holds in the Minister of Social Services.

MR. HODDER:  
They are one level higher than the Cabinet.

MR. TOBIN:  
The Premier has let us all know about the confidence he has in his Cabinet. This editorial goes on to say 'Why should not the appropriate Cabinet Minister, in this case the Minister of Development, and remember it is the Cabinet and not the Premier which constitutes the Government of the Province, be able to direct the manner in which the Commissioners carry out their mandate?'

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is part of the Cabinet. The Premier was part of the Cabinet from 1972 until 1989. But since 1989, the Premier is not just part of the Cabinet, the Premier is the Cabinet. Do not lose sight of that, and all Newfoundlanders know it.

'We have been watching Mr. Wells carefully. There is a my-way or

no-way tendency.' That is the belief that is shared today by the majority of Newfoundlanders. We can accept the fact that most people in Newfoundland in the last election voted for the Progressive Conservative Party. There were more people who voted for the Progressive Conservative Party than voted for the Liberal Party, and the Minister of Social Services should not forget that. But because of the way it was struck down, that is democracy, that is the way the Government falls.

MR. EFFORD:

Did you support free trade?

MR. TOBIN:

Did I support free trade? Most certainly I did support free trade. And you will see the result of free trade in Burin. In my own District, you will see the result of free trade, where the secondary processing plant in Burin, Mr. Speaker, will be a net positive on the economy. Do you know why? Because we will now be able to put into the American market a finished product that was completed here in Newfoundland without tariffs being applied. That is one of the advantages of free trade, Mr. Speaker, in that sense alone.

Let me say to the President of Treasury Board and his colleagues, that Burin secondary processing plant is the result of the restructuring of the fishery back in 1982 - 1983. It was result of the previous Administration who sat in this House and insisted, it was the Government of Newfoundland who insisted, that there be a secondary processing plant in Burin. None of us forgets, Mr. Speaker, none of us forgets the fact that Pierre DeBane, who was

then the Minister, and the fact that Roger Simmons, who at the time was a Member of the Federal Government, came to St. John's, Newfoundland, and held a press conference to announce unilaterally the restructuring of the fishery. Why was it being done unilaterally, Mr. Speaker? Because the Peckford Administration refused to stand by and see rural Newfoundland cleaned out, wiped out. That is why there is a secondary processing plant in Burin, because of the emphasis and the commitment to rural Newfoundland by the previous Administration.

In a matter of a few days, probably a few hours, we will see NatSea will be announcing that they will be closing one plant in Newfoundland at this time, to throw literally hundreds of Newfoundlanders on the unemployment rolls. Hundreds of Newfoundlanders will get their notice in a matter of a few days. What is NatSea going to do with the trawlers that are feeding the plants? What is NatSea going to do with the trawlers that are feeding the plants in St. John's? Are they going to be fishing them, or are they going to be tying them up? Or are they going to be going back to Nova Scotia to land fish from off the coast of Newfoundland for Nova Scotians? What is NatSea going to be doing with those trawlers? That is the question I would like to have answered some day by the Minister of Fisheries.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have been asking the Minister questions for several days now and we have not yet received an answer. Sir, you have been rather mute.

MR. W. CARTER:

I got (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Okay, I will sit down. You tell me what plants FPI are going to close. Tell me what communities you, Sir, and your Government are going to stand by, in a matter of a few days or weeks, and let die because FPI are going to be closing plants in Newfoundland. A minimum of three plants are going on the South Coast in a matter of a few days. In a matter of time, Mr. Speaker, three communities on the South Coast of Newfoundland will not exist. The Member from Placentia might not realize it, Mr. Speaker, but let me put it this way: Fisheries Products International cannot close their plants unless this Government approves it. Do not forget that. This Government can approve the closing of their plants or can reject closing their plants. They have now accepted the fact that National Sea will be closing their plant in St. John's, and they will accept -

MR. HOGAN:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, we hear from the Member for Placentia. And do you know something? I have no difficulty in believing that this is not important to him, because he got elected last April by going out and saying that the Wells Administration would defend the rights of the people of Long Harbour, and they will ensure that Long Harbour remains. What has happened to Long Harbour since he got elected? I will tell you, Mr. Speaker -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Lies. Lies. Lies.

MR. TOBIN:

Is that word parliamentary, Mr.

Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER:

I did not hear.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I heard it, but it does not matter to me. That is what results from a frustrated person. Long Harbour has closed, and the only activity in Long Harbour, the area the man represents, Mr. Speaker, is trucks, is moving vans, from Newfoundland to Toronto. That is the activity he has seen in his district since he was elected.

Now let me get back, Mr. Speaker, to the real issue we are talking about here. We are talking about the economy of Newfoundland and the Economic Recovery Commission which has more power than the Government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Oh, the Member is irritable this morning. That is good.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why was the Economic Recovery Team set up in this Province?

MR. HOGAN:

To work miracles.

MR. TOBIN:

It was set up to work miracles. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member from Placentia. If it can do anything, it would be a miracle. There may be a good group of capable individuals on that Economic Recovery Team, but they are getting direction from a very incompetent group of individuals, namely the Cabinet and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

MR. WALSH:

Go away, boy, you are your own colleague (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Member from Mount Scio - Bell Island should speak. A man who has turned his back on the residents of Bell Island by denying them a second ferry, should speak, Mr. Speaker. Any man who betrayed his constituents the way the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island has, he should interject. There is absolutely no doubt about that. He has as much understanding for rural Newfoundland as that paper has for him. Those are the facts of the matter. Mr. Speaker, he has no caring or no sharing for rural Newfoundland. He does not understand it, and he should be quiet.

Now, let us look at the record of this Government in seven months. If unemployment were to grow at the rate of almost three per cent every seven months, the unemployment rate in Newfoundland today would be at about 30 per cent. Since you people were elected, it has gone up by two and a half per cent. We have Long Harbour, in the Member's district, closed since he got elected, we have the Mary's Town shipyard, Mr. Speaker -

MR. HOGAN:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Placentia on a point of order.

MR. HOGAN:

(Inaudible) the House like this. First of all, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member said that we closed the plant, second, there is nothing but moving vans in Long

Harbour, and third -

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is not a point of order.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He is misleading.

MR. HOGAN:

Yes, totally misleading the House.

- and we said we were going to keep it up. We did not say that at all. He cannot go on misleading the House like that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct when he says there is more than just moving vans out in the yards. There are also cars and bikes and anything that can move, because it is not only Long Harbour that was closed down, the Member stood by and let the possible activities around Come-by-chance shift across to Trinity Bay, which also is going to lose a number of jobs in the area. So, he is correct when he says that the Member is not telling the complete truth.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

There is no point of order, Mr. Speaker. What we have here is a demonstration by the Member for Placentia. And he is a frustrated

Member. If plants like Long Harbour were closing down since I was elected, as is happening since he was elected, I would be frustrated too, Mr. Speaker, particularly if the Premier and the Cabinet decided to let me down the way they have let down the hon. gentleman.

Now we have dealt with Long Harbour. That is gone. That is history since they were elected.

What about the Marystown Shipyard, Mr. Speaker? This time last year there were 600 people working in the Marystown Shipyard, and today there are less than 100. And do you know something? Last Saturday, when I went home, I was speaking to some of my friends, one of my close friends, as a matter of fact, and his wife and children have now left for Toronto and he is leaving this week. There is close to 100 employees of the Marystown Shipyard -

MR. EFFORD:

Did they go on the train?

MR. TOBIN:

No, and I will tell you what they did not go on, they did not go on the ferry you were going to bring them all home on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 100 employees of the Marystown Shipyard who have lined up jobs on the mainland for after Christmas, most of them in the Shipyard in St. John, New Brunswick. There is only one person responsible for that, and that is the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, the hon. Clyde Wells, who insisted on

interfering with the collective agreement between the Marystown Shipyard and the Marystown Union. That is exactly why there is, believe it or not, an FPI trawler being constructed in Norway as opposed to Marystown. One man responsible, Mr. Speaker, and that is the Premier.

MR. TOBIN:

What about the St. John's Dockyard since this crowd came into office, Mr. Speaker? How many employees less down there since the Government changed six months ago? What is Dr. House going to do about that?

MR. EFFORD:

Hal Barrett is down there.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, he is. And I will tell you something else, he is a good man. Hal Barrett was one of the best Ministers ever responsible for the Marystown Shipyard. And if he brings the same type of leadership to the St. John's Dockyard, then they have a future.

MR. MURPHY:

I hope you are right.

MR. TOBIN:

I hope I am too. I am sure the Member does. I am sure he is very sincere about that. I am sure he does hope I am right.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so you have Long Harbour gone, you have the Marystown Shipyard almost gone, the St. John's Dockyard almost gone. What about Grand Falls, when the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture and the Premier refused to answer questions one day and scurried into the House the next day with a Ministerial Statement to announce another 500 jobs gone in the Central

Newfoundland area. A great record for this Government, Mr. Speaker.

And this morning my colleague, the Member for Humber Valley (Mr. Woodford), asked the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture a question. Did they have any discussions with Kruger regarding the close down of the mill? And do you know what happened? I do not know if anybody else noticed it, the Minister refused to answer the question. I wonder why, Mr. Speaker. I wonder why the Minister refused to answer that question.

MR. FUREY:

A Minister answered the question (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

A Minister did not answer the question. Like most questions we have asked, there has never been an answer. He answered the question and said, I cannot discuss what we talked about. He said, we talk about a lot of things when we get together as a group. He did not answer the question, if they discussed any closedowns as it relates to that operation in Corner Brook. He did not.

MR. WALSH:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

MR. WALSH:

It is shameful for a Member to stand in this House and say that a Minister did not answer. He may not have received the answer he wanted, but the Minister in question answered. I have asked Santa Claus for a lot of things and I have not gotten them, but

that does not mean he did not answer me. You were given your answer, but just not the answer you wanted. I think you should be satisfied with that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

He is wasting time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WALSH:

I am not finished yet.

