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

*Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush*

Tuesday

13 June 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):  
Order, please!

### Statements by Ministers

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

MR. DICKS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As Minister responsible for the Office of the Legislative Counsel, pursuant to Section 18 of The Statutes And Subordinate Legislation Act, I am required to lay before the House of Assembly a copy of the subordinate legislation filed under that Act. Accordingly, I table the editions of The Newfoundland Gazette published between April 8, 1988 and May 12, 1989.

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

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

MR. SIMMS:  
It appears to me what the hon. minister has there is probably something that should be tabled under reports and probably has just inadvertently risen at the wrong occasion, because it does not sound like a statement.

### Oral Questions

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

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

My question, quite naturally today, is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker), whom I would have to refer to today as the Schizophrenic Minister of Health. I would like to refer the minister to a letter that he wrote to the Chairman of the Hospital Committee in St. Lawrence in August of 1986, where he informed the Chairman of the Committee how proud he was to wear their button, supporting the continuation of their hospital, which I am wearing one of today, and it reads 'I support the continued operation of the U.S. Memorial Hospital.' As well, he attacked the Tory party for closing down rural Newfoundland and shutting down schools, hospitals and fish plants, and said: "If we are going to keep rural Newfoundland, then we have to find a way to keep schools, hospitals, employment and everything else in Newfoundland" and Labrador open. On page 2 he says: "If the will is there, it can be done."

So, Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: How could he, in such a short time, from being an Opposition health critic to becoming Minister of Health today in this Province, a very responsible position, change so much? Why did he make such a brutal and callous decision on the St. Lawrence and Grand Bank hospitals?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question.

I should say right off the top, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wants to make this a political issue it is up to himself. This government has no ulterior motive of doing any harm to the people in Grand Bank or St. Lawrence or anywhere else in this Province. What we are doing is we were entrusted on April 20 to get out and to spend the health dollars belonging to the people of this Province. We were instructed to spend them wisely, fairly, and spend them so that we can deliver the best possible health care that we can deliver for the dollars that we have. Now that is the tone, that is the environment that we are working in when we attempt to do something with the few health dollars that we have. We attempt to give the best medical care that we can give under the rules that we have to play with.

Now as for the letter, Mr. Speaker, I happen to have the same letter here. I stand by this letter just as strongly today as I did in 1986. There is nothing said in this letter which contradicts what I am saying today. The hon. minister says that we are going to tear down rural Newfoundland. The last paragraph says: "If we are going to keep rural Newfoundland, then we have to find a way to keep schools, hospitals, employment and everything else in rural Newfoundland." Now, I believe that and I mean that. On August 13 if someone in St. Lawrence, or someone in Grand Bank, needed the services of a specialist they had to come to St. John's to do it. We are today going to open extra beds in Burin, which by my

definition is rural Newfoundland. That is rural Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. So, in answer to the letter he quoted, which is a little bit off the topic, I am as committed today to Burin, to Nain, and to other parts of rural Newfoundland just as much as the hon. member is.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

I would challenge the minister to wear the very same button that he so proudly wore just a short time ago. As well, I do not know of any community in Newfoundland that is any more rural than St. Lawrence, Little St. Lawrence, Lamaline, Point May, Grand Bank, Fortune, Garnish or Frenchman's Cove. That is rural Newfoundland to me. That is what it means.

I would like to ask the minister what will happen to the patients now accommodated in the St. Lawrence and Grand Bank hospitals? What will happen to the employees, the 110 employees now employed? Will they end up on the welfare rolls of this Province? What this government is doing, is this another example of its job creation efforts that the Premier so proudly oozed and talked about in the election campaign? Is this the job creation program?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

The first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, refers to the patients. On a normal day in St. Lawrence or in Grand Bank there are clinics in both of these hospitals. People come in for blood checks, people come in to have their prescriptions renewed, they come in with colds, they come in with various illnesses, as all other people throughout the world have, and that will not change. The normal day to day operation of the hospitals in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank will not change. We are closing down the beds. Right now there are fifty beds in the two hospitals being operated 50 per cent of the time. Fifty per cent of that, one quarter of the beds, are being used for chronic care. It is not the proper environment for us to be treating our chronically ill people in. I have to tell the hon. member that we are very much aware that there is a problem with chronic care on the Burin Peninsula. We intend to address that and we intend to find a solution to that, but this is not the right and proper solution, Mr. Speaker. We are going to attempt to solve that problem but you cannot mix apples and oranges, it is two different problems. The Royal Commission suggested that in some cases it might be reasonable and sensible to change acute care beds into chronic care beds. That is possible in some cases but it is not always possible in all cases. It might or might not be possible in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, and that has to be looked at, Mr. Speaker. But we cannot jump in and make these hasty decisions until we see precisely whether or not it is proper for the people of that area. That is the first part of the question,

patients, Mr. Speaker.

The second part of the question is about employees. The bottom line is that at the end of the day there will be some job loss. Yes, that is a fact. There are sixty-six permanent jobs there right now in these hospitals. While this Budget Speech was being read, officials from my department were sitting with the union in our board room, down in my office, and they were discussing the problems with employees and they were trying to come to some reasonable conclusion, Mr. Speaker. That process is still going on. We also met with the representative from the Nurses' Union, so that has been going on. The bottom line is there will be some employees lost. I should say, though, that had the previous government done what they knew was right, and had they taken the proper action, which they knew was right two years ago, then some of these employees, a lot of these employees, could have been absorbed into the new hospital in Burin. You see, in the end, if you make wrong decisions then they are going to come back and haunt you. It is just those hon. members now are not sitting where we are, they do not have to pay the shot, we have to take the results of their inactions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, the people in the Grand Bank and St. Lawrence hospitals did not want to work in Burin, they wanted to work in their own community. That is what this government has been trying to push down people's throats the last sixty days in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

And the minister should come clean and be honest in this House because that is what we are expected to be here. There are 110 people working in those two hospitals, not sixty-six. He would like us to believe that.

Mr. Speaker, another supplementary: Will the Minister change his mind and immediately reverse his decision and keep those two hospitals open?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, it is not a simple answer, nor was it a simple decision. If it was a simple answer, if this Province were filthy rich, and if we could afford to put hospitals in Deer Lake, hospitals in the Leader of the Opposition's district, in Great Harbour Deep, if we could afford to put hospitals in every single village in this Province, yes, the answer would be yes, Mr. Speaker, we would do it. And I would be the most popular Minister of Health in the history of Canada, not just Newfoundland and Labrador. I would love to be able to say, "Yes, I will change my decision and put hospitals everywhere." But, Mr. Speaker, I am bound by certain fiscal realities; therefore I cannot say yes to Grand Bank and I cannot say yes to St. Lawrence until I can say yes to Deer Lake and yes to Lewisporte and yes to North East Brook and yes to Eddies Cove East. When I can say yes to these questions, Mr. Speaker, then I will say yes to St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. But in the meantime I am, in this department, asked to

represent all of the people in this Province and spend our dollars wisely. We were not exactly given a very good fiscal state when we took over the affairs of this Province. Therefore, we have to do what is proper and what is right considering the fiscal restraints which the hon. members inflicted upon us.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This time my question is to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen). I would like the Wordless Wonder, the Confused Minister of Finance, to stand in his place and inform this hon. House how much money is budgeted this year, in his new Budget, for the Grand Bank and St. Lawrence hospitals. How much money is budgeted in the budget for Grand Bank and St. Lawrence?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, there is no money in the Budget for these hospitals.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, we have seen it again, the Minister who did not know the difference between a numerator and a denominator, who could not calculate a tax formula that calculated the tax burden of this Province compared to the rest of the country. He does not know now if there is a cent budgeted for Grand Bank or St. Lawrence hospitals.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

There is none, there is none.

MR. MATTHEWS:

If you are going to close down the hospitals immediately, there is something has to be done with the patients, there is something to be done with the staff. Will the Minister stand in his place, then, and tell us how much money is in his new Budget for contingent arrangements because of these shutdowns? How much is budgeted for that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

The Minister of Finance!

MR. WINDSOR:

He is not allowed to speak.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance cannot be expected to know all the details of a billion dollar budget. Mr. Speaker, we have allocated for the operation of the two community health centers, one in St. Lawrence and one at Grand Bank, \$1.2 million. The hon. Minister of Finance thought you were asking what was there for new hospital construction. We are not talking about new hospitals, Mr. Speaker. We are talking about \$1.2 million, where we are going to operate two clinics, one at St. Lawrence and one at Grand Bank. St. Lawrence and Grand Bank will be open twenty-four hours a day. People will be able to go for X-rays, for blood tests, if someone gets a severe pain in the abdomen, he or she is rushed into the hospital at Grand Bank. There will be holding beds there so that the person can be stabilized. If it is seen, after a few hours in the holding bed, there is no major

problem, then that person will be sent back to his home, or whatever the case might be. But if there is a major problem, that person will be then rushed to the centre in rural Newfoundland, in Salt Pond, Mr. Speaker. He does not have to be brought into St. John's. It can be done right in rural Newfoundland, in Burin, where we have eleven specialist on staff, Mr. Speaker, where we are going to open up another thirty-five beds. That is what will happen, Mr. Speaker. That is going to cost us an extra \$1.2 million, whereas presently the structure is costing us \$3.5 million, Mr. Speaker.

And I should point out - I have it somewhere in my notes - that in total on the whole Burin Peninsula we are spending more money in health than has ever been spent before in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. This is what we are doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

We are spending somewhere in the vicinity of \$2 million and \$3 million extra, Mr. Speaker, in the Burin Peninsula. We look at the whole area and we are spending more money than ever before. And, Mr. Speaker, we are delivering a health care system which is better than it has ever been before and which will, in the long run, become a model for the rest of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, what is frightening about this is that that minister believes that. He has not consulted with the people of the area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Never.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The first the people knew of the decision to close the hospital was when the incompetent Minister of Finance read it in his Budget Speech. Another question I would like to ask the Minister of Health, and I want him to be honest and I would ask him to obey the rules of the House and be fair: How many acute care beds are needed to fulfil the total health care requirements of the Burin Peninsula? How many chronic care beds are required to fulfil the total health care needs of the Burin Peninsula? And is it a coincidence that by closing down the Grand Bank and St. Lawrence hospitals, the government is going to save \$3.5 million, and at the same time they are going to spend \$3.5 million in Roddickton, in the minister's district, for a new health care complex? Will he answer that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wants to get down in the mud and slime, that is up to him. But I am not going to get down in any mud or slime or dirt, Mr. Speaker, that is not in my nature. That is up to the hon. member.

In fairness, though, there is an illusion being given by hon. members opposite, and I think I should clarify it. The budget which I saw did not include \$3.5 million for Roddickton. It is not there. When we took over this government we inherited certain programs which were ongoing. There is a health clinic which happens to be in my district. It happens to be in the very town in which I live, in Roddickton. It serves St. Julian's and Croque which is forty-five miles away on a gravel road. It serves Englee, which is twelve miles away on a gravel road. It serves Main Brook, thirty miles away on a gravel road.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Answer the question!

MR. DECKER:

That, Mr. Speaker, is part of the question. I am dealing with part of the question.

One million dollars of this year's Budget is allocated to continue on with that program, which, I should say, my good friend Dr. Twomey steered through Cabinet, and I know the problems he had getting it through.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DECKER:

So it is an ongoing program.

If we had wanted to stop that, there is already \$700,000 spent in site preparation and all this sort of thing. If we had wanted to stop it, it would not have had bearing on the proper use of health dollars on the Burin Peninsula. I do not know if the hon. member wants me to cancel that, but I can him that if we did

cancel that it will not mean that the beds on the Burin Peninsula will reopen.

Now, how many acute care beds are needed. We will have sixty acute care beds opened before this year is over, as we phase down St. Lawrence and Grand Bank and as we open up the new ones. We are hoping, Mr. Speaker, that the way modern medicine is going, where we are getting into more home care, where we get some more chronic care beds available, we are hoping that seventy-five beds will be enough. Now, in the event that it is not enough, we will have to deal with that problem too. I should point out that the present structure in Burin, whereas it only has seventy-five beds, the chassis of the hospital, the basic structure of that hospital, the kitchen, the dining rooms, the bathrooms, and all this sort of thing, is large enough that we can turn that facility into a 125 bed facility by simply adding on a wing. So there is a contingency plan in place in case the seventy-five beds are not enough. I believe they will be enough, but I am not sure of that. We will cross that bridge if we discover that it is not enough.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Order, please!