When the Minister sits in his seat and does not stand, then you have not received an answer. So you may not have received the answer you wanted, but you did get an answer. Do not mislead Hansard or the House.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, to that point of order. First of all, of course, there is no point of order. All the hon. gentleman is doing -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Sit down, boy!

MR. RIDEOUT:

All the hon. gentleman is doing is trying to waste the time of the Member who is speaking, and that, I suspect, comes from an event that happened in the House earlier this week. It is just sour grapes on the part of the hon. gentleman on the other side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman from Burin - Placentia West is making a good speech. If Government Members do not like

what he is saying, they can retire to their common room - it is early in the morning - and have a coffee. Or the hon. gentleman can go to the common room and write Santa Claus, and see if Santa Claus will deliver him a Cabinet post, which is the only thing on the hon. gentleman's mind these days.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of order.

I recognize the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman's conduct when he was a child was anything like it is in this House, it is no wonder Santa Claus brought him nothing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

Now, Mr. Speaker, they are attempting to interrupt my train of thought and it is not going to work.

As I was saying, the ones gone are the Marystown Shipyard, the St. John's Dockyard, National Sea in St. John's, Grand Falls -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Kruger.

MR. TOBIN:

Kruger - no, there is no word on Kruger yet.

MR. WARREN:

Long Harbour.

MR. TOBIN:

Long Harbour. We talked about that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Baie Verte Mines.

MR. TOBIN:

The Minister said the other day there is a shut-down there right now, as I understand from my colleague and Leader. What else?

MS VERGE:

The Public Service purge.

MR. TOBIN:

The Public Service purge, there is no doubt about that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what else? I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that they are going to try to wait until this House is closed before they do two things. I would suspect they are going to wait until this House is closed before FPI and the Minister and the Premier have the courage to announce that at least three and probably four communities are destined to go. At least three, and probably four, do not kid yourself.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Can you name them?

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, I can, but I will not. We named St. John's the other day and the Premier confirmed it yesterday. We will name the rest, too, in time. Because we know, and we know the Minister has had discussions as it relates to which plants are going. We know that, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you one thing, when they go, there are communities that cannot survive. They are one-industry communities that are going, and some of them are going to be difficult to get to, very difficult.

There are more Newfoundlanders who have left to seek work on the mainland in seven months, Mr.



Speaker, since they became the Government than left in seven years,. I remember the Premier of this Province going throughout Newfoundland and Labrador during the election campaign saying he was going to bring them home. I would like to ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, how many has he brought home?

MR. FUREY:

How many did Peckford bring home?

MR. TOBIN:

We brought you back from St. Xavier. They elected Brian Tobin to hire you, give you a job that took you to Ottawa and then the people of St. Barbe brought you back. Mr. Speaker, Peckford called an election, the gentleman came back and got elected, so Peckford brought you home. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is one example. He asked the question, and he is the example. What else does he want to know?

MR. PARSONS:

The Premier made a mistake (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Well, whether it was a mistake or not, the people of St. Barbe, through the Premier calling the election, brought the hon. gentleman home, and he asked for an example. Mr. Speaker, that is their attitude. They do not know the difference.

There are a lot of people he brought home, Mr. Speaker. He brought home 600 to the Marystown Shipyard whom you have let go since you became Minister. That is what he has done, Mr. Speaker. There were people working in Long Harbour when Peckford was Premier, there were people working in the St. John's Dockyard, many more

than are there now. There were people working at the Natsea plant when he was Premier. There were people working in several communities on the South Coast when he was Premier. When he was Premier, Argentia was going to develop, and now your colleague, the Minister of Energy, has taken that from the Argentia people and moved it to Trinity Bay. No wonder I get calls every day asking me to be guest speaker at various functions in his district. There is a soft spot in my heart for the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, and I would find it rather difficult to go out and intrude in his District.

The editorial says, 'We have been watching Mr. Wells carefully. There is my-way or no-way.' How true, Mr. Speaker. Dr. House and his Commission have been elected by nobody to run the economy of Newfoundland. Mr. Wells and his Government have been elected. It is a denial of the democratic principles to pass over so much power to a group of unelected persons and to attempt to remove them from the continuous influence of the scrutiny of Her Majesty's Government.' How true, Mr. Speaker. Everybody in Newfoundland is saying it. Somebody wrote it.

Mr. Speaker, I only have two minutes left. I am sure I will have leave.

We can go on, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave! By leave!

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, there are a lot of things I would like to touch on as it relates to rural development associations, as it relates to the

way of life in rural Newfoundland, as it relates to the amalgamation issue, where the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, on the instruction of the Premier - there is a hidden agenda, Mr. Speaker, to resettle rural Newfoundland. Do you know who I believe is one of the leading people in trying to resettle rural Newfoundland? The Member for Exploits. He is another one of these Members from rural Newfoundland who have spent several years in city life and now he wants to go back and resettle rural Newfoundland. But the people in his constituency are not going to take too lightly to that.

What we have gotten through this Economic Recovery Team, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Development, whom we all thought was going to be overworked, and we said what a burden he had placed on him, and now we know the Minister does not have anything to do, because Dr. House is going to look after running his Department. I would suggest the Premier should give some of the responsibilities of the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs to the Minister of Development.

Mr. Speaker, we have a Minister of Fisheries who has a great record. He has been in federal politics and did a good job. Way back he was in provincial politics and municipal politics, a veteran member, a provincial member, sat in Opposition, and the tragedy is that he is going to be the Minister of Fisheries who is going to preside over the destruction of rural Newfoundland. That is what is going to happen, Mr. Speaker. It is a sad ending for a man who has devoted so much of his life to public life. But he is going to

be the Minister of Fisheries who is going to preside over the destruction of several fishing communities, three and probably four on the South Coast, and the St. John's plant, which includes the Southside. It is unfortunate that that is going to happen. I believe the only reason why this is happening is because of his Leader, because of the Premier. The Premier of this Province has absolutely no commitment whatsoever to the people of rural Newfoundland, he never had any commitment to rural Newfoundland. As a matter of fact, he had no commitment to Corner Brook. Because if you remember back when Bowaters were pulling out, who was their lawyer? Why did the people leave?

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:  
You can make all the speeches you like. You will never get in Cabinet, Sir. You can bring the Premier all the report cards you like on the rest of the boys, and still not get in Cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

MR. TOBIN:  
Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. John's South, the man who has sat idly by and not asked one question in this Legislature regarding the plant in his District, not a question, Mr. Speaker, has he asked in this House, voted against an all-plants-open policy. Shame on the Member, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PENNEY:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before I recognize the hon. the Member for Lewisporte, I would like to welcome to the House, on behalf of hon. Members, forty-three Level II democracy students from St. George's High School, in New Harbour, students from that great District of Bellevue and Trinity - Bay de Verde, accompanied by their teachers, Mr. George Brown and Mr. Harold Smith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. PENNEY:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to rise in this hon. House to speak on Bill No. 40, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will not take the full time that I am allowed just for the sake of making noise. I will make a few comments, address some points that I think need to be addressed. I think there are a number of us here in the Legislature that have had our full of people who just stand for the sake of speaking. We heard one hon. gentleman speak for about four or five hours earlier and still said nothing.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
That is right.

MR. PENNEY:  
Mr. Speaker, I checked with Webster's to see what Webster has to say about economy and recovery. Webster says 'economy is a system of producing and distributing the natural needs of society.' And 'recovery a returning to normal health or

prosperity.' I think we all recognize that we do need to return to normal health and prosperity in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:  
The second definition that he gives for recovery is 'a return to financial well being after a depression.' Well if you were to compare the economy of Newfoundland with the rest of the country I am sure you would have to admit that we have been in a depression for the last seventeen years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:  
The third definition is 'the regaining of one's balance or control after, for example, a stumble or a mistake.' Now, Mr. Speaker, it is quite normal to stumble. Our new Government will do that. But what you do when you stumble, you pick yourself up and you learn from your mistakes. But what we have seen for the last seventeen years is that the Government has stumbled, picked themselves up only to stumble again, and they have not even learned that there is a problem.

I repeat that again 'the regaining of one's balance or control after, for example, the stumble or a mistake.' The mistake was corrected, Mr. Speaker, on April 20.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:  
Now, Mr. Speaker, before we can begin to correct the problem we

must first of all accept that the problem exists. And we on this side of the House have accepted that fact. We have accepted the reality that we have a problem. We are attempting to correct it.

Now to prove to all hon. Members here that we do, in fact, have a problem I would like to quote some statistics from Stats Canada. Statistics Canada figures show that Newfoundland has the highest rate of unemployment in all of Canada. And I have checked the figures back to 1961.

MS VERGE:

Who was in power then?

MR. PENNEY:

I would suggest maybe the hon. Member would like to hear me quote the figures first before she makes any comment. In 1961, the UIC benefits to Atlantic Canada averaged \$120 per capita. The UI benefits to Newfoundland were \$140 per capita. That was just 16 2/3 per cents higher. Now we talk about UIC benefits because we only pay UIC benefits if we have unemployment. There was a very, very little change from 1961 to 1971. That is ten years. We maintained that 16 per cent difference. In 1972, maybe the Member would like to ask who was in power on the next figures I am going to give?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:

In 1972 the figure from Atlantic Canada was \$250 per capita, and the figure for Newfoundland was \$325 per capita. Mr. Speaker, that is over 30 per cent higher than Atlantic Canada averages.

In 1981 the figure for Atlantic

Canada was \$380 per capita. The figure for Newfoundland was \$520 per capita. That is 37 per cent higher, Mr. Speaker. And I wonder what party was in power then?

MS VERGE:

What about the Gross Domestic Product per capita?

MR. PENNEY:

In 1987, Mr. Speaker, the figure of UIC benefits paid to Atlantic Canada averaged \$580 per capita. In Newfoundland it was \$850 per capita. That is 46 per cent higher than Atlantic Canada.

Let us go back to 1961 again for a minute. The earned income in Atlantic Canada in 1961 averaged \$2800. The earned income in Newfoundland averaged \$2500, a difference of only 11 per cent. In 1981 the earned income in Atlantic Canada was \$6750 and in Newfoundland it was \$5750 which is a 15 per cent difference. In 1987, Mr. Speaker, the earned income for Atlantic Canada was \$7750 and for Newfoundland it was \$6300 for a difference of 19 per cent. I would remind all hon. Members that it was not the Liberal Government who was in power then. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you remember this is just for Newfoundland, PEI, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick and it must be remembered that Atlantic Canada has always been 56 to 70 per cent of the earned income for Canada. The best we have ever done in all of Atlantic Canada is 65 to 70 per cent of the national figures.

There was an interesting chart produced by Stats Canada for 1987 which was called the population by level of disparity. I would like to quote some figures from that one. This is 1987. Ontario has 5 per cent moderate disparity.

Quebec had 10 per cent deep disparity and 30 per cent moderate disparity. Western Canada had 10 per cent deep disparity and 20 per cent moderate disparity. This is the one I would like you to pay attention to. Newfoundland 57 per cent deep disparity and 26 per cent moderate disparity. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt we have a problem. There is no doubt from all of those figures that nothing is being improved. We need recovery. You do not have to be a statistician or an actuary to see that the figures are travelling in the wrong direction.

For the last fifteen or twenty years we have seen the Government come up with make-work programs. Basically what they have done is tell our citizens, go out and dig a hole and we will pay you, and tomorrow we will pay someone else to fill it in. I have had constituents in my District call me and say, I am sick and tired of cutting alders under the snow. That is what I have had to do. In the make-work projects I get, you are hired in the winter to cut alders under the snow.

Mr. Speaker, what we have done, or what the Government of the day has done, is created an unemployment mentality in this Province. They have created a 10-42 syndrome, and I am sure everybody is familiar with that. The problem is now where it has gotten to the point - and I do not care how many hon. Members are not prepared to admit it, but it has gotten to the point, in this Province, that if a person needs four stamps and you offer them five weeks work you insult them. That is the reality of it. We have created an unemployment mentality.

The Private Sector Program that

they boast about, that was nothing more or less than a subsidy for the employers. Mr. Speaker, as a small businessman myself working in Central Newfoundland for a number of years, I have seen how the Private Sector Program worked. I have seen how the small businessman, and the medium sized businesses in my area, took advantage of these people. Now, they are calling me, how come now I have to pay the full rates to get people to work for me? For the last few years I could have them come in and Government would pay part of the wage. I say it is about time that the Government stopped doing that.

Now, we have brought in the Economic Recovery Commission. Mr. Speaker, that is the greatest Government initiative since Confederation. Its mandate is to foster generations of long-term employment and economic development. I would like to quote, if I may, from a statement that Premier Wells gave in June of this year. He said we must make economic recovery a top priority in order to provide our people, particularly our younger members of the work force with an opportunity to obtain good paying jobs and at the same time create wealth for the Province, so that the Government will have revenues adequate to provide the social programs that our people so desperately need. The Government is therefore committed to making economic recovery a first priority.

Mr. Speaker, the Economic Recovery Commission has a six to ten year mandate. That is a long-term mandate. It is not going to happen overnight, we acknowledge that. The problems did not occur overnight, either. They have a timetable, broken into three

parts, consultative up to November, to develop alternatives from November to February or March, and to establish initiatives from March to June. And, Mr. Speaker, the Economic Recovery Commission is right on target.

The long-term mandate of the Commission is to provide the values of an enterprise culture and self-reliance throughout the Province. Personally, I am impressed with the quality of the members the Premier has appointed to that Commission, particularly Dr. House. I must say, I am amused by some of the comments coming from the other side of the House when they speak so negatively of Dr. House's abilities. It is amusing when you consider that not too long ago, that same Administration appointed the same hon. gentleman to another commission. They thought he had all the qualifications needed then. I do not know why they would have thought the qualifications would have disappeared simply because he went to work for our Government.

Since September, Mr. Speaker, the Commission has met with over seventy groups and organizations, businesses, area development groups from St. John's to Wabush. Mr. Speaker, it is not just St. John's, not just Corner Brook and Mount Pearl, but from St. John's to Wabush. I would like to remind every Member in this House that the little community of Campbellton in my District is just as important as Mount Pearl, and our Government recognizes that.

Little Burnt Bay, for example, that has been ignored for seventeen years, all it wanted was a few wells so they could get

good, clean, sanitary drinking water; ignored for seventeen years. Three months after the election, we gave them the funds to provide the wells.

Our Government is committed to decentralization of services. Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell you about a problem with services in my area. There is a motor registration office in Lewisporte that services the entire area with one employee. That employee has the authority to take people out for road tests. That is it. He cannot give them a licence, cannot give them a transfer permit, cannot give them beginners' permits. So, an individual from Stoneville, for example, who wants to do a road test, must drive to Grand Falls to pick up the permit or the receipt, go back to Lewisporte for the road test then back to Grand Falls to pick up the licence and then, back to Stoneville. By the time he gets back home, he has travelled 300 kilometers. Now, Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of services we have had to contend with in my District for the last few years.

I am very pleased to announce that since that situation has been brought to the attention of the Minister, it has been looked at, and I feel assured the situation will be corrected. That is the change in mentality with this Government, Mr. Speaker.

It was not too many days ago that a non-confidence motion was brought to this legislature. To think that they would make a motion of non-confidence in our new Government! Mr. Speaker, Newfoundlanders, on April 20, voted to show that their non-confidence was with the previous Administration, and they

placed their confidence in us. That is why we are on this side of the House now.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the initiative of our Government and the Premier, and the formation of the Economic Recovery Commission, small and medium-sized businesses are now going to get the profile they deserve. Small and medium-sized businesses have always been the backbone of the economy in this Province. I would like to remind all hon. Members that if you had twenty convenience stores located on twenty street corners and each one of them employed ten people, that is the equivalent of one large business that employed 200. Now, make no mistake about that, they have the same employment, they provide the same employment, they generate the same secondary employment, and they provide the same amount of taxes to Government, and in a lot of cases more, because they are not owned by some parent company on the main land where the taxes are sent home. And that is now being addressed properly by our Government.

Tourism, Mr. Speaker, the totally untapped potential of tourism in this Province is about to be realized for the first time. I was very impressed in September when the hon. Minister of Development came to Lewisporte along with six or eight other of his Cabinet colleagues, and he addressed a group in Lewisporte, the Chamber of Commerce, the Lewisporte area development association, town council. They were also very impressed with the interest and the concern shown by the Minister. He recognized the potential, and he made a commitment that the development of Lewisporte as a tourist site would

be given a priority within this Government.

Now, the group that made the presentation to him, had been making the same presentation to the previous Administration for 14 years. For 14 years they have been making the same presentation, and every time the presentation was made, they got their promises. They have 14 years of promises. I think at that time we were in power for four months. We did not get promises from the Minister, we got commitments. And that is the difference, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:

This is the first time that the people out in that area that had this concern were subjected to honesty from Government.

Education, Mr. Speaker. I am delighted today to hear the hon. Minister say that we have a triple E educational policy. That is fantastic. I do not know if there was even one E on the educational policy from the previous Administration, now we have three of them.

Mr. Speaker, if you remember the campaign that we came through not too many months ago.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I remember it well.

MR. PENNEY:

I am sure we all do. Conversation came up, topic came up about a University for Central Newfoundland. The P.C. party said, 'No way. We cannot put a University in Central Newfoundland. There is no way we

can justify the expenditures.' The Liberal Party, which is now the Liberal Government, I might remind the hon. gentleman, said, 'Not only can we, but we will.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PENNEY:

I would like to remind everybody here that Central Newfoundland, and Western Newfoundland is just as important as the Avalon Peninsula. I would also like to remind all hon. gentlemen that if you are talking about distance for travel, the distance from St. John's to Lewisporte is exactly the same distance as from Lewisporte to St. John's. It does not increase because you go the opposite direction.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend an invitation to every hon. Member in this House to attend the official opening of the University when it opens in Lewisporte sometime down the road.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Is that a promise or a commitment?

MR. PENNEY:

That is an invitation.

Mr. Speaker, I made a few notes and I have them sorted out. Under the topic of Health, I would like to give you a few figures. Since the election, Mr. Speaker, our Government has allocated almost \$10 million for upgrading and repairs of the Health Centers and Community clinics. The exact figure is \$9,784,000. Also, we have allocated almost \$8 million to increase the staff of the Central Newfoundland Hospital to expand the catscanning services, and to have 33 new nursing positions, and phase in opening of

35 unused beds at the Burin Hospital. The Burin Peninsula Health Care Center I believe it is called. That is our commitment to health, Mr. Speaker, that is the commitment from our Government.

This is the Economic Recovery Team because these are the concerns that we have had to live with for the last few years. These concerns are being addressed by our Government and they are being addressed through the Economic Recovery Commission.

The fishery, Mr. Speaker, every single Member who has ever spoken to this Bill that I have heard, talks about the problems in the fishery. Sure, we have problems in the fishery. That is one of the reasons that we introduced the Economic Recovery Commission. We all recognize that there is a crisis in the fishery. We blame the scientists for giving us inaccurate figures with the fish population and the scientists are going to have to assume their responsibility and their share of the blame. We blame the Federal Government for cutting down on the TACs for Eastern Canada while at the same time, increasing the total allowable catch to the foreigners. They deserve the blame and they are going to have to shoulder their responsibility and their share of the blame. But I remind you that there is enough blame to go around to everybody.

Yes, the Provincial Government has to assume its share of the blame. Yes, the fishermen have to assume their share of the blame as well. There must be a change in mentality within the fishery in this Province. There must be a total change of mentality. We have to start processing our under utilized species of fish.



It was only a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, and the hon. Member for Fogo would probably attest to this, and anybody else who came from a fishing community, if it was not a codfish, caplin, salmon, or a herring it was not considered to be a fish. That is most certainly true, and everything else was disregarded. So we have to start using the under utilized species. And we have to start increasing our secondary processing and our value added processing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, more than anything we have to stop selling our raw resource to somebody else so that they can cook it, and sell it back to us. Those days are gone and we have to stop doing it. These are the kind of changes that must be brought about in the fishery. These are the kinds of things that the Economic Recovery Commission will be addressing.