The Speaker has been sitting listening to admonitions from right and admonitions from left. I want members to the Chair is calling Period and all other day. The hon. long and involved realize that the long, but, in all people who are in and hon. members war. fair answers to these

was letting it go. Under normal circumstances I would not. If hon. members want short answers they should also ask short questions. The last ones contains three involved questions. So if hon. members want short answers, ask short questions and I will ensure that the answers are short.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we have just seen from this minister is not going to do anything for the decorum in this House. Maybe before the day is over we will see something about decorum.

I just want to tell this minister, on page 23 of the Minister of Finance's Budget document, he says specifically: "the funding will be provided to continue the construction of modern health care facilities in St. John's which has an estimated cost of \$3.5 million." The hon. minister may say that he is going to do it is the the for is

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SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

The number of health care beds on the Burin Peninsula, when the three cottage hospitals were open, was eighty-six. As the minister just admitted, there are now going to be sixty acute care beds. Fifteen of those in the seventy-five bed hospital in Salt Pond will be for extended care, care for the elderly.

Does the Premier honestly think that where there were eighty-six acute care beds before and there will now be sixty, that sixty acute care beds can service the health care requirements of 35,000 people serviced on the Burin Peninsula?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me just make a quick comment on the manner in which the question was asked, first of all, Mr. Speaker.

The slurs and comments say a great deal more about the person who threw them than the person at whom they were aimed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the position is fairly simple and straightforward. The two hospitals that are being closed down were being used, in terms of bed capacity, at about 50 per cent of their capacity at the moment, and only 50 per cent of those are for acute care beds. So if you took the total number of acute care beds presently in the Burin

Hospital and added to it the number of beds in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank that were being used for acute care purposes, sixty or so beds would be about what was needed. But, in any event, there is an ability there to increase that to seventy-five, the total bed capacity of the Burin facility at the moment.

As the Minister of Health has said, the building is constructed in such a manner as to provide for an addition, if and when it becomes necessary, and he stated the position clearly on that. That seems to me to be an eminently reasonable and sensible way to deal with health care. Maybe that is why the hon. member has difficulty understanding it.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

A supplementary to this misleading, misdirected, deceitful Premier who went around this Province -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

- in my very area of the Province, and promised that he would open more hospital beds.

Mr. Speaker, what he is doing on the Burin Peninsula is he is cutting twenty beds. Now, how can this Premier, who went around this Province and asked for the support of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, do such an about-face? Will he stand in his place and answer to the people, answer to the galleries, and tell

them why he could do such an about-face and why he could be so deceitful? Because he accomplished political success by deceit. That is what he did, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

The hon. member knows that the word 'deceit' is an unparliamentary word.

MR. WARREN:

It is not unparliamentary.

PREMIER WELLS:

It is. But, again, it says more about the hon. member than it does about the person against whom it is directed. The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that the assumption is incorrect to start with. I did not go about this Province saying what the hon. member said. Here is what we said. Here is our stated position.

MR. SIMMS:

Let us hear it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER WELLS:

Just listen and you will hear it.

Our stated position is we were going to stop and reverse the trend of the government of closing hospital beds in the hospitals of this Province because they could not afford to keep them open. That is exactly what we said.

MR. WINDSOR:

But you are going to open another one up in Roddickton.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

I will answer it if they want me to, if they do not want me to I will sit down, Mr. Speaker. It is very simple. It is very clear. We intend to provide good care, hospital facilities, for the people of this Province who need it. We intend to cause to be reopened the beds that the former government closed down in our hospitals throughout the Province. We do not intend to be so cowardly as to fail to deal with the real medical situation as it needs to be dealt with, on a proper basis, because the former government did not have the good sense to deal with it, or the courage to deal with it properly. We have to do, Mr. Speaker, what, in our judgement, based on the best advice that we can get, and we are listening to advice -

MR. WINDSOR:

You are not listening to the people.

PREMIER WELLS:

We are listening to the people of the Province and giving the people of the Province the kind of government they want, and we intend to continue to do so.

I understand and have great sympathy for the people of St. Lawrence, just the same as I understand and have great sympathy for the people of Daniel's Harbour when a mine closes, or for the people of somewhere else when a school closes, or when anything closes. People are directly affected by that. I am not a piece of stone or a piece of wood, I have feelings, too, but that still does not relieve me of the responsibility, together with my colleagues in the Cabinet, of running this government on a proper basis, merely because the

former government failed to do so, or did not have the courage to do so.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

A new question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

When this party was in power we had the courage to do what needed to be done in this Province, and this very Premier was the one who criticized us for it. But we did not swallow hook, line and sinker recommendations from officials or Royal Commissions. We were the duly elected government of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

You, Mr. Premier, if you do not realize it, were elected to govern this Province and not to slough things off on Commissions of Enquiry and Economic Recovery Teams. You are the Premier and you have the authority and the power to make decisions. You have the power and the authority.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman has been given great liberty from the Chair. He has been questioning the whole period and I would expect the member to get on with his question. He is now making a speech.

Would the member get to his question, please?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was the decision of this caucus that I dominate Question Period today, for obvious reasons, and I am not going to let up on this Premier - I want him to stand in his place and answer questions this uncaring, misleading, deceitful Premier - who went around this Province, who did not consult with the people, made promises, made callous decisions afterwards. Is he now going to treat the people of St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, and have them compared, become the Beijing of Newfoundland and Labrador under this Premier, whom I referred to yesterday as Noriega?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Why does the Premier not be as honourable as he intends to be and stand in his place and admit that he lied to the people of this Province just thirty days ago? He lied!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order.

The hon. the member, who just took his seat, I think engaged in a couple of instances of unparliamentary language that cannot be accepted, particularly when he accuses the Premier of lying. I ask the hon. gentleman to please make a retraction.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I respect Your Honour's request, and I respect the operations of this hon. House, but one thing that I have been known for in my seven or eight years as a member of this Legislature is being honest. I believe in telling the truth. And everything I have said today,

about this particular Premier, I believe to the bottom of my heart and soul, because he has achieved political success by being deceitful. I stand by that, Mr. Speaker, and I will not retract.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
I will make a further effort to ask the hon. gentleman to make a retraction. Without any holdup at all, without any doubt in my mind, he said the Premier lied and, further, that the Premier was deceitful. I am asking the member whether he is going to make a withdrawal of that particular statement, unequivocally.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker, I respect your request. Again, I really respect your request, but I consider myself to be a gentleman of principle and, first of all, to stand up for the people I was elected to represent in this Legislature, and that is what I am doing today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:  
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:  
I could take the normal course and seek to have the hon. member removed, because his behaviour disqualifies him from sitting in the House at the moment and he should be removed from the House.

MR. SIMMS:  
What are you doing?

PREMIER WELLS:  
I am answering the hon. member. He has asked a question and I am addressing it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

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

I just thought the Premier was making a statement to my ruling that would assist in the ruling before I finally made the ruling, and if hon. members do not want the Premier to make a statement, that is fine, I am prepared to make the ruling.

Again, for the third time, I ask the hon. member if he would, indeed, retract the statements he made about the Premier lying and being deceitful, because we cannot have these kinds of statements on the records of the House.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Mr. Speaker, you cannot change the truth, not on your life.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
In that event, having asked the hon. member three times to retract, I have no choice but to name the hon. member. I will name the hon. member and ask him to leave the Chamber and ask the hon. the Government House Leader (Mr. Baker) to make the appropriate motion. I will name the member by name: William Matthews.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:  
Just to help the hon. the Government House Leader, maybe he

and hon. members will want to proceed with Question Period, and after Question Period they might come to the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Question Period is up.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has elapsed.

Before we go to Orders of the Day, if hon. gentlemen would permit, I will ask the hon. the Government House Leader to deal with the expulsion, the naming, if he wants to do it now.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we understand what has happened, we regret what has happened, and I would move that the hon. member be out of the House for one minute.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the intestinal fortitude of the President of the Council for finally making a motion against the advice of the Premier. I would now indicate to him clearly that this motion is debatable and we fully intend to debate the motion, if Your Honour rules that is acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, having made that declaration, I might add for Your Honour's benefit, of course - I am sure Your Honour is fully aware of this, in any event - that since there was not an appropriate opportunity to get up, because there were no interruptions or interventions, I should point out to members of the House that some of the descriptive adjectives used

by my colleague, the member for Grand Bank, whilst they may have sounded a bit rough and tough, have on occasion been ruled parliamentary. I would refer Your Honour to Beauchesne, 5th Edition - I do not have the 6th one in front of me, but I do not imagine that there is much difference in the 5th Edition, page 110, on the bottom of the page, which refers to words which have been ruled parliamentary since 1958. Your Honour will see that the word 'deceive' has been used and ruled parliamentary. Your Honour will also see that the word 'mislead' has been used and ruled unparliamentary. So it is not unparliamentary on all occasions for members to use those words.

Now, obviously the member for Grand Bank in his presentation here today, Mr. Speaker, felt very deeply about what he was doing and he honestly felt that the accusations he was making towards the government and towards the Premier, the leader of the government, he felt deeply about as well. For the hon. member to have the opportunity to represent the people he was elected to represent on an occasion such as this, in the House of Assembly, I believe the hon. member should have been given as much leverage as Your Honour did give him. I compliment Your Honour, because I believe Your Honour did give the hon. member a fair bit of leverage.

I am sure that the decision the member for Grand Bank made in not being able to abide by the direction of the Chair, by the ruling of the Speaker, was a very difficult decision, especially for that hon. member. That hon. member is a member, I think, who is known throughout the Province, and certainly he is known in his

district of Grand Bank, for being an honest, responsible individual, and one who would not do anything he did not feel was right. Obviously, in this case, the hon. member feels that he was right. He feels strongly about what he said, and he is, as I said, an honest representative of the people of Grand Bank.

I am sure he felt badly because he was not able to accept Your Honour's direction. And I know he would not have done it under normal circumstances. But I believe that what we saw today in Question Period in terms of answers given to the questions asked was enough to provoke the hon. member to go as far as he did. I honestly believe that myself as an observer in this Legislature for the last ten years or so. The abuse of Question Period by members opposite, I believe, was enough to provoke the hon. member, and perhaps the Premier should have a talk to some of his ministers. The member asked the Minister of Finance a question, and it was clearly obvious that the Minister of Finance had absolutely no idea at all. He had absolutely no idea at all. He could not answer the question. There was obvious confusion over there. Then the Minister of Health gets up and what does he do? He abuses the Question Period, Mr. Speaker, by taking prolonged periods of time to answer questions that were, and I beg to differ with the Speaker in this regard, fairly simple questions. The hon. member asked the Minister of Health how many acute care beds were required to serve the people of the Burin Peninsula. A fairly short answer is required to that question. How many chronic care beds were required? I believe, Mr. Speaker,

that that is a question that requires a fairly short answer. Yet, the Minister of Health took, I believe, nearly four minutes to respond to that particular question.

Mr. Speaker, I stand in defence of the hon. member's right to say what he said today. I stand in defence of the hon. member's job, in defence of what he did today and the way he did it. I do not condone, quite frankly, members who do not respect a direction from the Chair. But I can say in defence of this hon. member that that is not the sort of action he would normally take. And I do not think anybody on this side of the House and I do not believe anybody on that side of the House would normally expect the member for Grand Bank to take that kind of action. But, Your Honour, he was provoked today. He could not get the answers to his questions that he was looking for.

I also understand that the delegations that met with the Minister of Health and the Premier this morning did not get much satisfaction at all, to say the least. In fact, I believe they were terribly distressed and disappointed with the responses they got. And they have only come from Grand Bank and St. Lawrence today to ask for what is rightfully theirs, to ask that a decision that had been made by the previous administration and the previous government be upheld, particularly in light of the Liberal Party's pronounced philosophy all throughout the election campaign just past, where they certainly gave the impression that if elected, they were going to keep hospital beds open.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I heard the Premier say that is not what they said in the election campaign. Well, that is debatable I suppose, and can be debated hithertofore. But I know from speaking to some people from Grand Bank and St. Lawrence this morning, when they were down in front of Confederation Building, that that was certainly the impression that those people had, and it is the impression that many people around this Province had. Let me just quote a short sentence from the Liberal policy document that was in place for the election campaign, of which we have a copy, obviously. It talks about Liberal health policy dictating as long as the demand exists.

MR. FUREY:

Ah, ha!

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. the Minister of Development says 'Ah, ha!' Well, what about 'Ah, ha'? There is no demand on the Burin Peninsula for health care. Is that what the Minister of Development is trying to say.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is right.