Mr. Speaker, another example of this kind of abuse within the fishery. We have watched, and I am not talking about within the last six months I am talking about in the last few years, herring being salted round and put in barrels and sold to the Russians. The barrels alone cost almost \$20 and the finished product is being sold for less than \$30. On top of that we sell our raw resource over-the-side to the Russians. Mr. Speaker, that is obscene. We can no longer afford to do that.

When I was a teenager, I worked for a fish plant in Lewisporte and I got paid 50 cents an hour along with most of my buddies from my class, to pick out male caplin. The fish plant processed all the male caplin that we could handle. The female caplin went over the wharf and drifted out to sea. Now

what happens when we get a market for female caplin, we destroy all the male caplin. We throw them out to sea.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider that we are doing this in a starving world I repeat that is obscene and it has to stop.

My information suggests to me that the highest productivity that any fish plant in Newfoundland has ever gotten out of our codfish is 34 per cent. My information also tells me there are other parts of the world where if you do not get 50 per cent out of your codfish you lose the license to process it the next year.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is how you are trying to do it. Is it not?

MR. PENNEY:

The hon. Member knows the difference.

I would ask, Mr. Speaker, all the people here who are involved with any area where there is a fish plant, what do we do with the sound bones from our codfish? We throw them overboard. What do we do with the head? We throw them overboard. What do we do with the tongues and the cheeks? Now the hon. Member for Fogo, if he has ever visited the plant on Fogo Island will know that the only cod tongues that are ever cut out of the fish down there in that plant, is if there are five or six school kids come down there and cut them out and put them in a little pail other than that they go overboard.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PENNEY:

Yes, I guess they are. Are we

talking about the same plant, I wonder?

What do we do with the liver, Mr. Speaker? Years ago all the liver that came out of our codfish was kept.

MS DUFF:  
Cod liver oil.

MR. PENNEY:  
Yes, and what do we do with the liver now? We throw it overboard and we feed the gulls.

MR. PARSONS:  
(Inaudible).

MR. PENNEY:  
And what do we do with the skin, Mr. Speaker? Finally we are about to address that to at least some extent, we are going to see that there is a plant gets opened up somewhere in the Bellevue District to process the cod skin into a form of leather.

And what do we do with the roe sacks, Mr. Speaker, that most Newfoundlanders call britchins. What do we do with them? We throw them overboard. It is about time we stopped looking at quantity, if we do not have the quantity there and we know that the TACs are down, we know the fish stocks are down, if we do not have the quantity we have to start looking at quality, Mr. Speaker.

Like I said there is enough blame to go around, and everybody must shoulder his share of it. It is fine to blame it on the Feds, it is fine to blame it on the scientists. But if we want to see the fishery become a viable industry in this Province again, we must all assume our share of the responsibility and we must do something to change it. That is

the approach that has been given to this situation by the hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter). I am very pleased with that. I really am. This is probably the most honest approach to the fisheries that we have had in this Province for fifteen years.

Mr. Speaker, we have prided ourselves and I am sure we have all heard the Newfoundland fishermen say at one time or another that we come from one of the greatest fishing nations on earth, and they are not talking about Canada they are talking about Newfoundland as a great fishing nation.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot even get a jigger without going to Norway. If we want a cod net we have to bring it in from Japan. It is about time we started being honest with each other. It is about time we accepted the reality of it and these are the concerns that have to be addressed and they have to be addressed by our Government and fortunately we have an Economic Recovery Commission put in place to address those situations, and it is just not that, Mr. Speaker. This total Administration has now got a brand new mentality to governing and the Economic Recovery Commission will help return our economy back to what Mr. Webster calls normal health. And I am very pleased to be a part of this new Government.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

East Extern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

It is certainly a pleasure for me to rise in my place today and outline what I feel are important issues as it pertains to the Economic Recovery Commission. There has been so much negativity addressed here today as to what the previous Government did, I would like to impart to the students that when a test was given right across Canada, the results of that test. It was done by Southam, and it involved all the major cities in Canada.

There are a couple of sentences here, the biggest surprise though was that Newfoundland, a province not noted for affluence, topped the list.

MR. WARREN:  
Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:  
Now let me give you the statistics. Everything is negative over there. The PCs were shocking. They should have been ousted seventeen years ago. God forbid. It is so good that they stayed in there, because in education alone the values of education, the conditions that education is all about, what happened over the seventeen years. Let me tell you how affluent Newfoundlanders and Labradorians have become. There were 2,700 pupils questioned. Out of that CTU test presented twenty basic questions, history, current affairs and geography. The final marks from West to East were, Victoria 55.1 per cent, Calgary

68.7 per cent, Edmonton 60.5 per cent, Regina 53.4 per cent, Montreal 48.8 per cent, St. John's, Newfoundland, which includes all the areas really. It was taken from the general area, 70.3 per cent. Now, under a PC Government these are the things that happened.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Were you a P.C. Member then?

MR. PARSONS:  
No, I was not, but I was involved in education. I spent fourteen years as a member of the R.C. school board for St. John's.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
The Member for Exploits (Mr. Grimes) and the Member for Conception Bay South (Ms Cowan) (inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:  
Mr. Speaker, before I get into the Economic Recovery Commission I have to make a couple of remarks to my good friend, the hon. the Member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Crane). When he spoke the other day about the economics of our Province, and certainly he did give a good speech, but he mentioned that the Member for St. John's East Extern (Mr. Parsons) was a participant, or a moonlighter, as it pertains to the fishery.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
A moonshiner.

MR. PARSONS:  
I am not a part-time fisherman. I was at one time and real proud of it. That is the right of every Newfoundlander as I see it.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
When you were walking the beat.

MR. PARSONS:

When I was walking the beat with my hon. friend there from Placentia I was a moonlighter, but in 1974 I gave it up. He also said I was a wealthy man. Now, that he said in a facetious sort of way. I think he was trying, perhaps, to insult me, but I do not mind. He did give a good speech and he did address some of the issues.

Mr. Speaker, when the Premier announced this Economic Recovery Commission I had an awesome fear. I had a feeling of, oh my goodness, not another one.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, no, there are Commissions which are for real. The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs did the commission that I had an involvement in and that was just an issue where two towns disagreed over who owned this piece of land, or that piece of land. That was good. The Member of the Government of that day could not decide. He had a lot of friends out there trying to impose their opinions. He did a real fine job as commissioner. Those commissions do not excite me because I think those are necessary, but when you speak about a commission that has to do with the economics of a province, run the county, then you are speaking about oranges and apples.

Mr. Speaker, let me say to the hon. gentleman, he is only a little boy. All he understands is what he has heard. He does not really have any basics for what he speaks of. Let me say to the young man over there. What would you call him? Let me say to him

that in 1934 -

AN HON. MEMBER:

What do you remember about 1934?

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, my son, a lot more than you do because, like I told you, what you hear you have read about or someone told you. I do not know very much about 1934 but I do remember some of the events between that year and 1949.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You must have been twenty years old then.

MR. PARSONS:

No, I was not twenty years old but I was close to it. In 1949 I was nineteen. There is no secret about my age, it is immaterial, but we went through an era of Commission of Government. Some of those young lads over there do not even know what it is all about, do not know - only what you hear. Let me tell you something, let me say to you, Mr. Speaker, that Commission of Government was an era that we want to forget about. That is why, when this Commission was appointed, I said, 'My goodness! Not another commission to deal with the economics of our Province!' When a commission like this commission was established, it was answerable to no one except the Premier. When the Commission of 1934 was established, it was responsible to no one but the Prime Minister in England. That is the difference. Do you know what happened? Do you know how much the people suffered in Newfoundland and Labrador from 1930 to 1949?

Just to relate one instance, I had an old friend, and oftentimes I sat on the grass and listened to all his old anecdotes, stories and

whatever. He told me, 'You cannot remember the bad years. You cannot remember what we went through under Commission of Government.' He said, 'When I had to walk to St. John's to try to get a note to get some flour, the basic necessities, and then would walk home; and they would send the policeman of the day down to look into the barrel to see if there was any flour in it.' Those were days that I do not want to think about, but they were for real. Newfoundlanders and Labradorians went through them under Commission of Government. And in 1949, six cents a day was the rule. That was the order of the day, six cents per day. This was the Commission of Government that ended up with \$40 million in the coffers. When we joined Confederation in 1949, there was \$40 million of savings there, after what our people went through.

We have today, another Commission who are telling us they are going right across the Province. They are going to save money. On the backs of whom? They are going to save money.

Let me read a few of the things that have happened since this Government took over.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Oh, oh!

MR. PARSONS:  
Just a moment, now. Give me a chance. Let me tell you how many people have lost their jobs since this Government took over. Everything is negative with the previous Government. Marystown, 500 workers.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

I did mention it to the previous Speaker. I told him I had papers on the chair and I am not going to soil it. The papers are about one-half inch thick and putting my foot on the chair makes me a little more at ease. I am positive that His Honour sees nothing wrong with that. I have it covered with paper. I also tell His Honour that I will bring in something else to put on that chair. My shoes are clean, no spikes in them, and I am sure I will not hurt the chair.

MR. SPEAKER:

I just want to inform the hon. Member, of course, that it is not parliamentarily acceptable to rest your feet on a chair or any other object while you are speaking.

MR. PARSONS:

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, from whom I learned that?

AN HON. MEMBER:

You cannot question the Speaker.

MR. PARSONS:

I am not questioning the Speaker. I will take my foot off the chair.

The first person I saw do it was a great Newfoundlander, one of the finest, one of the men who will go down in history, Brian Peckford. Having said that, I will remove my foot from the chair. Look, over in the doorway, the hon. the Member for Gander, the man who wanted to abolish the school tax.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Cabinet would not let him.