MR. SIMMS:

I say to you poppycock. Stick with Development and Tourism. Here is the appropriate sentence: 'Hospital beds must be kept open.' Now, that is a quote from the Liberal Party policy document.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Now he puts the 'if' on.

MR. SIMMS:

But that is what the document said.

PREMIER WELLS:

Read all of it.

MR. SIMMS:

Read all of it. 'Institutions must not be understaffed.'

MR. RIDEOUT:

Right.

MR. SIMMS:

'Compassion must always take precedence over business administration.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

I am very glad that the Premier asked me to read more.

'Compassion must always take precedence over business administration.' Oh, am I ever glad he asked us to read that!

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a great example of compassion by this six week old Liberal Government. A fantastic act of compassion. Closing the hospitals in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, that is compassion, that is keeping hospital beds open.

Now, Mr. Speaker, here is another little indication of how the Liberal Party, now the government, formerly the Opposition, can quickly change their minds. How easily the world turns around. A petition was presented in the Legislature by the member, I presume -

MR. DOYLE:

Yes, for Grand Bank.

MR. SIMMS:

- the member for Grand Bank, who was fighting this battle years ago, was supported by the now Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter) when he was in Opposition.

MR. DOYLE:

And Liberal Health critic, too.

MR. SIMMS:

'I would strongly support this petition' - which was asking to keep the hospitals open - 'and ask that the Minister of Health and his colleagues give it serious consideration and accede to the request contained therein', in that petition which asked for hospital beds to remain open. Now what about that support? He was the Health critic. We got more information, Mr. Speaker, that indicates members of this Premier's own Cabinet strongly supported keeping open the hospital beds in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence. There was no question then of rationalization. There was no question then of whether or not all the beds were used. They did not even bother to ask those questions. They said 'Keep the beds open.'

The people of Grand Bank and St. Lawrence said, 'Keep the beds open,' and the Progressive Conservative Government kept the beds open, Mr. Speaker. But this government here, which does not seem to practice what it is preaching, suggests somehow, here in the House today, that they did not say, 'Keep beds open.'

Here is another little interesting tidbit of information, Mr. Speaker, we might be prepared to pass on. We might as well, since we have occasion to debate this motion about my colleague. Here is a letter from the deposed Leader of the Opposition. I am

sure many members over there in the front benches remember him well. Certainly they remember the back of him well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Here is what he says: 'If council wishes - well, I should not read it all, should I? 'I realize the government has been cutting back on hospital services throughout the Province.' A minute ago the Premier said we were not making any tough decisions. The then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Barry, thought we were cutting back on hospital services throughout the Province.

'There is a definite need to retain certain facilities which are needed throughout various parts of the Province. The Liberal Party has just completed its report on medical services in the Province and addressed this very issue' - I believe chaired by the Minister of Fisheries now. They have just completed their report on medical services in the Province and addressed this very issue.

Now this is the Leader of the Liberal party just a couple of years ago: 'I can assure you that we will support the people of Grand Bank in their efforts to have medical services retained in the immediate area as long as the residents require these facilities.' Now, Mr. Speaker, I wonder what has changed in that period of time.

We have the present Minister of Health, when he was in Opposition, in writing supporting the position of the people of Grand Bank and St. Lawrence and condemning us



when we were in government -- supporting the people of Grand Bank and St. Lawrence a couple of years ago. We have the present Minister of Fisheries doing the same thing in his capacity as Chairman of this particular Committee. So what has changed? I do not quite understand.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

A real change!

MR. SIMMS:

Ah! A real change has occurred. The only thing I can see that has changed, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, is that the leadership of the party has changed and it is, therefore, one would expect and suspect, the direction from the top, from the new leader, that these hospital beds be closed in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence. There is nothing else one can assume.

They had the gall today to sit there in Question Period, while the Galleries were full with people from the district of Grand Bank representing the people of the area, and toy with the member for Grand Bank in responding to his questions instead of coming clean and answering responsibly, the Minister of Health in particular. It was only the other day he said to me, 'Why do you not ask me some questions, boy?' Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you now it will be a long day before we ask him anymore if he is going to get on that way.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He cannot answer them.

MR. SIMMS:

Well, it is typical of the members opposite anyway, and we have all seen it.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to have a few brief words on the motion. I have a funny feeling that there are colleagues on this side who certainly want to debate this motion, who certainly want to have something to say about the dramatic turn of events that occurred here today, which I do not think has stood the government in good stead to any great extent and to any great degree. I support the member in his presentation today and his representations on behalf of the people of Grand Bank, whom he represents.

If the hon. member had not gotten up to make his motion, I was prepared to make a motion myself. I was making a presentation myself in terms of a motion, and I would have been prepared to move something similar.

MR. BAKER:

Well, support the motion.

MR. SIMMS:

The hon. member will see if I support the motion when the time comes. The hon. member will see. It is non-traditional to make the kind of motion the hon. member made. It would have been an affront to the Speaker had he not gotten up to make the traditional motion, even though the Premier was trying to tug his sleeve and tell him to sit down. That is not the traditional practice, and the Premier will learn that, I guess, as time goes on. We will see how the vote on the motion goes when it is debated, but I can assure you that the motion will receive a thorough debate before this day is over.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I have very few comments to make with respect to this. I will draw hon. members' attention to the fact that two Question Periods have gone by and that hon. member never even raised the issue. That is how important it was to him. Two whole question periods.

MR. SIMMS:

He spent two hours on it yesterday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Two Question Periods went by and he never raised the question.

MR. SIMMS:

You have already accused the minister, why do you not keep on doing it?

PREMIER WELLS:

So today, when he has a grandstand in the House watching him, he gets up and makes this grand gesture of calling me a liar so he can be kicked out of the House for the show. It is all right! It is a good show!

MR. TOBIN:

And do you disagree with what he said?

PREMIER WELLS:

Of course, I disagree with what he said. I disagree totally with what he said.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has achieved his purpose. He has gotten himself kicked out of the House, and he got up with a big smile and walked out as his constituents were in the Gallery to put on a big show. That is what the public business of this Province means to hon. members

opposite. It is all a big show for them. Largely, the members opposite are putting on a show much of the time, and that is what is important to them. They have done the same again, they delayed the business of this Province. For six months, they had the government of this Province flat on its back, doing nothing while they fiddled, and they are fiddling again. That is what it means to the members opposite to be concerned about running the public affairs of this Province. Well, Mr. Speaker, we are not going to participate in that kind of nonsense. If they want to debate all day, all week, this silly motion so that the hon. member can be kicked out of the House and put on a show for his constituency, that is all right. They have the responsibility for their actions and they will, in the end, answer to the electorate, and they will know what the electorate's response is when the time comes again.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the government of this Province is more interested in running the affairs of this Province. It may well be that the hon. members opposite have genuine differences of opinion with the way we are doing it. They may think that we are doing it incorrectly, and it may well be that they may be right in some respects. On occasion I suspect they may be right about it, but there is a sensible and proper way to do it. We are prepared to do it and operate in the proper and sensible way; we are not prepared to participate in this kind of grandstanding and clowning around for the show. We are going to attend to the real interests of the people of this Province and govern this Province on a proper basis, something which

the hon. members opposite are clearly not used to doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, it was probably just after the election campaign that I had occasion to make a statement to the effect that it would not be long before the people of this Province would see the real change and the real leadership that was elected on April 20. Mr. Speaker, if there was any doubt about it, we see today the arrogance and the hobnail-boot approach that the Premier himself is taking with a member of this Legislature, legitimately elected to serve the best interests of his constituents,

MR. WARREN:

He was not even elected with us on April 20.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Yes, he was not elected to this Legislature in the normal way himself.

MR. WARREN:

And he was not even elected.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Yes, for a person who was not elected to this Legislature in the normal way himself, he gets up here today, Mr. Speaker, and except for the agitation which is so obvious on his face, because the Opposition is doing something he would consider stupid and silly, except for that, Mr. Speaker, that hon. gentleman, the

Premier, would have taken the gentleman for Grand Bank by the scruff of the neck and hauled him down across the floor of the House and out through the door of this Legislature, because he had the audacity to stand on his feet, with some of his constituents watching - the biggest sin of all, Mr. Speaker, was that some of his constituents were watching the performance of the Premier and the performance of the government - and that hon. gentleman had the audacity to do that and embarrass the, Emperor. That is the real problem here, Mr. Speaker.

That hon. gentleman yesterday spoke for two hours and twenty minutes in this Legislature, and I will say put on a fine performance, two hours and twenty minutes addressing the ill-conceived suction cup budget of the Minister of Finance, the man who could get on his feet today and tell us there was no money in the budget to continue operations in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. That is the competency of the Minister of Finance.

Our Finance critic, the member for Grand Bank, spent two hours and twenty minutes on his speech yesterday fighting with that minister, fighting with this government, talking about what, Mr. Speaker? And the Premier has the gall to get up and said that he never mentioned it in Question Period. Talking about what, Mr. Speaker? Talking about the closing down of hospital beds in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, that is what the hon. gentleman was talking about, talking about the raise in tuition fees for university students in this Province, talking about all the financial burden, the \$100 million

tax grab that this hon. gentleman and his administration have imposed on the people of this Province. And then he gets up there today, in his sanctimonious courtroom lawyer style and makes the accusation that 'You did not even mention anything about St. Lawrence or Grand Bank in Question Period,' when he spent two hours and twenty minutes at it here yesterday.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the people have seen the arrogance of this hon. gentleman. The word is going around this Province quickly, and the word will go around even more quickly as of this day, when a member who is legitimately elected to this Legislature is attempted to be chemozzled by the government. Not giving answers, standing up and taking a sip of water so that you can knock another minute off the clock and a simple little answer like, how many beds are needed here, and how many beds are needed there, runs into a five or six minute dissertation by the hon. the Minister of Health. People saw that today. We have been seeing it in this Legislature for the last two or three weeks, however long we are here. But people from out around Newfoundland and Labrador saw it today. It has taken this government less time, five or six weeks, Mr. Speaker, to become so arrogant and so pompous that it would take a normal government five or six years to become. People can see it all over Newfoundland and Labrador.

Not only can they see it in this Legislature, and the media are starting to pick up on it and they are starting to report it, but people coming in to meet the Lord, the Emperor himself, the Premier, saw it again today, Mr. Speaker,

when some of those people in the gallery, in a civilized, courteous manner, come in to meet the Leader of the Government, bring their member of the House of Assembly with them, and one of the first things that is questioned is 'What is he doing here? He is an Opposition member. What is he doing here? Has he any right to be here?'

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can name member after member on that side of the House who had the carpet worn out to my office when I was a minister, coming with delegations, coming with their constituents, coming on behalf of their constituents. I can name them, dozens over there I can name who were coming in day after day, week after week. But is this the new openness now? Is this the new fairness and balance that people had preached at them during the election? Is this the New Jerusalem that the new Premier was going to bring to Newfoundland and Labrador? You now have to let us know, you have to consult with us, you have to warn us if your elected member in the Legislature is going to accompany you as a part of a delegation.

What would you expect, Mr. Speaker? Would not the people in my constituency or any constituency, if they are coming to meet the Premier or a minister, expect that as of right their member in the House of Assembly would accompany them? Is that unreasonable to expect in a democracy? Are we still living in a democracy, Mr. Speaker? Why would members be questioned?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

What are you talking about?

MR. RIDEOUT:

The Premier knows exactly what I am talking about. His Parliamentary Assistant (Mr. Grimes) knows exactly what I am talking about, and the people in the delegation know exactly what I am talking about, Mr. Speaker. That is the arrogance that has penetrated this government in a short five or six weeks, and that is what we are seeing here.

We are seeing, Mr. Speaker, that the people of the district of Grand Bank have been penalized by the government for political purposes. That is exactly what we are seeing. The commitment that was made to the people of Grand Bank and St. Lawrence by the previous administration was that there would be a seventy-five bed hospital built and maintained at Salt Pond, along with the status quo in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. That was the commitment that was made by the previous government. This government, Mr. Speaker, in reviewing their budgetary situation, saw an opportunity, in a district that they did not hold, to chop \$3 million or \$3.2 million out of their budget. That, I submit to this House, was the only consideration.

If that is the only crime that the member for Grand Bank commits for however much longer he is here, and I suspect it will be a long time, pointing that out to the government, then I say, 'Too bad,' Mr. Speaker, because that is going to be done in this House day after day. This is not the only example. We have seen many in the few short weeks we have been here since the House reconvened, and we will be pointing them out as we go along.

The inconsistency of this

government, Mr. Speaker! They go around the Province with their own document, and page 18 in their own document commits them to opening hospital beds, not closing them. This little, flashy document that the leader of the party, the now Premier, flashed all around Humber East - did not do him a lot of good, but he flashed it all around Humber East and all around the Province - says the same thing, they will keep hospital beds open as long as the demand exists. Now, is the government saying that there is no demand on the Burin Peninsula for those hospital beds? Is that what the government is saying? This government, Mr. Speaker, have not had the audacity to say it publicly yet.

Then they put in the word 'compassion'. Mr. Speaker, where have we seen any evidence of compassion by this government in the last several days?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

We certainly have not seen any compassion from the Minister of Finance. He brings in a budget that takes an extra \$100 million out of the pockets of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, and has the audacity, in the same document, to criticize the federal government for taking \$80 million out of the Newfoundland economy through additional taxation. He says how bad that is and how that is going to cause economic hardship in Newfoundland and Labrador. He does not have the phrase out of his mouth, Mr. Speaker, when he begins slash, slash, tack, tack, and it all adds up to another \$100 million. That is the consistency of this government.

This government talks about caring about hospital beds and keeping hospitals open. Immediately, in the first budget document, you see slash St. Lawrence, you see slash Grand Bank. This government is flip-flopping from one end of the day to the other. How many more are there coming? We do not know. But, Mr. Speaker, this government is going to be watched, I can tell you that. This government is going to be watched and we are not going to allow them, through the vehicle of this House of Assembly, to be able to get up and become pretentious and say, 'Do not talk to us about that because we are in this bind because you created and left us with something.'

Mr. Speaker, the government is the government. They were elected to govern and they can take any decisions they want to take. It is no good to blame it on us or somebody ten years previous, or somebody yet to come. The government is the government and they can make whatever decisions they want to make.

Like the Minister of Social Services, he can decide, Mr. Speaker, to go down to Reagan country and bring back a new philosophy of putting all of the social service recipients in Newfoundland and Labrador to work. He can do that. He can also go through the books, Mr. Speaker, and decide how many poor, single parents and widows and the old and the sick and the handicapped, how many of those people are out there might owe the Department of Social Services a few dollars. He can take a witch-hunt approach to the books in his department, Mr. Speaker, and see if he can scrape a few dollars here and a few dollars

there and a few dollars somewhere else, and then take it out of the hide of those who can least afford to pay. He can do that if he wishes.

The real change, Mr. Speaker, that this government talked about when they were over here, the real change that this government put in front of the people as their agenda for change, was supposed to be fairness, balance, compassion, great words that anybody could take out of the dictionary and chomp out in front of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and you could not argue against it, Mr. Speaker. But we have seen and we are seeing the fairness and balance in their approach to the health care system. We are seeing their definition of compassion in their approach to the health care system. We are seeing the same thing, Mr. Speaker, in their approach in the Social Services system. We are seeing the same thing in their job-creation approach.

The Minister of Labour and Employment (Ms Cowan) or Labour Relations or whatever the new title is - took one of the best programs that any government ever brought into force in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Private Sector Employment Program, and tars it with one brush as being full of patronage and full of politics, and says that it is no good. It is no good because she did not bring it in, that is the problem, Mr. Speaker. She now has to try and find some other way, but I doubt if she will bring it back anyway.

But the point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is that this government, day after day, is being so arrogant and hypocritical from the

time that they sat over here. You would think that there would be some consistency. You would think that as hon. gentlemen plotted and planned, and finally succeeded in moving from this side of the House to that side of the House, they would have had some great brainy person who would have researched for them the positions that they took as Opposition, the positions that they articulated as Opposition, so that when they got over there they did not, within their first few days in office or their first few weeks in office, start doing those stupid, silly thing that look hypocritical. That is what you would think would have happened.

But no, Mr. Speaker! There is no consistency between what the government preached when they were in Opposition and what the government practices as government. We have pointed that out today. A letter from the Minister of Health, who was the then critic for the Official Opposition, to the same people who are in here begging today for the government to maintain their health care system, the hon. gentleman was only too proud then, Mr. Speaker, in the Opposition context.

How did the Leader of the Opposition characterize that in those days? Was that somehow or other impeding the people's business, or was it going about the rightful business of the Opposition? But the hon. gentleman was only too proud in those days, just a couple of short years ago, to write off a letter of support saying 'We the Liberal Party, stand behind you.' The hon. gentleman was only too proud then to say, 'Give me your button. Let me wear your button

as the symbol that the Liberal Party stands behind you.' The hon. gentleman was only too proud then, Mr. Speaker, to say 'The only thing that is lacking is the will to do it.' But where is the button, where is the letter, where is the dedication and, more importantly, where is the will today, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SIMMS:

Where is the beef?

MR. RIDEOUT:

The hon. gentleman is now in a position not to just talk about things, he is a position to deliver things. And if he cannot deliver what he put in writing, Mr. Speaker? That is the least you can ask of an hon. gentleman, to deliver what he put in writing. If it was good enough to stand behind when you were in Opposition, is it not good enough to stand behind when you are a minister of the Crown? Or was it just all for show? The Premier was talking about show here today. In fact, did the real show begin two or two and a half years ago, over here, when some of his colleagues, who are now ministers, would take anything and sign it just for show, just to try to garner support, just to try to garner a few votes? Was that the approach?

Then the Premier gets up and talks about honesty and doing it right, and if it is right, then we are going to do it right. We do not care who it affects and what the adverse effect is. That letter certainly tells a lot, Mr. Speaker. It is easy to stick your name to a letter and tell somebody you support them. The hon. gentleman has got caught out badly. He must feel pretty proud today to have to go before those

delegations, he must feel pretty good about being ordered today to go down to St. Lawrence and Grand Bank over the next few weeks, he must be pretty pleased about that order from the Emperor, but he will have to go, Mr. Speaker. Before we would even consider making any kind of decision of this magnitude what did we do? The old arrogant, previous government, Mr. Speaker, sent an entire Cabinet Committee to the Burin Peninsula. The Social Policy Committee of the Cabinet went down and met with the town councils, the people, the hospital workers, and all those who should have any input into any decision made on the future of those facilities. This government did not even have the courtesy to consult with their friends on the Burin Peninsula. Some of their friends, some of their supporters, financially and otherwise, were shocked when they heard over the news that one of the first things this government did was to send the facilities to St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. They are all important, both of them, but this government did not even consider the possibility of the facilities being used by the taxpayers of the province. It was a disappointment to those who were in the Premier's position for this government when they were over here. They should not know of this surprise seeing the Premier's Legislative Committee.

when there were over here, obviously having no meaning or worrying about it, and not even having the good sense to ask somebody to correlate their pronunciations, not even having the good sense to ask somebody to bring together for them policy positions that they staked out before they became a government. That is where the Minister of Health has misled the people of St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. They could not dream in their wildest dreams, Mr. Speaker, that with a letter in their hip pocket from the Opposition critic for Health, who, I would say unfortunately for the Province but fortunately for them, in their eyes, perhaps, ended up being the Minister of Health, they could not believe the dart, with this letter in their files, when the axe fell on Budget Day. They could not believe it.

MR. SIMMS:

Hang your head in shame, boy. Hang your head in shame!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Not only did they have the commitment of the Progressive Conservative Party when we were government, but they had the commitment of the Liberal Party. They had all bases covered, so the wars were fought, the battles were fought as far as the people of St. Lawrence and Grand Bank were concerned. They never dreamed in their wildest dreams that they would have to fight those battles again. Certainly the friends of the party down there never dreamed they would have to fight them again with this Premier. Not only did they have the word of the now Minister of Health, then Opposition critic, they had the word of the former Leader of the Opposition, who told them that the policy of the

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Liberal Party was to keep those facilities open. They had the word of the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. W. Carter), who was the Health critic for the Opposition prior to the hon. gentleman from the Strait of Belle Isle becoming the Health critic. They had the word of the former Minister of Fisheries, who cannot, I am sure, Mr. Speaker, back down from what Hansard records. There is nobody disputing what we say here in this House when it is transcribed in the Hansard. He said, 'I would strongly support the petition' - this was the petition tabled by my friend, the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews) - "I would strongly support the petition and ask that the Minister of Health and his colleagues in government give it very serious consideration and accede' - in other words, give in to, grant - 'to the request contained therein.' The present Minister of Fisheries, who, at the time of saying it, was saying it on behalf of the Liberal Opposition, the Liberal caucus in the House of Assembly, the official Health critic for the Liberal Party of the day.

So we have two of them, Mr. Speaker. We have two presently here, the former Health critic who is now the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker) a former Health critic who is now the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter), both of them now sitting around the Cabinet table, cheek to cheek, Mr. Speaker, jowl to jowl, ready to knife the first Newfoundlander they can get a crack at -

MR. SIMMS:  
The first P.C.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Or the first P.C.

- but both of them sitting around that Cabinet table, Mr. Speaker, and obviously, neither of them had the good sense or the commitment or the decency or the courtesy to say, 'Hold on, now, Emperor, we cannot do that because, as a party, we have committed we would never do that.' What has happened here, Mr. Speaker? Only one thing has changed in all this. It is not the former Health critic, it is not the former, former Health critic; the former, former leader is gone, the only thing that has changed is that the hon. the Premier has come on the scene and he has changed dramatically since his campaign.

MR. SIMMS:  
A real change.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Real change! We have seen the real change. The real change, Mr. Speaker, is that it makes no difference what we were committed to when we were in Opposition, it makes no difference what former leaders of the party committed themselves to, it makes no difference what present members of the Cabinet might have committed us to.

DR. KITCHEN:  
The Press Gallery is empty.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Mr. Speaker, I have spoken in this House for days and days when the press gallery was empty -

MR. SIMMS:  
That is right.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
- and I will continue to speak for days and days whether they are up there or not, Mr. Speaker. But I tell you this, Mr. Speaker, I have said more in five minutes than the

Minister of Finance has said in all the time he has been in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Of all the people, Mr. Speaker, in that caucus, to have the gall, the man you had to handspike out of his seat -- and we tried handspiking him out of his seat and could not do it during the Interim Supply debate -- when he gets up, makes all kinds of foolish, silly comments about numerators and denominators and formulae and all that kind of thing.

No money in the Budget for this project or that project. I mean, I do not know how much longer he is going to last, I really do not. Every morning, Mr. Speaker, he must take an overdose of stunned pills. Every morning the hon. gentleman must grab for the stunned pill bottle as soon as he gets out of bed and gobble them down his throat so he can come in here and make a fool of himself, because every day that is exactly what he does. Every day the hon. the Minister of Finance makes a fool of himself. Either he cannot get up because he is glued on, or if he goes to get up, the Premier looks back and says, 'No, I will handle that.' You know, I never thought when I saw that hon. gentleman in another caucus that it was possible to glue him to his seat.

MR. SIMMS:

Old Suction Cup himself!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Old Suction Cup rolls again!

Mr. Speaker, this motion is an

important motion. This motion has important implications for Your Honour. The Government House Leader has not said much about that, but this motion is an important motion. It is an opportunity here to determine whether a member is going to be able to get up in this House of Assembly and represent the interests of his constituents or not.

MR. EFFORD:

Not again!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Now, Mr. Speaker, the old Midnight Wanderer has been a prime example of that.

MR. SIMMS:

No, he would never have done that.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I notice something about the Minister of Social Services, he has not been out roaming around after midnight lately.

MR. SIMMS:

Crawling under rocks.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Crawling under rocks and in behind doors and stuff like that, Mr. Speaker. But the hon. gentleman, when he was over here, Mr. Speaker

MR. EFFORD:

That is a personal attack.

MR. SIMMS:

That is not a personal attack. Do not be silly.

MR. RIDEOUT:

There is not another hon. gentleman in the House, I am sure, ever engaged, and rightly so, in beating up on people personally the way the hon. gentleman did

when he was a critic over here. So do not ever let us hear you, because we will always remind you of your own actions when you were on this side of the House, and they will stand out for a long time, Mr. Speaker, in the annals of parliamentary history, I can tell the hon. gentleman that.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a significant motion, and I am concerned that so soon into its mandate this government would choose to beat up on the little people, so soon in its mandate this government would choose to be so hypocritical, so soon in its mandate this government would choose to be so arrogant, so soon in its mandate this government would be so afraid of the people and their representative that they question whether or not they could come to a meeting. Mr. Speaker, there is something wrong in the rooms of this government and we are going to keep pointing it out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Question!

MR. DECKER:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DECKER:  
Mr. Speaker, if hon. members want to put the questions, I can certainly sit down. Are you prepared to put the question?

MR. SPEAKER:  
Are you ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Yes.