MR. PARSONS:

Cabinet would not let him. Thank God for that! Some sensible people in Cabinet, like the Minister of Fisheries, the

I am not sure about the Minister of Transportation. I think Transportation may have wanted it abolished, because he wants to abolish everything, so he would not want to change his train of thought. But there are some good Cabinet Ministers over there. The Minister of Fisheries, he is a Conservative. We all know that.

MR. WINSOR:

I almost voted for him in 1979, you know.

MR. PARSONS:

You voted for him?

MR. WINSOR:

Almost. Close to it. Second choice, he was going to be. He had a meeting in my house, he did.

MR. PARSONS:

In 1979?

MR. WINSOR:

In 1979.

MR. PARSONS:

I ask the hon. Minister questions during Question Period and his answers are good, similar to if he was still on the Tory side. There is no doubt at all about that.

But, Mr. Speaker, let me go on to the loss of jobs. The Newfoundland dockyard - 300 jobs gone. Now I was down on that dock during the P.C. Government's rule, when we brought in all kinds of monies to the dock. Look, everyone is becoming negative towards the Province. Do you know that I asked a question this morning to the Minister of Education.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

You do not agree with it?

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible) over here.

MR. PARSONS:

Well, we all cannot be like the hon. Minister, can we?

I mentioned to the Minister of Education this morning about the School Tax Authority. There is so much confusion out there, the Government has caused so much negativity, that collections are down a great amount.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Why?

MR. PARSONS:

Because they do not know. They do not know if the school tax is going to be abolished, they do not know if there is something new going to be brought in. No one knows. You cannot do anything on your own, you have to wait for Dr. House.

MR. WINSOR:

On payroll deductions the employment factor is so low there is no money being taken out because the unemployment rate (inaudible) so much.

MR. PARSONS:

Yes, the other restraint on the school boards is the unemployment picture is rising so fast that the deductions are not coming out from payrolls. Payroll deductions are going way down, and this is why. Let me say this to you. We would have our heads in the sand today if we did not know there was going to be a great number of jobs, in excess of 300 jobs, going to be lost at National Sea. When the statement comes out today, it will be perhaps one of the most devastating statements that St.

John's has had for the greatest number of years, the St. John's area in general.

MR. KELLAND:

Tory mismanagement caused all this? Everything is (inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Tory mismanagement? The Minister of Environment has said, 'caused by the Tories.' No, my friend. The Minister of Fisheries will agree. The decline, the demise of the fishery started in 1972. Now, if you want me to continue and explain to you what happened in 1972, I will. Those was the Trudeau years. That was when we had our 200 mile limit. It was done just before an election to win the election for Members around this neck of the woods, in Newfoundland and Labrador. He did it for expediency. A 200 mile limit, when he should have taken in the Nose and the Tail of the Grand Banks at that time. Let me tell you something else. When the agreement was signed between France and Canada, the 1972 agreement, that is what started the demise of 3PS. Now they are finished up there they want to come into other parts, 2J and 3KL. That was under a Liberal Government, not a Tory Government.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Dr. Kirby and his report? - 400 000 pounds.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, I agree with the hon. Member. I agree with him wholeheartedly, but what we did not take into consideration was that we were not

alike at all, there were no similarities between the coast of the United States, Iceland, or anywhere else that had come up with the 200 mile limit. Our Continental Shelf went beyond the 200 mile limit, and if we had taken that into consideration, then we would have taken in those areas. And I think at that particular time we possibly could have gotten it. Right now I doubt it very much. I do not think there is really much chance that our jurisdiction will take in the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks. I really do not think so.

Let me go on to some other items. The fishing industry: The Premier stood in this House and he said, '6,000 jobs are going to go in the fishery.' Now let me say this to you. The only controversy out there over the 6,000 is if he meant 6,000 fishermen, and did he include the plant workers associated with that?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Yes, my friend it is going to be approximate but it is not going to be lower, but much, much higher. We have seen it start today with the plant on the Southside.

I feel sorry for the Member for St. John's South, I really do. Nothing political. I know that over on the Southside there is a great number of people in a particular area over there whose jobs are contingent upon that plant remaining open. It is a sad day for all those people.

The hon. Minister of Fisheries knows what I speak about. There are husbands working in the plant, wives working in the plant, and

usually if there is a downtime they end up with enough stamps to draw UIC. It is a way of life. No matter if you are in Burin, on Shea Heights, in Pouch Cove, Englee, Carbonear or Harbour Grace, when a great number of jobs are taken away from one area it causes havoc, it causes hardship which I am sure no Members of this hon. House, no matter which side they are on, would want to even think about let alone be part of. Again, to the hon. Member from St. John's South, I feel sorry, I really do, and I feel sorry for all the people who are going to lose their jobs; I feel sorry for the fishermen who, unless some situation is created whereby they are going to be able to sell their catches - and I think perhaps there might be, but at the present time they are in limbo as to where those fishermen are going to sell their catches.

I mentioned the other day, and it is real, that St. John's was never noted to be an area of concern as it pertained to the inshore, but that is a myth. I mean, there is a lot of fish landed in St. John's and it adds to the economy of this general area. Again, I do have concerns now about where those fishermen are going to sell their fish.

Long Harbour, since this Government took over, the hon. the Member for Placentia, 250 jobs; Grand Falls 250 jobs, not really 250 jobs when you look at the loggers, when you look at the truck drivers, when you look at everyone else associated with the industry - 500 jobs. Wooddale, 60 jobs, Superior Seafoods, 400 jobs, Universal Fisheries, 1,500 jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
What about Sprung?

I am not backing up one step as it pertains to Sprung. I told hon. Members across the House management problems were there, but we had a Minister at that particular time who addressed those problems. That was the only problem. Sprung itself was viable. We had problems, but what we did try to do was make jobs for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians. We did not try to take them away from them. You did not hear our Premier up there saying that soon there would be 6,000 jobs lost in the fishery. He did not say there was going to be a machine close down at Abitibi-Price.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
He told lies.

MR. PARSONS:  
No, he did not tell lies. That is what he did not, tell lies.

Universal fisheries 1,500 people. I am surprised that the Minister of Development over there has not done something about it. Where are those 1,500 people going to get jobs?

The Premier joined APEC, A-P-E-C, a few days ago. I want to tell the Minister of Development that on the West Coast there is another closure coming up that the Minister is going to announce in a couple of days, and that is West Coast Farm Products.

MR. FUREY:  
Am I?

MR. PARSONS:  
Yes, you are going to announce it. More people unemployed. The brewing industry: If it takes -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).



MR. PARSONS:

It has, because the Premier has signed on the dotted line. He has taken out the barriers.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Free Trade.

MR. PARSONS:

No, no. It had nothing to do with Free Trade. No, this was just adding to the Premier's ego. He signed the deal with APEC. He did. He signed the deal with them, took away all the barriers, Mr. Speaker. The brewing industry could lose anywhere from 500 to 1,000 jobs. How is the Minister of Development going to explain that?

I want to say to the Minister of Development that I have already told him in the House that he is going to close Newfoundland Farm Products on the West Coast. That is the information I have. He is going to close it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What?

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, yes. You had better talk to your Minister of Development. Yes, he is going to close it, with a loss of several jobs. That is what I have been told.

MR. FLIGHT:

How many?

MR. PARSONS:

Seventy jobs.

This Commission must be a tragic event for the Ministers on the other side. It must be. When I look over there at the Minister of Development, the Minister of Fisheries, the Minister of Environment and Transportation, the hon. the House Leader, the

Minister of the high trees, they must feel awfully bad that the Premier did not have enough faith, enough trust in them to say, you can run this Province. You know, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador did not elect Dr. House. Those people over there were elected to run this Province. It was time for a change. Fair! Fair!

MR. FUREY:

Did you vote for Confederation?

MR. PARSONS:

Never mind Confederation. Balance. Balance and being fair. How about the Ministers over there? How about all the hon. Ministers? Surely, goodness, they must get up in the morning saying to themselves, 'What does the Premier think of us that he has to bring in a group of people who were never elected, who have no relevance, really, to Government?

AN HON. MEMBER:

I thought you said (inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

I will get to that. There was one man -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Two.

MR. PARSONS:

I am sorry, two.

Now, let me say this. I know the Minister of Development feels bad, because I know of the Minister of Development's ego. He has an ego as tall as this building. I am six feet, five, and when I look at him sometimes I have to look up at him. And the hon. the House Leader, you know, who exudes ability to people close to him, and he does have a lot of ability. I have to agree, he has a lot of ability, as does the hon.

the Minister of Education and the Minister of Employment over there. How bad must they feel when they say, 'The Premier did not feel we were capable of running the Province, he had to bring in a group of people.

MR. FUREY:

What about his ego?

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, I told you, the Minister of the high trees, or the low bushes, whichever you choose.

The Minister of Development mentioned that Dr. House headed up a Commission on Employment and Unemployment for the previous Government. Well, he is right. And that is like the rest of what he presented. He presented books about what the problems were pertaining to employment and what we should do to fix the situation. Why, after all that is shelved, gathering dust, do we now have Dr. House, at a cost of \$2 million per annum, and going up - because the Government are saying now, we are returning moneys this year, but wait until next year; you are only six months in power. Some of the money is going back to the Treasury.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, my! Some of the money is going back to the Treasury. They did not do anything.

I just mentioned Newfoundland Farm Products. The Minister of Development is going to make an announcement this week whereby seventy more Newfoundlanders are going to lose their jobs. I really do pity the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of

Education. The hon. the House Leader wanted to abolish the school tax. The Minister of Education did not know where he was going to get \$30 million, so his colleagues rallied to his support and the hon. the Member for Gander was defeated, and, Mr. Speaker, thank God for that. I also feel for the Minister of Fisheries, because the Minister of Fisheries, like all the rest of the Ministers over there, cannot be constructive. They have plenty ability to be constructive, but they have one man who runs the show.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who is that?

MR. PARSONS:

The man who sits in tall trees place there, that gentleman right there runs the show. He is God. How great thou art! Mr. Clean. I will bet you any money that the people on the Southside are not going to call him Mr. Clean today or when the rest of the announcements are made as it pertains to plant closures, and the rest of the announcements are made as it pertains to fishermen being taken out of the boats. I bet you he will not then be called a God. I bet you he will not be Mr. Clean.

MR. WARREN:

You only have thirty minutes left.

MR. PARSONS:

That is fine. I would much rather put my foot upon the Chair, but since you will not allow it, I will go on for the next thirty minutes.

MS DUFF:

The Minister of Development wanted to ask a question.

MR. PARSONS:

The hon. the Member for St. John's East reminded me that the Minister of Development wanted to ask a question. I am very, very sorry I did not facilitate him. He still thinks he is in Opposition. You only have three more years to wait, and then you will be able to ask all the questions you like. If you keep on causing unemployment, creating an atmosphere, people will ask what did the Minister of Development do? We had great trust in the Minister of Development. You will have plenty of time to ask questions after three years. We cannot do it any sooner.

Mr. Speaker, I find it regressive, I really do. I said why I do not like commissions when they have to do with the economy. Commissions are not really answerable to anyone. I heard the Premier say on several instances in the House, I do not know. I have not spoken to anyone on the Commission of late. I am saying to the hon. members across the House, you were elected to do a job; not Dr. House. He was not elected to do it. If you wanted Dr. House's expertise you had it. You had it in the report he brought in a couple of years ago, to the previous Government. You did not have to have an Economic Commission. If Dr. House was such a great person, and I think he is. I think Dr. House is a good man, I really do, but the point remains he did what he had to do at that particular time. He made recommendations. Why did you not carry out the recommendations made in that study rather than bring out this \$3 million hoax? Five million in the next few years.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) \$23 million?

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, would you please tell the hon. Member to be quite? He is not sitting in his own seat. Oh, he is getting used to the seat, but it will never become reality.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

MR. PARSONS:

I am just getting warm, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. SPEAKER:

By leave.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to close, but I have to object to one of the things my hon. friend for Lewisporte (Mr. Penney) said about creating employment. He said if all the stores were to have three or four employees and there were twenty of them, we would end up with, say, 100 employees we do not see because the twos and threes just are not accountable. But let me say to the hon. Member from Lewisporte, if this Government persists and takes the people out of the workforce, who is going to buy from the convenience stores? There is not anyone to buy. The only situation that is left is what the hon. Minister of Employment said, welfare. And, Mr. Speaker, God forbid. But that is what it is if this Government stays on the road that they are on, there is nothing can happen in this Province, Mr. Speaker. Everything is a downturn. And, Mr. Speaker, I regret that this commission was ever established. And in closing, Mr. Speaker, if the responsibilities lie with the

Members on that side to do a job that they were elected for, not to be answerable to any commission that was not elected, has no part of this Government. With that said, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before I recognize the hon. the Minister of Development I would just like to take this opportunity to welcome to the galleries a group of students from St. Georges High School, New Harbour. We have 46 level 11 Democracy students. And on behalf of the hon. Members of the House I welcome them here, and they are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Collins.

The hon. the Minister of Development.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, if I speak now on behalf of the Premier -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Okay, the Chair did not recognize that the hon. Minister of Development was speaking on behalf of the Premier.

MR. FUREY:

I was about to say that in the absence of the Premier who introduced Bill 40, the Bill with respect to the Economic Recovery Commission, I wanted to notify hon. Members that should I speak now on his behalf and in his behalf, I would be closing debate. But we are quite prepared, Mr. Speaker, to hear

every single Member for as long as it takes, Mr. Speaker, on this particular Bill. And we were thoroughly enjoying the previous speaker's speech. So, we hope somebody over there has something of substance to say in the next little while.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It was not a point of order.

MR. FUREY:

It was not a point of order.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Well why did the hon. gentleman stand up?

MR. FUREY:

I was getting up to speak.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He was recognized.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He was recognized?

MR. FUREY:

I was speaking.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

AN HON. MEMBER:

No, Mr. Speaker, we have Members on this side who want to speak. We were not going to permit the Minister to close debate, Mr. Speaker, and take the House on his back like they are trying to do.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. John's

East.

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to be able to have a few moments to address this important piece of legislation because it is perhaps the only really substantive piece of legislation that we have had before us in this House. And I think the fact that so many speakers on both sides of the House wanted to have an opportunity to speak to it, really underlines the importance of the legislation and the very serious issue that it addresses, the economy of Newfoundland. I am very please I was not denied that opportunity through some kind of procedural wrangles. I am not familiar with the tactics of the House right now. But I thank the Minister of Development for not closing debate before I had an opportunity to speak.

The hon. Minister of Development seems to have left the House, but one of the first things that I wanted to do was to say how much I enjoyed his speech yesterday. There is one thing about this Minister, everybody in this House has a different style when they speak, but the Minister always speaks in a very sonorous, millifluous tone of voice that is always, apparently very reasoned, and it is enjoyable to listen to. Sometimes the substance of what he is saying is in conflict with the tone in which it is delivered. But I must say, I do find his style very sophisticated, very easy to listen to. And I was sorry that I had to leave for the last little bit of his speech because I was called out by a constituent, but I always enjoy listening to him.

I do not think there is one Member

on either side of this House that in a way is not giving the same message to this piece of legislation. I think every one of us are very cognizant of the fact that there is nothing as important to Newfoundlanders all across this Province as the state of the economy, which has now been placed in the hands of an Economic Recovery Team. None of us need to have reinforced the high cost of the unemployment that we see in our Province today. In the past number of weeks we have spent hours debating issues related to the fishery and it seems that something certainly needs to be done about the economy because the patient is getting sicker and sicker. Their pulse is pretty threadbare at the moment and there is certainly a need for some form of action. I have no intention of being negative about the Government's attempts to do something about the economy of this Province. It is the number one issue. The only problem I have, and I think it is my role as a responsible member of the Opposition to critique legislation and to offer my own suggestions as to what should be done. It is in the form or the initiative, this particular initiative, the way in which the Government is treating the patient and that is the essence of what I will say today.

I was sorry, in some of the speeches, to have reiterated time and time again what I have come to look upon now, especially in this session, as the negative litany that we get when we try to address issues before us. When I was considerably younger than I am right now, coming from a convent school, we had a little exercise we had to go through periodically, and I am sure the hon. Member for Placentia (Mr. Hogan), certainly,

and the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy) will remember. It was called the Litany of the Saints. We would be hauled over to church, particularly in Lent, and we would say St. Bartholomew pray for us, St. Agnes pray for us, St. Gonzaga pray for us. We had this powerhouse of people that we invoked to come and help us. When I was very young I thought this was great, we have all these people on our team, but after awhile it got boring, frankly very boring. I am frankly getting extremely bored with every time a question is raised on the fishery, we have, blame it on the Tories. Every time a question is raised on the (inaudible) -

AN HON. MEMBER:

I never once did that.

MS DUFF:

You may not have, Mr. Minister, because you are one of the better Members of the Government. Certainly, we have heard it over and over again. In tourism, unemployment, health, whatever the issue it is the previous Government and the last seventeen years. There are some variations on that litany because if it is not being blamed on the previous Government it is being blamed on the Federal Government, or alternately, when it is really unanswerable the person who is asking the question gets attacked. That only goes so far, then I think it is time to take a slightly more positive approach to this. Can we say we have had a moratorium on that litany and we would now like to hear a litany of the initiatives that this Government is going to take itself to cure some of the problems? It is blatantly untrue to say that the previous Government did nothing and it may be worth

reiterating that with this particular issue we are discussing now, the Economic Recovery Team, that Dr. House, who has been appointed by the Government as the saviour of the Province's economy himself took pains, after this Governmetn was elected, to go public in a press conference and in a Letter To The Editor to state that he was very pleased with the efforts that the previous Government had made to implement the recommendation of the House Royal Commission Report. He went on to cite various initiatives that had been taken by the previous government. Now, as a person outside of Government at that time I must say I was not totally pleased with what I perceived the Government to be doing, and I did give it to the former Premier several times in terms of a comprehensive response to that Royal Commission Report. I would say where the Government failed more than anywhere else was not in what they did not do, because it is very obvious now as I see some of the programs that have been put in place in many Departments and some of the areas that have been addressed that a great deal was done. I think they failed badly on the public relations side in getting the message out. In fact they took the House Royal Commission Report very seriously and had already put in place a tremendous number of initiatives throughout Government to address the various problems that Dr. House had identified and the solutions that Dr. House had put forward.

My problem, if you like, with this legislation and with the commission that is set up is basically one of necessity. I believe that the doctors have found the wrong medicine for an

ailing patient here, and that the same objectives could very easily and perhaps could have better been achieved through other avenues, not by taking this Commission approach to problem-solving, and that is the point I would now like to elaborate on.

Dr. House, in the Royal Commission Report, which I read again - I was lucky enough as a member of the Federation of Municipalities, to have spent a whole day with Dr. House's Commission, outlining the recommendations in his report, so I am very familiar with his intent, with the philosophical base from which he was coming when he wrote this report, and with the recommendations. I think there are 246 recommendations in all, neatly divided up by department. There are recommendations for the Department of Agriculture, recommendations on Forestry, recommendations on the Fishery, recommendations on Tourism and Education, and so on. It is probably the most comprehensive view of the ills of our economy that we have ever had. It is not a Bible, but it certainly does offer a very good blueprint. But, Dr. House never envisaged the Government setting up a Commission to deal with that.

He was very, very clear, I think, in his statements in his Commission Report that he felt it was the responsibility of Government, themselves, the policymakers, the elected Cabinet of this Province, to take his recommendations in hand, to put into being whatever changes, whatever actions and whatever money was necessary to implement his report. In fact, he very clearly states in his report that 'the recommendations we make will require confidence, imagination, a

positive attitude and sheer hard work from policymakers. And you are the policymakers.

AN HON. MEMBER:

We have made the policies.