MR. SPEAKER:  
You heard the motion. All those in favour "Aye"?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:  
Contrary-minded?

The motion is carried.

### Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MR. DICKS:  
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DICKS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

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

MR. DICKS:  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as minister responsible for the Office of the Legislative Counsel, pursuant to Section (18) of The Statutes and Subordinate Legislation Act, I am required to lay before the House of Assembly a copy of The Subordinate Legislation filed under that Act. Accordingly, I table the editions of The Newfoundland Gazette published between April 8, 1988 and May 12, 1989.

MR. SIMMS:  
A good job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS COWAN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS COWAN:

Mr. Speaker, I am bringing to the House today the second annual report, that of 1988, of The Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

At this point I wish to inform hon. members of this particular report, under the provision of Section 5.5 of The Internal Economy Commission Act as amended, I wish to inform the House of a composition of the Internal Economy Commission. The members are the Speaker as Chairman; the Deputy Speaker, Lloyd Snow, as Deputy Chairman; the hon. Winston Baker, hon. Chris Decker, hon. Paul Dicks, Mr. Len Simms, and Mr. Robert Aylward. These are the members of the Internal Economy Commission.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I wonder could I ask the President of the Council to respond on

behalf of the Premier, who is not here. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier to investigate, or send out another committee to find that Minute in Council, and the Premier said he would, and hope to get back before the end of the day. He did not. Does he have anything to report?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

I thank the hon. Opposition House Leader for his question, although some of his terminology has certain implications that I do not agree with. The Premier agreed to look into a certain matter and he obviously will give an answer when he has that answer and when he is available to give that answer. I would like to point out as well, at the same time, to the Opposition House Leader that every single question that has been put on the Order Paper has now been answered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Let us see what will happen after tomorrow's Order Paper.

### Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Motion one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I really did not expect that I would have the occasion to rise in this House so soon, I thought it would probably be tomorrow. I think there is a bit of a message in that, Mr. Speaker, what was transacted today and over the past number of weeks. There is a bit of an admission, by the Premier and the Government House Leader, to get up and move that I be expelled for a minute. I think it says more than perhaps they would want to admit. The thing about it is the Emperor has left the Chamber again, so I guess the seals will now start surfacing, and I welcome it because that was the only way I was able to get through two hours or so talking yesterday, with the interjections by the Old chicken wing member for Mt. Scio-Bell Island Mr. Walsh. He really helped me yesterday, and I welcome that because it enables you to keep going.

Now the Second Emperor is just leaving. His attitude has been 'you wanted me, now you take what you get.' That is what he has espoused over the last month or so, particularly in the meetings I attended this morning with delegations from my district. 'I really did not want to be the leader, you know, but the people of the Liberal Party they pressured me into it, and they paid me \$50,000 a year additional salary so I could take it. So all of you take what I give you,' that is the attitude that comes out of this Premier.

And to be very honest with you, Mr. Speaker, in the seven or eight years that I have been a member of the House of Assembly I would say that I attended meetings with Ministers, and Premiers, on close to a 100 occasions, but I never in my lifetime and in my political

lifetime particularly, saw the arrogance of the Premier of this Province showed and displayed to the people of St. Lawrence to Lamaline this morning. He did not believe that anyone else should have an opinion on the health care services in their area, and when they questioned him on it and gave their opinion, he became very irritated and shouted back at them. Mr. Speaker, he went as far as to remind one gentleman that he had a grin on his face, and the gentleman very quickly responded to him and said 'Well, I guess I have learned something since April 20, you are no longer allowed to smile in this Province with you as Premier.' And this is just how the meeting deteriorated this morning, Mr. Speaker, and I was saddened by it.

And I have all the respect in the world for the Premier of this Province, whoever that person he or she might be, regardless of what political party, so I was really taken aback by that arrogant attitude that the Premier displayed. And the people from the delegation now making their way back to the Burin Peninsula are gone away very, very saddened today by that display by the Premier of this Province, because they did not come here for that, they came to express their opinions and to pass on to the Premier and the Minister of Health what they thought would be the best health care arrangements for the Burin Peninsula. They did not come in this morning and say they would not accept anything less than what they had. They wanted to negotiate and consult and to involve the Regional Health Care Board at Salt Pond and the Blue Crest Interfaith Senior Home in Grand Bank, and maybe come up with a total health care package for

the Burin Peninsula that maybe made more sense than what is in existence there now. To address the total health care requirements of the Burin Peninsula acute care and chronic care, care for the elderly, and, at the same time, a very, very important point was to protect the jobs now in existence and, indeed, maybe even create more jobs on the Burin Peninsula if the requirements for looking after the elderly were to be met. That would have tied in very neatly, Mr. Speaker, with the pronounced job creation efforts that this government has been announcing and trying to promote over the last number of months. So it was very, very disturbing.

Of course, we hear the Minister of Health and we hear the Premier today talk about the regional health care center at Salt Pond, of which we are all very proud and which we all support, but it cannot totally take care of the needs of the Burin Peninsula. You say that as a government you have to close down the hospitals in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. I made reference today, in my question to the Minister of Health, to Roddickton. I have nothing against the people of Roddickton. I hope they get a 200 bed facility, if that is what they need up there. But when you look at the geography of the Province and you look at what is in existence now and you size up the Northern Peninsula, you have a situation on the Burin Peninsula where you are going to open sixty acute care beds - there were eighty-six and you are now going to have sixty acute care beds. Now, you look at the Northern Peninsula and from what I gather, there is a hospital at Norris Point. Is that correct?

MR. DECKER:

Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:

How many beds?

MR. DECKER:

About fourteen.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Fourteen. Is there a hospital at Port Saunders?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Not at Port Saunders, Port au Choix, is it not?

MR. MATTHEWS:

You have a situation identical to what exists on the Burin Peninsula.

Is there a hospital at Port Saunders?

MR. FUREY:

Port Saunders has a (inaudible) centre.

MR. MATTHEWS:

So we have twenty-eight. What about St. Anthony?

MR. DECKER:

Sixty.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Sixty. So, how many does that give us?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Eighty-eight.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Eighty-eight. And now we are going to open up a new health care center in Roddickton. For how many people? What is the population of the Northern Peninsula?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Seventeen thousand, maximum.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Seventeen thousand, maximum. Let us say 20,000. Let us be generous. Let us be liberal in this case.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Let us be really liberal.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Let us not be really liberal, because that gets dangerous. We have seen that in the last week or so. That is dangerous.

So you have 20,000 people and yet, as a Premier, as a Minister of Health, as a Cabinet and as a government, you are trying to convince the people of the Burin Peninsula that sixty beds is going to satisfy the health care requirements of 35,000 to 40,000 people. When you do a comparison it becomes very obvious that what is happening here is that this government has decided to shut down much needed hospital beds on the Burin Peninsula to transfer it to the Minister of Health's area of the Province, in Roddickton. It is as plain as the nose on your face.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

They committed the big sin of voting Tory.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is what this Premier has done after going around this Province preaching fairness and balance and 'all regions of the Province will be treated equally.' Well, by inflicting a net loss of twenty hospital beds on the Burin Peninsula and increasing it somewhere else is not fairness and balance, and it is not treating all regions of this Province equally.

Now, if they want to put twenty or

thirty beds in Roddickton that is fine, but do not take them away from someone else to do it. Because you know how people react when you take something away that they already had. I will say sincerely in this House of Assembly that the two delegations, the town councils and the health care committees and so on from the Burin Peninsula, they are not unreasonable people. And if there is some way to better utilize the facilities, then these people would certainly entertain consultation and discussion with the Minister of Health and the government to accomplish that. The other side of the coin is that for St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, in essence what this government is doing is wiping out an industry in those towns. Sixty jobs in St. Lawrence are very, very important. That town has become so economically depressed up to -

MR. KELLAND:

Would the hon. member permit a question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No. Sit down, boy. Sit down.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Clyde is gone now, he is allowed to stand up.

MR. RIDEOUT:

And he does not have the moose licences drawn.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Is the moose draw not over yet?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Sure half the moose are shot.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

I made a mistake and got two. I

got yours.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, not being a big game hunter, I am really being distracted here now. I have lost my trend of thought.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at a community like St. Lawrence, which had its mine shut down, its fish plant closed down - thank God the mine is now reactivated and we see 110 people or so working there. And we see the fish plant working again, but neither industry is operating at the levels they were before. And now you are going to take sixty direct jobs out of that community, and with the indirect jobs that could probably amount to close to 100 jobs being taken out of a community like St. Lawrence. That is devastating to St. Lawrence and the surrounding communities.

As well, you are going to have the same situation in Grand Bank, where we have seen a decrease in the number of employees at the fish plant. Since the fisheries restructuring crisis, I would say there are approximately 200 people less working in the fish plant in Grand Bank than were there then. And with the downturn now in the fishery, the deep sea fishery particularly in this Province, we are going to see further reductions in employees. Even if they are all maintained on the payrolls of Fisheries Products International, they are going to earn less money. The amount of time they are going to spend processing fish is going to be less, consequently their unemployment insurance and so on will be less. So it is going to be very, very negative for the communities of Grand Bank and Fortune, and all around the

thirteen communities in my district, from Little St. Lawrence to Garnish. So when a government makes a decision to take away another sixty jobs from those communities, I think sometimes we do it without fully understanding, in essence, what we are doing to those communities and to the people.

This government, for sure, has decided to shut down the hospitals in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank without knowing fully what they are doing. They do not know. In fact, in answering questions today on how many beds are needed on the Burin Peninsula for acute care and chronic care, the Minister of Health could not stand in his place and tell me. Now, here is a minister who made this decision just a few short weeks ago. Could you believe that that minister could make a decision to close out some fifty-four or fifty-five hospital beds, to lay off approximately 110 hospital employees without knowing the requirements of the Burin Peninsula?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

No.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Well, he did, and the government did. They did that. And that tells me something about this government and it ties in with something I said yesterday. When this Premier axed some of the most competent civil servants who were employed in the bureaucracy of this Province, they are going to suffer the consequences of this: They fired the Deputy Minister of Health.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Order, Mr. Speaker.



There are three or four meetings on the go over there.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I have stood in this House and sat in this House since it opened, and I listened to the Premier lecturing before he opened the House about decorum and other things -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. gentleman is right, there are three conversations going on and it is beginning to take primacy over the debate now. I would ask hon. gentlemen to please restrain themselves and allow the hon. member to be heard.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

What we see here, Mr. Speaker, is comparable to what happens to a class in school. After you have them strapped to their seats so long, if you do not give them a recess break they get restless and they start to talk among themselves and pass notes and flick pieces of paper with a ruler and a rubber band. That is what happens. Of course, the Premier should know that he should allow his members to leave the Chamber on occasion to have a coffee or open up the windows, and then when they come back in they are more relaxed and can participate more positively in the functions of the House. But that is what we see here.

MR. TORIN:

Do you think they are allowed to go to the washroom?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Well, I am not sure. I have heard

that they are not. They are not even allowed to go to the washroom. The Premier says, 'Make sure, before you go up at 2:00 p.m., that you use the facilities.'

MR. WARREN:

They are wearing disposables.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, where we are they were before us, and they know it is very difficult when you have twenty or so people trying to use the facilities at the same time. So, I would advise members opposite that if you want to chat, and I know you do, and that is okay as well, go out in that big Common Room you have over there and have a chat, and really reflect on what your government and your Premier and the Minister of Health have done to the communities of St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, and all the communities in between. Reflect on it and reach down into the bottom of your stomachs and ask yourselves can you really support what this government has done. Can you really? Can you really support or pretend that you support the 10 percent tuition fees that you have imposed on students in this Province? Or can you really support deep down within you the slashing of the private sector employment program? Can you really do that when you really do not have anything to replace it? I have heard the social assistance program being brought up as a replacement. I see \$2 million being transferred over to the Minister of Employment. For what? What are you going to accomplish with it? Maybe some day she will get up and tell us what she is going to accomplish with the \$2 million.

MR. RIDEOUT:

She has not told us much yet.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, she has not told us much yet. We hear this new program is being considered. Well, I suppose you can go on forever considering programs, but it does not do much to employ the people of the Province or to help the private sector of this Province. What this minister has allowed to happen means a slash of 3,000 jobs across this Province. Now, that is a deadly blow to the private sector and to rural Newfoundland, and then you have the 110 jobs in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence. That is 3,110 jobs in two little decisions, as they saw it over there, just one little slice with the old machete; the old machete mentality has set in: Ah, cut it out. \$7.5 million, what is that? Three thousand jobs in Newfoundland and Labrador. That is no problem. We will cut that out and we will take half the \$7.5 million and give it to Dr. House and his Recovery Team. They are going to create far more jobs than that. Now, \$7.5 million in the Private Sector Employment Program was in essence \$15 million, because for every dollar this government put into the program they got \$1.00 from the private sector. So it was \$15 million. So what do they hope to accomplish?

AN HON. MEMBER:

How many jobs for youth?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, that is a very good question. I do not know if my information is correct or not, and I am sure the minister has the information at her fingertips over there, but there were a fairly large number of student applications for the Student Employment Program that were not

funded.

MR. TOBIN:

Chicken wing just came in.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, I know. Old chicken wing, he is doing his part. He applied under the student program and he did not know that it was not approved, like other members over there. They did not know that the program was cancelled, the private sector employment program. They actually called over to the project office and said, When will my project be approved?

MR. TOBIN:

Old chicken wing?

MR. WALSH:

I never called.

MR. MATTHEWS:

There were members who called from your side and said, When will my project be approved for the private sector employment program? That was in the last week. They were informed that the program no longer existed and you could hear the gasps come out over the phone. It was like a cartoon, where you see the big bulge come out through the cord. They could not believe it. There are several hundred student applications on file over there in the Employment Services Division that cannot be addressed because of the attitude and decisions of this government.

MR. BAKER:

That is not true.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The President of Treasury Board says it is not true.

MR. TOBIN:

It is true.

MR. MATTHEWS:

What is true? Everything that is said in this Chamber the Premier says it is silly and stupid, and the President of Treasury Board says it is not true. Now, I happen to know, as I had to tell the Minister of Employment before, that there were 1,534 applications on file for the Private Sector Employment Program that she did not know were there. The minister could not tell me. She could not tell me who made recommendations to Cabinet on approval for the project. I had to tell her who that was. I, as well, had to inform her, in light of her remarks about patronage in the program, that in two years not one recommendation to Cabinet was rejected on the Private Sector Employment Program. There was not one rejection. Now, how can that be patronage? We even approved one for this gentleman here who was a director of a firm. Now, how is that patronage? We approved one for Dicks and Dicks. Is that patronage?

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is false.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, it is not false. I would just as soon forget that in this House. I could have brought this up about a year ago and I chose not to. I decided not to. As minister responsible for the program, I decided not to. I know everything that happened and how you squirmed and went and changed.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I will challenge you.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You can challenge all you like, but I know the story all too well, Mr. Speaker. All too well I know what happened. I was called on

the matter when it was discovered and I said, 'Leave it alone.' Do you know why I said leave it alone? Unlike the hon. gentleman, we tolerated you when you were over here and we were in government. Do you know why I did it, to be very honest with you? It was because I had so much respect for the Private Sector Employment Program that I did not want it tarnished by these kinds of things becoming public. And I said, for the integrity of the program, leave it alone. Because we were under fire from the Opposition in this House of Assembly for about a week or so on the Private Sector Employment Program, which is fair enough. But I believed so much in the program that I did not want the program damaged in any way because, as I said, in two years there was not a rejection by Cabinet when the recommendations came up. There were a few problems discovered after the approvals were done, which is fair enough. When you have thousands of applications coming into a department, people lined up at the desk, particularly from the Avalon, to fill out their applications for the program, then you are under pressure to get approvals. That is why, this year, we sent the applications out early in the year around this Province so they would come back earlier and the project offices would have a chance to complete the applications and get pertinent information. The applications would then be referred to the interdepartmental committee which made recommendations, and everything would be more orderly and Cabinet would not be under pressure to make hasty approvals. That is why I did it. I did all these things to try to make the program more successful and more

equitable for everybody around this Province from Labrador, down the Northern Peninsula, along the South Coast and so on. That is why I did it. And I will tell you, when I went to the lock-up to be briefed on the Budget, the two things that hurt me most in the Budget Highlights were the closure of the two hospitals, Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, and the cancellation by this administration of the Private Sector Employment Program. It affected me very, very deeply. This member here from Mount Pearl, the former Finance Minister, was there with me and he knows.

MR. HODDER:

And they had the face to say there was patronage.

MR. MATTHEWS:

There was no patronage in that program, I can assure you, none whatsoever.

MR. TOBIN:

What were you saying about the member for Port de Grave?

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am finished saying anything about the member for Port de Grave. I said why I did or did not do some things that other people would have done, and there was good reason for that. The reason is as I have just outlined. But if the shoe were on the other foot, I think we would see a different ball game. But, then, that is the difference in people. That is why, I guess, some people would have stood in this House today and said 'I am sorry'. They would have sucked back what they said.

HON. MEMBER:

A man of principle.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is the way I am. I have always been very strong-willed and I guess I will go to my grave like that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

I have never been known to back down from anything or anyone and, please God, I will still have the courage to continue to be like that.

I and this former administration were accused in this House today of not having courage. Well, I suppose you can put all kinds of interpretations on different words, but I would like to think that instead of saying we were less courageous than some other people are or would like to be perceived around this Province, I would like to say that we were a little more compassionate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

And I think if you are going to be successful in running this Province as a Premier, as a Cabinet and as a government, you somehow have to find the mix. You have to take tough decisions sometimes that are not always popular. But, as well, you have to be compassionate. So, if you can get a mix of the two 'c's', then I think you have a fair chance of pleasing most of the people and you will end up being successful in what you are pursuing.

MR. TOBIN:

John, what is that story?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Leave John alone. John is under enough pressure as Minister of Social Services.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Trying to get the \$8 million back.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He is out on a big search of the Province now. He has his people looking in closets for the clothes and other things he is going to want to take back, the \$8 million he is going to find.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Tearing up mattresses to see if he can find it. They will have to buy a new mattresses now.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, everything. He is on a rampage of the Province. The same gentleman who fought the cause for social assistance recipients in this Province for four years. We saw what he did with the Budget, and now he is socking it to them again.

MR. TOBIN:

He cut the budget. Less than a \$2 million increase.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is a dismal performance for a man, by the way, whom I thought would be an excellent Minister of Social Services. I said, 'He is going to be an excellent minister,' because he had me convinced that he believed so much in fighting for the underprivileged. And he has become so quiet and so mum that I cannot really believe it. He was a fighter, but the fight went out of him and it is too bad. I suppose that is all right, too.

Perhaps he wants to learn a bit more, but if you listened to him

for the last two or three years you would think he knew more about social assistance than anyone else in the world. He was going to increase everything: All allowances were going to be increased. But what happened to it?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He got his arrogance injection.

MR. MATTHEWS:

You helped establish the priorities of your government, and obviously you did not stand up enough for the social assistance recipients of this Province. You saw millions of dollars going to Dr. House - \$3 million - and you sat there and you allowed your Premier and your Cabinet colleagues to say, We are going to have a \$5 million surplus, when you should have said, Let us balance the budget. Give me the \$5 million to give to the poor of the Province. You sat there and you took that.

MR. TOBIN:

Now he is going to beat them up for \$8 million.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he is going to go out now with the club. He is going to club them.

MR. RIDEOUT:

And with hobnail boots.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Pass over the \$8 million or you are going to get a sledge. Big bumps on the club too, I suppose, big knots. He is going to beat them into submission.

MR. TOBIN:

He is going to take back \$8 million from the poor, the sick and the suffering of this Province?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Why would the minister even say that he was going out to get back \$8 million from the poor of this Province? Why make such a statement when he knows he cannot do it? The poor people do not have it to give him. Oh, I know what he is going to do, he is going to issue their cheques with less money on them.

MR. TOBIN:

He should go to Treasury Board and ask him to write (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

He should. And if the President of Treasury Board has half the compassion that he professes to have in this House, and he is as decent as I believe he is - I think he is one of the most decent individuals I have ever met.

MR. TOBIN:

Who?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The President of Treasury Board.

MR. TOBIN:

He is a fine fellow.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I taught with him for a while too. He is a terrible teacher.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

And he is a terrible environmentalist.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He convinced himself that he was a biologist and, more importantly, he convinced the Cabinet that he was a biologist and he sold Bt to be used in the spray program. He said I know more about spray than anyone else. And he looked at the member for Windsor - Buchans and he said, Now listen here, I know more about spray than the rest of

you put together.

MR. TOBIN:

(Inaudible) the budworm.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, he said, Now we are going to use Bt this year. I am an environmentalist and I am a biologist, and I know more about it than anyone else.

MR. SIMMS:

Chemical warfare.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Chemical warfare. Yes, using a bit of the other stuff might be a little bit more wiser than poverty welfare, too, if the forests of the Province fall a part.

MR. TOBIN:

Get back to your point.

MR. SIMMS:

It will be Bt Baker's fault.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Bt Baker will stand up then and he will take full responsibility, I am sure he will. Old Bt Baker.

MR. TOBIN:

First you said he was a good man, but a poor teacher. I know he is a good man.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He was awful. That is why he left teaching.

MR. TOBIN:

But he is no better than the Minister of Development. He is a good man.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Having said that in fun, seriously he is a very decent individual and he was good biologist. And he is a good politician. But I have listened to him in the last couple

of days and I am not so sure how he is going to perform as President of Treasury Board. I am not so sure. Listening to him speak publicly, I am not so sure how he and Mr. March are going to make out. I am not so sure.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

There is a fight coming.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Ah, there are going to be lots of fights.

MR. SIMMS:

We will know soon enough.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. March was out on the steps today.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He was out there today, ranting and roaring.

MR. RIDEOUT:

He was in a familiar position.

MR. MATTHEWS:

A familiar position, and he did not care who was at the top.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

March will not be working for Seabright next time.

MR. WINDSOR:

He was not out with the judge today, was he?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

No, he was not out with the judge today, and he will not be with the judge the next time.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He would accept any friends, he said. It is hard to believe. Hard to believe.

There are a lot of members over there and a lot of ministers who have their day coming. The Minister of Social Services is getting bored now in the House, he is not getting any questions. But, of course, he is preoccupied with the \$8 million purge.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He cannot get up every day now and make accusations.

MR. SIMMS:

He is not doing anything.

MR. TOBIN:

Wait until it hits.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Wait 'til she strikes!

MR. SIMMS:

How about the Minister of Finance?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The Minister of Finance? I suppose I should be taking more about that minister than any other minister in this debate, because it is the Budget Debate. But what can you say about a minister who was not permitted to introduce a \$1 billion Interim Supply Bill? The President of Treasury Board had to do that.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

I know why now.

MR. MATTHEWS:

And he has been asked six or seven questions in the House which he has not even gotten up on his feet to even attempt to answer.

MR. WINDSOR:

Scandalous!

MR. MATTHEWS:

He was asked a question today and he answered it incorrectly. I asked how much money was in the

Budget for the continuation of the St. Lawrence and Grand Bank Hospitals and he said, nothing. Then the Premier very quickly looked back and said, There is money there, Hubert.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

And the Premier was right. Because that was exactly the answer. And then the poor Minister of Health was so embarrassed he had to jump up and take up a book and start to read it. I do not know where he got it.

MR. WINDSOR:

We are three months into the fiscal year and the Minister of Finance does not know that he spent so much.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The Minister of Health did not see it in the Budget document, did he? There is nothing specifically listed in the Budget for Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, when you have listed the rest of the hospitals. From where did you dig up the figure, that is the question.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is cover-up.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is covered up like the increase in electricity rates that is going to hit this Province is covered up, some 14 or 15 per cent. Now, they did not cover up the tuition fees. I do not suppose they could find a way to do it. But what they do not realize, you see, is that by wacking the tuition fees up by 10 per cent they are going to end up costing themselves just as much money anyway, because Student Aid calculations are

formatted. I am sure the minister must think about that over there. He is looking very pensive today. They are hoping you would not talk about things like this. The Minister of Education, if he was sincere, would stand in his place and say, Look, I fought with my Cabinet colleagues. And I honestly think he did. I think he is sincere about students, and I think he is sincere about post-secondary and secondary education.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

They would not listen to the scientists on Bt, and they would not listen to the experts on education.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, they did listen to the biologist on spray, but they would not listen to the expert on education. That is the problem.

MR. TOBIN:

Who is the expert on education?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The Minister of Education is the expert on education.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The member for St. John's North.

MR. TOBIN:

He is a decent fellow.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, there is no question. He is very decent.

The only thing that worries me is that The Minister of Education may have taken some advice on education from the Minister of Finance. Now, if such is the case, and to be very honest I do not think that -

MR. SIMMS:



The Minister of Finance should have been Dean of Education, should he not?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, but the committee did not even interview him, did they?