MS DUFF:

The only policy I have seen being made by this Government, so far, is the policy to abscond from their direct responsibility and to place it in the hands of a non-elected Commission. And I do not think that is imaginative, I do not think it is positive and I think Government is actually ducking its responsibility and its accountability for implementing this report, by setting up a Commission.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MS DUFF:

They listen passionately on the intercom while they are having their coffee and it does not matter to me whether they are here or not.

I think Government would have been better - and, again, as a Member of the Opposition, I think I have a clear responsibility to state not only what they should not do but what I think they should have done. They should have put the lead role for this responsibility clearly in the lap of the mellifluous, sonorous, intelligent and very credible Minister of Development (Mr. Furey). I would not have been able to get up and speak so calmly in defense of this Bill if I knew that it had gutted my Department and basically says that my Premier does not have sufficient confidence in me, as Minister of Development, he has to take my role - because almost every power that is identified for

this Commission in this legislation is duplicated by powers that already exist within the Department of Development. So I feel it would be very good, in fact, to have set up an economic recovery team, which was what was promised in the election, but that team would not need to be set up -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MS DUFF:

I have already made the pickles. It is alright, the Minister can keep his recipe book.

- if the Government had, in fact, gotten the best and the brightest brains in business in this Province and set them up as an advisory team, advisory to the Minister of Development so that they could monitor the progress of Government, advise on new initiatives. If the Minister then had been given the responsibility to establish a very action-oriented committee of senior Cabinet in those portfolios that have a direct responsibility for implementing this report, given a time line, told that by a certain time, you have to come in identifying ways in which you are going to act on this recommendation or that recommendation on which you are going to create so many more new jobs in this Province, then I think that would have been far better, an acceptance of the direct responsibility of Government. No possibility of having to wait years until the Economic Recovery Team could be put in place. And, in fact, the Economic Recovery Team itself has very little on it in the way of people who have direct experience in the business scene in this community, and it is business that

creates jobs here.

Dr. House in his study, if it says anything, its underlying message, which is clear in the title of the study, was that we have to build on our strength and nobody could argue with that. I am quite sure that will be the underlying motivation of the Economic Recovery Commission when it is set up. He wanted us to start from what we have. He wanted us to start small and do things that were feasible and did not have to wait for changes in Federal legislation or big projects from outside of the Province. And there is no doubt that, I think, the major strength of Newfoundlanders, wherever they may be, is their resourcefulness and within the base of our urban and rural communities I think you will find a great deal of resourcefulness and a great deal of ingenuity and again a great capacity for hard work. It really annoys me when I see the image that is being presented of Newfoundlanders, largely through CBC on National Television of people who are just looking around for ways to find to use UI. Even targeting Newfoundlanders as if all of the projects that have been done through CIC or through the Government's own programs with the Department of Social Services are useless projects, because that simply is not true. They must have come down here and looked around for the most useless projects they could find.

Newfoundlanders are amongst the most hard working people in Canada. They have that reputation when they go to Fort McMurray or to the logging camps of British Columbia or to Toronto. They are frequently willing to go far to find jobs or to work harder at



jobs that other people do not want, and even when they are so-called not working because society defines that you have to have a pay cheque to be classed as working. They never stop working. Most of them are out cutting wood or repairing their house or doing whatever they can to survive. What they have not had up to now very frequently within the context of their own communities, and that is another thing I suppose that marks Newfoundlanders as a little different, they have a very strong affinity to place. It is a very deep seated, deep rooted part of our social and political cultures that Newfoundlanders want to stay home. They want to be able to work where they are because family and community are values that they hold very dearly.

What they have not had oftentimes is the capital financing or the money or the seed money to help them find work in place, and they have not had the ability to market the products of their labour outside their local communities. And I think these were some of the ideas that Dr. House had that Government should do, that Government should begin to look at ways in which capital financing could be provided, and help from the Provincial Government could be provided to market some of the products.

Now one way in which, I think, this can be done and I do not fault this Government any more than previous Governments, but I think we have been lacking somewhat in setting up some kind of a development fund that could be used at the local level as an incentive to the private sector in local communities and to municipalities in local

communities. To initiate projects that make sense at the local level. I know from my own municipal experience that every municipality in this Province desperately wants to promote the economic development of their own community. They work very hard at it. They oftentimes work in conjunction with the Rural Development Associations and the Development Association and any other agency that may be there. But what is often lacking is the seed money to enable them to get the thing kick-started.

If Government were, through the Department of Development, to set up that kind of a development fund, if they were for instance not to set up a Commission, which has a budget of \$3 million a year and I am fully aware of the fact that this year they have not used it, if they were to set up a fund taking some of that money you could make \$1 million of provincial seed money leveraged into \$3 million with the municipalities and the private sector. Municipalities respond very quickly to the ability to make their money go further. But I do not see any evidence of that being done.

Now I do not wish to go over and over comments that have been made by other speakers here, and many speakers have addressed the problems in the fishery and agriculture. If you look at the recommendations of the House Commission Report, I think one of the things that becomes clear is that we should be trying to find ways in which locally produced products can be marketed locally. At the moment, I think about 90 per cent of the agricultural products that are consumed in the Northeast Avalon region which just

happens to be where the concentration of population is, are imported. Yet, we do have the capability, and I heard the Premier speak quite eloquently on this when he opened the Agricultural Fair, because in years gone by we produced far more agricultural products than we produce now.

What happened in the interim was not a change, as the Premier quite rightly said, in the amount of rain fall or the sun or the land, it was basically a change in the marketing. Where you had, after Confederation, the national companies coming in here basically controlling the wholesaling and marketing sector so that the person out in Eastport Peninsula, for instance, which I happen to be familiar with, and these people began to do a lot more agriculture particularly with small greenhouse farming for tomatoes and some salmon smoking, was that they could not readily find a market for their products, because Canada Packers and Sobeys and the big guys controlled the marketing to the supermarkets and if your tomato had a bump on it, or if it was not a certain standard size to fit in a poly-pak they would not buy it.

Now it has always amazed me why, given that we have the capability to produce more fish, more agricultural products, more crafts, more wood products for the local market, we have never bothered through the Department of Agriculture jointly with the Department responsible for rural development, to set up a proper market for farmers and craft people in the Northeast Avalon region. It does not have to be elaborate, God knows there are enough vacant building around.

They certainly have worked well in other areas, including Charlottetown which has about one-quarter of the population, so that locally produced products whether they are strawberries from the West Coast, whether it is smoked salmon from Labrador, whether it is tomatoes from the Eastport area, could be brought in here without a middle man, directly marketed to the population based in the Northeast Avalon region. It will certainly not solve all the economic problems but it would help to provide some cash in the economy of rural Newfoundland and at the same time give access to people in this region who have not got the opportunity to grow their own food, access to good locally produced products.

The same would be true of the Craft Fair. All you have to do is look at the prices people are willing to pay at a craft fair. I know people who spent \$250 on a handmade doll and they are now booked up in orders until 1991. They sold out at the recent Craft Fair. But in between the craft fairs there is nowhere really that you can go to buy the very fine handmade local crafts that are produced, and many more could be produced in Newfoundland. These are a cottage industry they can be produced right in a local community. There hardly is a Newfoundland woman who does not know how to knit, and there is a market for knitted goods, so I mean that would seem to me to be a fairly small scale, fairly obvious thing. It does not need an Economic Recovery Team to make it happen. It needs a Minister of Development who has the mandate, who has the creativity, who has the guts sometimes to take risks that may fail and who will just do

it. And it is not done.

The other area that I think has been totally neglected is the area of culture and heritage. We have never recognized the value of the culture and heritage of our Province as an industry. Now, it is not only an industry it is far more important than that. Most certainly, if you look for instance at the fact that all across this very historic Province there are historic buildings that are falling down. I know there are Moravian properties on the Coast of Labrador, there are historic public and private buildings in all of our older communities, yet Government has no programs to act as an incentive to the private sector. It has one, I should not say that, a fairly new program set up by the previous Administration with the Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Foundation where people under very limited circumstances are able to get very limited grants. But if this program were made broader, and if you look at \$1 million of seed money put into culture and heritage what it could do would be totally amazing. You could set up a whole new industry that would, in the first place, have as a result the protection of our architectural heritage which is a non-renewable resource which will probably not be here in ten years time. It is labour intensive using skills that already exist in our local communities, and because it uses local materials, because in those days we were not importing concrete and glass and all that funny stuff, it uses local materials and will be a boom to the sawmilling industry. But, in order to make it happen it needs, through the Department of Provincial and Municipal Affairs, a program with seed money, the

technical help that would be needed in terms of design and monitoring of what is being done, and some promotion so that it would be encouraged. It would not cost a lot of money and it could have tremendous long-term permanent spin-off and the product would be a tremendous addition to our tourism industry, because one of the things that Dr. House says is that we should be identifying what our particular strengths are in the tourism market, and study after study has indicated that our culture and our heritage are what sets us apart from other provinces in Canada and other destinations in North America and that we should be doing something to develop that tourist plant and we are not doing it. You want to look again at the level of artistic endeavour and the quality of the art that is being produced in this Province. Now, that is an industry. Artists make money by producing their art. They buy materials to make that art, altogether apart from the values to the tourism industry, and yet we have just received a tremendous insult from the National Gallery of Canada who did not ever bother to come to Newfoundland when they set up their Second Annual Exhibition of Canadian Art because they did not think there was anything worthwhile here. There is something wrong, there was a failure on behalf of Government to promote, to encourage, and to give a venue for our artists to display their work. All of these things are small industries, small scale, building on our strengths, using what we have, and not taking a lot of money. What they take is guts, imagination, creativity and a little bit of money.