MR. SIMMS:

Les would not take him on.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, he would not have him.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

So he upped the tuition right away.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, he socked to the students.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he whacked it to the students, but I have a funny feeling that by the end of September we are going to see who is going to sock it to whom. I would say you are going to see more than 200 or 300 people on the steps down there come September, and then the Premier and the Minister of Education will have to go down, I suspect, because they will not go away unless they come down. We will go down, as we did today.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

Is that the member for LaPoile making a grunt and a groan over there again? I must say to the member, I was impressed with his speech.

MR. SIMMS:

I liked the speech by the member for Placentia.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That was the best yet. He speaks in the House every day, but it is

usually a barb across the House to you. He has no sense of humour. You have to have a sense of humour to survive in any profession, particularly in politics, if you are going to come here and sit in this Legislature as long as this Premier says we are going to sit here. Any one who does not have a sense of humour better develop one fast. You will have no problems finding use for the beds in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, because you will be able to open up a psychiatric ward and very quickly all of us here will fill it up, we will take turns, if you do not develop a sense of humour here in this Legislature. So let us not get so bogged down in it all. We get so serious that we cannot do as we are doing right now. Throw a scattered barb and laugh about it. If we do not, we will all go funny. Most people out there think we are crazy now anyway, and there are times I tend to agree with them; I wonder and reflect on why I got into this profession.

MR. TOBIN:

There is a big garden down there, too. Can you see the member for Placentia setting potatoes?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The first candidate to go in is obviously the member for Burin - Placentia West.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

I can tell you that the only reason he is here is because I signed him out this morning.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The beds have been closed now, so you cannot get him back in.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Having said that, and I say that, of course, in jest, because, as everyone knows, he is my good friend -

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Sometimes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
He is good sometimes, yes, and he hates to be outdone by anyone, so I was very surprised when I got the flick out of the House today that I did not see him coming right behind me. But getting back to education, on a very serious note, I expect that over the next two or three years we are going to really see the educational funding escalate and increase in this Province, because we have some fairly heavy educators now in the Province who are sitting in the caucus and the Cabinet. We have the Minister of Education, the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, the member for Exploits, the Minister of Finance, the member for Carbonear, and the member for Windsor - Buchans is educated.

MR. TOBIN:  
The member for Port au Port.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I am talking about the heavyweights, educational heavy weights.

So we expect to see great strides in the educational funding of this Province. As I said, we look forward to the upcoming negotiations with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association.

MR. SIMMS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
We will see how many of the resolutions that were passed at

their annual convention are going to be addressed.

MR. SIMMS:  
They want a 20 per cent increase.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
They want a 20 per cent increase.

We will see this time, when the negotiations get rough - maybe they will not, though - who pulls out the old Kleenex and stands up in front of 700 or 800 teachers and weeps because they could not get anymore. We will see what happens this time. We will see which side they will cry for this time. Will it be for the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, the teachers of this Province, or will they cry because the government is financially strapped?

'Please, do not put any more pressure on us. Have compassion on Pat and I,' Roger will say. 'Have compassion. We stood up for you. We could only get you 3 per cent or 4 per cent, but please do not force the government too hard because we are members of it now. So take it easy, be reasonable. Say 4 per cent is a good increase this time. Make the government look good.' That is what we are going to see.

Now, I do not think for a minute that the Minister of Education is going to stand for that, because I have more faith in him. I do not have that much faith in the other two because I have seen them operate. I have seen them stickhandle and try to skate with one skate on. I have seen all that. And I have seen their true colours, and we are going to see them again.

We will see now, when the Premier

puts the thumb down, really where they stand on the cause of education in Newfoundland and Labrador, and where they stand on the plight of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. We will see. It will not be long before we will see. If they think again that they will only have 200 or 300 out on the steps, there will be a lot more out there.

MR. SIMMS:

The member for Stephenville is there right behind the Premier.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He should not be right behind the Premier, that member, he should be up next to the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

There is a member in this Legislature who is sincerely concerned about the youth of this Province, who has been, is, and will continue to be. The only one, I suppose, in the Legislature who, over the last four years, I could compare to myself with concern for the youth of the Province, and it is that member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

I could not believe, I do not believe yet, that he does not have the responsibility for the youth of this Province, by the way, because I think he would make an excellent minister.

MR. SIMMS:

He should be in the Cabinet.

MR. MATTHEWS:

If I were Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, he would be the

first man I would call into office. Do you know why? Because he is sincere about the youth of this Province and he means well for them. Maybe it is because he is one of the younger members of the Legislature and he has performed very, very well. But where have the youth responsibilities disappeared? Where have they gone?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Buried under the water and sewer.

MR. MATTHEWS:

What is the old song, Where has all the something gone?

MR. SIMMS:

'Where Have All The Flowers Gone?'

MR. MATTHEWS:

Where has culture gone? Where has tourism gone? Where have the youth responsibilities gone?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

To the department of everything but the kitchen sink.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Where has it all gone? Responsibilities, divisions that had such high priority before in this Province, are now buried somewhere else. Why? Is the youth of this Province not important enough? Is culture in this Province not important enough? Is rural development not important enough? Is tourism not important enough? What is important enough in this Province, Mr. Speaker? That is what I have to ask. What is important?

I can tell you what this Premier has done. I have to stand in this House again, being the honest person that I am, and say that I agreed with a reduction in the size of the Cabinet. I agreed

with that. I told the man that I supported for leader of this party that one of the conditions I would support him on was that there would have to be a reduction in the size of the Cabinet, because I thought it was too big, even if it meant that I had to go. And I would have gone, by the way.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

It almost meant I had to go.

MR. MATTHEWS:

This man dug in his fingernails hanging on, my buddy here, but I said to the Premier, No, leave him. He is a good fellow.

But seriously, I sincerely believed that and I believe it today. That was a condition, and I talked to Tom Rideout about that. And he had the same commitment as I did. But I said to him, at the same time, You cannot reduce the size of your Cabinet so that the departments of government become nonfunctional. Again, it was a matter of degree.

And what has this Premier done? Divisions have been lost in departments that no one has heard tell of since.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

That is right. Wildlife disappeared.

MR. MATTHEWS:

If you were to be honest, Mr. Premier, or if you knew what was going on in the bureaucracy of this government, you would know that things are very quickly coming to a stop, grinding to a halt. The people of the Province are not going to be as well served as they were before and they care about that. They care about applications being processed as soon as they can, and cheques and

invoices being dealt with as soon as they can. And what you have done, Sir, you have again gone from one extreme to the other; you have made certain departments of this government nonfunctional and there will be decisions made and things done by some of your ministers and they will not know what has happened, because some of your ministers have too many responsibilities and they just cannot do justice to them.

But, of course, that was fine. I said, Well, a reduction is not too bad. The Premier is moving in the right direction. He has decreased the Cabinet from nineteen to fifteen and, as I said yesterday, he has probably saved the taxpayers \$200,000 to \$250,000 in salaries and so on.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Around that.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is around that to run four ministers, \$200,000. But because he is saving \$200,000 on one hand and making government more and more nonfunctional, he is going off to appointing commissions and the Economic Recovery Team, which is going to cost this Province this year \$3 million, when he could have kept his four ministers for \$200,000 and have gotten just as much value out of it. You can nod and shake your head, you see, but you believe in wizards and so on, and doctorates, but I do not. I believe in practical people. He has left. Make no wonder he left. A man who has cost the taxpayers of this Province an additional of \$2.8 million to set up an Economic Recovery Team. If they create 500 jobs for this Province, I will swallow the budget book. Now, you might say, You are capable of doing that

anyway, and you may be right.

MR. EFFORD:  
(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, I know the Minister of Social Services would like to see me swallow the budget book. And I am sure that over the last week there were times he wished that he had swallowed it. I am sure there were, because he must be so embarrassed with the document.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Sure he is.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Ninety-five million additional taxes off the skin of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and then he has the gall to say, I am going out and take another \$8 million off those who can least afford it. You will have them going around with short pants on all year long; they will not be able to afford to buy long underwear.

MR. TOBIN:  
The Penman's.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
The Penman's are gone.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
Strip him.

MR. BAKER:  
(Inaudible) Tory Stanfields.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Never mind the Tory Stanfields.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
That is all they will have left to keep them together, a pair of Stanfields.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes. I would say the minister had

better get some Krazy Glue in and some patches.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
But he feels bad about it.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, he does feel bad, but he will not stay in the House and admit that he made a blunder. Neither will the Minister of Finance, the minister who miscalculated, who admitted in the front of people he miscalculated and said, Boys, we need \$95 million more in taxes. I do not know why and I do not understand the formula that got me to come up with the \$95 million figure, but we are going to take \$95 million off them anyway. That is what we are dealing with over there and you may as well admit it.

And you must be all saying today, my God, who do we have in charge of the finances of the Province? Can you imagine the fiscal agents of this Province, Standard and Poor and Moody's?

AN HON. MEMBER:  
They are in shock.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I would say they have booked flights for Newfoundland but are going in the opposite direction.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Yes. You will never get to New York.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
It is like John Crosbie said: 'if you keep going East you will end up West. Well, I would say that is the only way they will get here, if they go all a way around the world. Because they will be afraid to come near the Province to see what is happening to the finances of this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

They should keep going.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, they had better keep going. I would say they should pass over the rock and never land. So, that is what we are into. We are into incompetence. We are into inexperience.

DR. KITCHEN:

We were.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now listen to who said, 'We were.' Will every one in this House listen to who said 'We were' into inexperience and incompetence. The old Wordless Wonder, who got the award in the House of Assembly, who did not know the formula and is Minister of Finance. He did not know the fiscal terms. The member for Mount Pearl had to send him over a list of definitions because he could not understand, he wished he would talk to him in English.

MR. WINDSOR:

They are right in the front of his budget. They are all there.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He was using fiscal terms like bonding, credit agencies, fiscal capacity and things like that, and the minister stood in his place and said, 'I do not know what the hon. member is asking me. I wish he would ask it in English.'

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The real tough one like denominator, that threw him.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Can you imagine? And he looks over here and says that this Province was being managed by incompetents. I asked him a question today and he did not even

know if there were 5 cents in the budget to continue the operation of Grand Bank or St. Lawrence. And when I asked him if he shut them down today was there any money there for contingency plans, he did not know that. Now, what does he know outside of inflicting taxes on the people of Newfoundland and Labrador? That says what he knows.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He knows how to use a vacuum cleaner to suck out the wallet.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, yes. I have never seen the like!

MR. RIDEOUT:

He knows how to use a suction pump in your pockets.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, I am going to tell you something -

MR. R. AYLWARD:

That is where all those fish pumps went. He has them for sucking up money.

MR. MATTHEWS:

- it is vicious! It is shocking, what he has done. What he has done is absolutely ridiculous. Ninety-five million dollars in additional taxes. Three hundred additional dollars for every man, woman and child this year. The poor students, as I said, will not be able to afford to come to university. They will not be able to afford to turn on the lights to study. We will have a bigger failure rate in the post-secondary institutions of this Province this year because students will not be able to afford to have their lights on to study. So, I suppose you will have to buy them a flashlight, a little penlight, or

kerosene. But he taxed kerosene, too, did he not? If he did not tax the kerosene, he taxed the lamps. If you are affluent enough to give your son or daughter a car, an old second car to come to St. John's to try and get them around, to make university life a little more pleasant, they cannot afford to put the gas in it. That is what we have seen here by this minister and by this government. And do you know something? What is really frightening is that they are proud of what they have done. They are proud of what they have done.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
It is strange.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes. As we said, it is a real change.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
It is the same old recovery team they had in place in the 1960s.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, the Recovery Team, that is a new idea.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Oh, yes.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
That is an up-and-comer, that one.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
There was a team put together in the mid-1960s.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
The Premier was here then. That is where he got the idea.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Oh, yes, he was here at the time. That was the time he was out to do away with some unions, was it not?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
About the same time.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
What did he say about St. John's then?

MR. MATTHEWS:  
He said St. John's was a parasitic city.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
The member for St. John's South agrees.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
There was a team put together in the 1960s that was very similar to that, and it was disbanded by Premier Moore's in 1972. I do not know what the results were. I do not know what we got out of it. I do not think we got too much. They called the shots. Do you know what they did? They did exactly what this Economic Recovery Team is going to do.

I have to laugh when I see the member for Burin - Placentia West over there. It makes me laugh. He is so funny. He is over there now trying to get something out of the Minister of Development for the Marystown Shipyard. He would do anything to get something for his district. I suppose you have to admire him for that. I would not be surprised now if he is going to take the minister out to dinner instead of the minister taking him. It would not surprise me one bit.