I have just received my five minute warning so I want to just

get into my conclusion here. I have been trying to deal with the necessity and to make the point that I do not think it was necessary to set up an Economic Recovery Team to achieve the goals that all of us want to see happen, which is to get our Newfoundland people off the welfare rolls, off UIC and producing productively in our own communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:  
The other comment that I would make about this initiative is that in fact, I think, it was a political move and it seems evident to me that the real initiative, the real intent of this particular Commission was to take the responsibility out of Government's hands and give this Government an excuse to do nothing for two, three, or four years. We have heard it already from the Minister responsible for Employment, and from various other Ministers who have spoken. We have not set up any new programs, all we have done - I mean, the Government has done, is destroyed good programs that were already in existence and waiting to come around and put a red cover on them so they would look like new initiatives, done nothing and they say, wait. We are waiting for the advice of the Economic Recovery Team. Well, the point I would like to make is that there is no need to wait, the recipe is not for pickles either, it is for economic recovery. The recipe is here in these 246 recommendations clearly directed at Government Departments and that this Government has been negligent in its duty by taking this very important issue, putting it on somebody else, an armslength body,

and saying we cannot do anything because we are waiting for this Commission to report. I believe that the Government, in fact, should reconsider -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Read it.

MS DUFF:  
I have read it. - reconsider this legislation and say, 'yes, the hon. Member for St. John's East is right.' What we need to do right now is not bounce this baby somewhere else, but take action ourselves as you have been directed, and get this Province back to order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

MR. FUREY:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FUREY:  
I would like to notify the House, Mr. Speaker, that if I speak now in the absence of the Premier, who introduced this legislation, we will be closing debate, so we offer the opportunity for any other Member who would like to contribute to the debate. Certainly I would take my seat.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Minister of Development, if he speaks now, he will close the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, this has been a very interesting debate. I think we summarized the other day the three or four questions that were asked, particularly by the Leader of the Opposition, who addressed a number of question. Why were we putting this Bill under the Premier, we responded to that. Whether or not there would be a reporting mechanism to the House, we responded to that, and a number of other general questions. But I want to thank the hon. Member for St. John's East for her kind words, and her complimentary attitude towards my remarks the other day. I thank her very much for that, and I happen to personally believe that she is the finest Liberal on the Tory side.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, when we set about to establish the Economic Recovery Commission, we said to the people of the Province, and we said it quite clearly during the election and after the election, we do not have all the answers. We certainly admit that fully up front, and we want to be honest with the people of this Province that we do not have all the answers. We said that during the election, we said it after the election, and we are now asking all 52 Members of this House, Mr. Speaker, to help us together, as all Members of this House, to try to pick up the economy of this Province which we have inherited after 17 years, which we found flat on its back.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member for St. John's East Extern this morning said basically if I can summarize his speech, that there was really no problems. He

essentially said there were really no problems. He gave a lubricious litany of losing propositions. He gave a litany of losing propositions. He said that Long Harbour had gone under, and we accept that, we understand that. When we sat on that side of the House when the Government announced on this side of the House or in the public media that Long Harbour was going under, we understood that. We understood it was a corporate decision. We did not blame the Government of the day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. FUREY:

You check the record. I ask the Leader to check the record. What we said is Albright and Wilson were leaving. I recall meeting with Albright and Wilson officials with the then Leader of the Opposition. We put the case - is this the only mechanism that you can tell us, the only thing that you can do because of modern technology? Why are you not doing the same in Quebec? Why are you building a new plant in South Carolina. We happen to have believed that perhaps, just in a small way perhaps, free trade may have had something to do with that. But, no, we did not blame the Government. So, if the Opposition wants to spend its time standing in their places day after day and saying that corporate decisions made by private sector corporations in this Province for corporate reasons are the fault of the Government. Well, it is the fault of every Member in this House if you take that to its logical conclusion because we are all representatives of the people out there across this Province. That is the easy way out. We are

not prepared to take the easy way out. What we are saying is that we have found an economy in very rough shape. And, Mr. Speaker, these are not my numbers, and they are not the Oppositions numbers, and they are not the Government of the days numbers, they are Statistics Canada's numbers.

Let us just look at the unemployment rate for the last ten years from 1980, when Mr. Peckford took over power to 1989 - 1990. In 1980 Newfoundland and Labrador had an unemployment rate of 13.3 per cent. What happened in 1981? It jumped to 13.9 per cent. What happened in 1982? It jumped to 16.7 per cent. What happened in 1983? It jumped to 18.7 per cent. What happened in 1984? It jumped to 20.2 per cent. What happened in 1985? It jumped to 20.8 per cent, and in 1986, 19.2 per cent; and in 1987, 17.9 per cent. What we are saying is that if you look right across the record of the past ten years we have averaged somewhere in the vicinity of 18 per cent unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, they are not my numbers. Those are the real numbers and the real record of the Administration of the last ten years under Premier Peckford, with Ministers who sat with that Premier and said everything was rosy and everything is all right. Mr. Speaker, we on this side are not prepared to do that. We want to face up to the reality of the past and get on with the job of building towards a better future.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:  
Let us talk about that. Do you want to talk about that too?

Okay, let us talk about that.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:  
He says there were more people.

For the last ten years under the Peckford Administration the population grew by 2,000 people over ten years. There was an awful out-migration. In the same ten years in Nova Scotia the population grew by 38,000. So you want to talk about population, the Government numbers of the day for the last ten years saw a steady stream of people leaving this Province like they have never seen in the history of this Province ever.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we are saying -

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible).

MR. FUREY:  
- my how the truth hurts.

Mr. Speaker, would you protect me from that anti-confederate.

The real numbers, Mr. Speaker, do not lie. We can argue and banter back and forth until the cows come home but the real numbers do not lie. The population of this Province over the ten years of the Peckford Administration grew by 2,000 people. That tells me that there was an incredible drain of people who went away to Toronto, and the Fort McMurrays and the Albertas and the hon. Member talked about us during the election saying, 'we would like to bring people home.' Yes we would like to bring people home. That would really, really be a wonderful thing. We would like to

create a climate, an economic environment, Mr. Speaker, where people have a sense of dignity. Where they can work with their families and yes, Mr. Speaker, where they can come home. But we are not going to sit in front of television cameras, as the former Premier did in 1982 and look out into the living rooms of this Province, and say I met a group in Alberta and they looked at me in 1982 and said when can we come home, Premier. 'I will bring them home.' Well, he did not bring them home. He drove them away by the thousands, by the thousands.

Mr. Speaker, we are not prepared to deceive people. We want to tell the truth. And the truth of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, in a nutshell, we do not have all the answers. We readily admit that. We say it up front. We are being honest and truthful to every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian who have not seen truth like this Administration in the last seventeen years. But they are going to get truth.

In order to get on the road to economic recovery, we have to get on the road to reality. And the reality is, that we have found ourselves with an economic circumstance that has this Province in shambles in every single nook and cranny and cove right across this Province. We have inherited an economy and a series of economies that are in shambles. This Economic Recovery Commission is not a God send, it is not a magic wand, but it is dealing with truth and asking the best brains that we have around us to help us. Not just this Government, but every single Member who sits here and claims to be representing Newfoundlanders all around this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

On motion, a bill, "An Act Respecting the Economic Recovery Commission," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. " (Bill No. 40).

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

MR. BAKER:  
Mr. Speaker, the order of business on Monday: there are a couple of Bills that have already gone through the other Committee and we will probably be dealing with those.

I would like to inform hon. Members that we would like to sometime in the next couple of days start second reading on Bills No. 44 and 54.

It is moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until Monday, at 2:00 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR  
 First Session - Forty-First General Assembly  
 Hon. Thomas Lush, Speaker  
 Mr. Lloyd Snow, Deputy Speaker  
 Mr. Percy Barrett, Deputy Chairman of Committees

<u>Member</u>	<u>District</u>
Mr. K. Aylward, (Lib) .....	Stephenville
Mr. R. Aylward, (PC) .....	Kilbride
Mr. Baker, (Lib) .....	Gander
Mr. Barrett, (Lib) .....	Bellevue
Mr. Hynes, (PC) (IND.).....	Trinity North
Mr. Carter, (Lib) .....	Twillingate
Ms Cowan, (Lib) .....	Conception Bay South
Mr. Crane, (Lib) .....	Harbour Grace
Mr. Decker, (Lib) .....	Strait of Belle Isle
Mr. Dicks, (Lib) .....	Humber West
Mr. Doyle, (PC) .....	Harbour Main
Ms Duff, (PC) .....	St. John's East
Mr. Dumaresque, (Lib) .....	Eagle River
Mr. Efford, (Lib) .....	Port de Grave
Mr. Flight, (Lib) .....	Windsor-Buchans
Mr. Furey, (Lib) .....	St. Barbe
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Mr. Gover, (Lib) .....	Bonavista South
Mr. Greening, (PC) .....	Terra Nova
Mr. Grimes, (Lib) .....	Exploits
Mr. Gullage, (Lib) .....	Waterford - Kenmount
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Mr. Hewlett, (PC) .....	Green Bay
Mr. Hodder, (PC) .....	Port au Port
Mr. Hogan, (Lib) .....	Placentia
Mr. Kelland, (Lib) .....	Naskaupi
Dr. Kitchen, (Lib) .....	St. John's Centre
Mr. Langdon, (PC) .....	Fortune-Hermitage
Mr. Lush, (Lib) .....	Bonavista North
Mr. Matthews, (PC) .....	Grand Bank
Mr. Murphy, (Lib) .....	St. John's South
Mr. Noel, (Lib) .....	Pleasantville
Mr. Parsons, (PC) .....	St. John's East Extern
Mr. Penney, (Lib) .....	Lewisporte
Mr. Power, (PC) .....	Ferryland
Mr. Ramsay, (Lib) .....	LaPoile
Mr. Reid, (Lib) .....	Carbonear
Mr. Rideout, (PC) .....	Baie Verte - White Bay
Mr. Short, (Lib) .....	St. George's
Mr. Simms, (PC) .....	Grand Falls
Mr. A. Snow, (PC) .....	Menihek
Mr. L. Snow, (Lib) .....	Trinity - Bay de Verde
Mr. Tobin, (PC) .....	Burin - Placentia West



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Mr. Walsh, (Lib) .....	Mount Scio - Bell Island
Dr. Warren, (Lib) .....	St. John's North
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Mr. Dicks .....	Justice
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