But, you know, this Economic Recovery Team that was established in the 1960s called the shots in every department of government, and they really turned out to be a thorn in the side of all the officials and the bureaucrats and

the ministers. They were a thorn in their sides.

MR. RIDEOUT:

That is where the Premier got the idea. He is a '60s person.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he is a man for the 1960s, trying to perform going into the 1990s, there is no question about that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He will never get into the year 2000s doing stuff like that.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, never, never.

AN HON. MEMBER:

There will be real Commission of Government (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

I will tell you that the name of this Province will be changed by the year 2000 with the performance of this Minister of Finance. I do not know what it will be called. Poverty Isle, I would say. Poverty Isle, or something like that. That is what we are headed into, absolutely! Going back to the former Economic Recovery Team, and the Premier was then in the government, you had a Director General of Planning, a Director of Resource Planning, a Director of Resource Planning, a Director of Infrastructure Planning, a Director of Human Resource Planning and an Assistant Director of Planning. It sounds so close to what we have heard announced over the last week so that we are back to a situation like the 60s, where we had such success from the 60s Economic Recovery Team that we are now going to put another one in place. There were factories, rubber boots, and all kinds of stuff.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hockey sticks.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, hockey sticks. We are going into all that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

And orange juice.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I was too young to remember that. I just remember the Economic Recovery Team from the 60s because someone reminded me of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot believe it, and they have not been out for recess. But I will tell you one thing, that the Chairman should recommend to the Speaker that if the Emperor is not going to let them leave their seats, he should provide oranges. It is like in the old soccer games, at half time you always bought a dozen oranges for the opponents.

AN HON. MEMBER:

They only got a half orange.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Never in Grand Bank did you only get a half orange. You probably got two oranges. Because, you see, we were not very hospitable when you are on the playing surface, but for the ten minutes you went off at half time we thought you were half human and we considered you to be so.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You tripped people when they were playing.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, I never did that. I certainly did not when I played. I was too



clean a player to ever engage in that kind of thing on a playing field. I played fair, as I play now. I played hard and aggressive, but fair. The very people who are in the Gallery today, by the way, were my main opponents 'in soccer, the people from St. Lawrence. Do you know why they admired me most? Because I played hard and I was aggressive. That is the kind of people that they like, because that is the kind of people they are.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

I was a good, clean player. I never tripped anyone else up unless they tripped me up first. You are allowed to trip if someone trips you first.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Sure. That is fair.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I will tell you how fair and clean a player I was. I played for seventeen years in this Province at all levels, junior and senior. I played for every Newfoundland select team that there was while I played soccer, by the way. Today, when I got the flick from this House it reminded me of something: It reminded me of the only time I got a red card in seventeen years.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who gave it to you?

MR. MATTHEWS:

My good friend, Newman Bartlett. But, you know, he had to do it. Newman would do it anyway, because he did not want to let me go out of my career flawless or too clean.

MR. SIMMS:

To match your hair.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, it was redder than my hair. I thought back today, as a result of that. I must tell you I am no more prouder today of what I did than I was when I got sent off the playing field in my home town, when I got the red card.

MR. TOBIN:

Were you a clean player?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes. But what happened that night on the playing field, when I got the red card, was somewhat similar to what happened over the last couple of days. A guy was much shorter than me and could not jump high enough to head the ball from me, so I would just stand and head the ball away. For the first game in Burin, he would come with his feet up and he would catch me right in the thighs with the cleats on his boots. I put up with it for one game. I came into Grand Bank and the first high ball came in and this little fellow ran in. I just nodded the ball away and in he comes with them again in the same spot, and I was getting pretty sore by now. But the play went on and it happened again. Then I said to him, Listen, I put up with this two nights ago in Burin, and I have put up with it twice tonight, but the next time you come and do that you will not do it anymore. He was a neruy little fellow and short.

MR. TOBIN:

He is shorter now, is he not?

MR. MATTHEWS:

He is shorter now. That is a good point. And do you know what? He had the nerve to do it.

But I got the red card. As the

member says, he is shorter now than he was then. I think I took about three inches off the bottom of his two legs, of which I was not proud. His Uncle started screeching that poor old Matthews had killed Keith. The referee, by the way, did not see it, which was a funny thing. He was going away from the play when he heard this screeching and bawling, and he looked back, of course, and saw the player there. I was about fifty yards away by now, and I was saying, 'I did not do anything with him,' but I got the red card. Well, today was similar, you see; you get rubbed and rubbed and rubbed so sore, and you talk to people who will not listen to you. That is exactly how the people in the Gallery felt today. They were rubbed sore by this government, rubbed very sore, and I was rubbed sorer, or more sore. I have been at this for seven or eight years now, trying to protect the health care services for these people. I know them all personally and so well. They are friends. My family is down there. It is not like somebody from some other part of the Province representing, who does not know them. I can knock on any door in the district and know them all personally, because I spent my life there. But I got rubbed so thin today. And to have to tolerate the arrogance of the Premier in a meeting earlier today, a Premier who went about this Province promising that things were going to be so much better in all facets of our society, in all sectors, and in particular the health care sector, and to see him treat those people with such disrespect and arrogance this morning, I just could not take any more. I believe so much in the cause I said, 'If it means that I have to get the red card

from the House of Assembly today, then I guess the Speaker will have to give it to me.' So it is a very similar comparison.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I do not want you to get sick or anything, but in health care -

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes. Health Care: 'A Liberal Government will keep hospital beds open as long as the demand exists, and give financial priority to the upgrading and improvement of our health care system. The Liberal plan can make a real change.' Yes, it can make a real change! It is going to make a real change for the 110 employees in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence. They have a choice: Go on welfare and hopefully the minister - no, I cannot say that. That is being contradictory, and I do not want to be like the Premier. I was going to say I hope he gets enough back from the \$8 million purge that he can afford to give them welfare, the people who are not going to have jobs - or they can make a decision to move to some other part of the Province or out of the Province. Maybe we will have an additional 110 people leave the Province, which certainly will not sit very well with the Premier who was going to bring 35,000 or 40,000 back a month or so ago. Maybe we will have the 110 pass the 35,000 coming back. I do not know. That is a real change for them. It is social upheaval. There is nothing worse in this world than insecurity, knowing that your job is uncertain.

Everyone in this Legislature, unless you have another job or you have an outside income, feels insecure everyday. I have been here just about eight years and

every morning I wake up I feel insecure, because I have to look beyond this term of another three years and to what I do after that. Well, these people do not know how long they have to look before they are unemployed, these people in those hospitals. Because the Minister of Finance does not know if he has any money to keep them going until next week, they do not know how long they will be there. Can you imagine how the employees who are in this Gallery will feel today driving down that Burin Peninsula Highway? They know that the only thing the Premier did today was agree to send his Minister of Health down there just to say that he did send him down there. He left the clear impression that there certainly was no encouragement.

I do not know how his meeting went with Grand Bank.

PREMIER WELLS:

It went very well.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It went very well. I am surprised to hear that. You must have changed your tone from this morning or it would not have gone very well with the Mayor of Grand Bank, I assure you.

MR. RIDEOUT:

I hope he did not grin.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No. I hope the Mayor did not smile. He would have gotten reprimanded if he had smiled this afternoon. Mayor Long got a rap on the knuckles this morning because he smiled.

MR. SIMMS:

Explain that one.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No. It is too belittling to even get into.

Let us deal with the bigger issue of the feelings of the employees who were here today, who are driving over the Burin Peninsula Highway back home right now, and the employees who are down there who are waiting for the report from their delegation. Let us deal with that.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did the minister tell them to hold a public meeting when he goes down there?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, yes. He told them he would do whatever they wanted him to do, and I am sure he will. He is going down to visit the facility, which is very important. The whole Social Policy Committee - do they have a Social Policy Committee, by the way?

They have three Planning and Priorities committees, they have a Chairman of Social Policy and a Chairman of Resource, but I do not know if they are actual committees. Has the Premier constructed a Social Policy Committee of Cabinet? Who Chairs it? Who is Chairman of the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet? Who is the Chairman?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The Premier. He chairs everything.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Is the Minister of Education the Chairman?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes, he is.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He is? He does not want to admit

it. He does not want to admit he is Chairman of the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet. What the Chairman of the Social Policy Committee should do is do what this Party and this government did, take the Social Policy Committee down there. It is a very important social issue. What bigger and more important social issue will you get? Go down, take a look at the facilities and meet with the people. Meet with those who are employees, meet with those in the hospital beds and talk to them. And talk to some of the older people who have relied on those facilities all their lives. Go down and get the real feel for the decision you have made, because I say very honestly that you do not understand what you have done. You do not understand what you are doing, you really do not. You are going to put the Burin Peninsula in nothing short of a health-care crisis. Sixty acute care beds will not handle the pressure down there.

Now, will the Chairman of the Social Policy Committee, the Minister of Education -

MR. SIMMS:

And the President of Treasury Board.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, I do not want the President of Treasury Board there, because he will find some biological reason to close it up. I would not let him near my fish plants, because I know he would go through bacteria counts and he would say, Maybe Bt will clean this out. No. I do not want him down there. But the Chairman of the Social Policy Committee I would like to have down there, and I would like him to agree to take the Social Policy Committee down there. And let us

arrange a public meeting, a public reception in Grand Bank for him, and a public reception in St. Lawrence for him and his committee. That is what we should do.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It would turn out to be a public whipping.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, it will not turn out to be a public whipping, it would turn out to be a public meeting, a forum on the decision of this government. Why would you not do that.

MR. TOBIN:

Would you be allowed to go to that?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Well, I would write for permission. I have learned one lesson today, that I am going to write the Premier, with a copy to the member for Exploits, and ask for permission to accompany future delegations from my district to whatever minister or department they might go.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Papal dispensation?

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, I really have to do that.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Why?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Because I have. I am only the member for the area, so why should I be entitled to go into meetings with delegations that are here talking to ministers and government? Why would I be allowed in there? Let me tell you something: I am not sure of my political future. Three years time: You cannot think or talk about that, but I will tell you

that I do not know. I may run again, I am not sure. But if I do, they will have to put up with me for a long time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
And it will not be here, it will be over there. But that is a long way into the future. It is a long road that has no turns, and some roads have more turns and sharper turns than others. Mr. Speaker, there is no question. The Liberal plan can make a real change. It sure can. They have made a real change in Newfoundland and Labrador in the last couple of weeks.

The Municipal Affairs list will not be tabled in this House of Assembly. You know it and I know it. The Minister responsible does not have time to table the list, the poor man, with all due respect to him. He is overworked.

I met the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation on the elevator this morning and what he said to me tied in so well with what I said yesterday, when I talked about ministerial responsibilities and the amount of work and the demand on the ministry of this Province - 18 hours a day. You are right. I know you work 18 hours a day. The demands are there. It is one thing to work 18 hours a day, but it is another thing for you to perform. You have to evaluate that. But the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, I do not know how the man gets time to sleep. Perhaps he does not sleep. I will tell you that he has some responsibilities.

MR. TOBIN:

And he shows it.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
He had to go to Vancouver last week to get a rest.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I would like to ask if he is the Minister responsible for Culture?

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Are you the Minister responsible for Culture in this Province?

MR. GULLAGE:  
Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Have you discussed culture yet with anyone in your department, your officials?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Why is the cultural budget of this Province slashed? Why is the Arts Council getting some \$13,000 to \$14,000 less this year? Culture was so important to this Province! But do you know something? In all honesty, I am not blaming it on this minister.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
No, he has too many responsibilities.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
This minister has too many responsibilities and it ties into what I said earlier. It is one thing to cut the size of the Cabinet, and I concur with it. The Leader of the Opposition knows I concur with cutting the size of the Cabinet, as I told them earlier when you were out. When I supported you for the leadership

that was one condition, that the size of the Cabinet would be cut down, trimmed down a bit. But you cannot cut it so much that you slow up the functions of government, and that is what has happened. I do not blame it on this minister. The poor man will soon become nonfunctional himself, because he does not get time to sleep and rest. There are officials in his department who have not had time to brief him yet. They cannot get in to see the man.

MR. TOBIN:

I hear his executive assistant looks after culture.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I would have no idea.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

That is the word.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Well, maybe his executive assistant does look after culture, and that tells me something else about the priority this government places on culture, and it tells me what priority they put on youth in this Province. And the member for Stephenville must be so embarrassed to see what has happened to the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth under this Premier. He must be embarrassed. I know you are.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Captain Quick is looking after this one.

MR. MATTHEWS:

If you were to tell the truth, you would get up in your place and say, Yes, I am very disappointed with the decision of this Premier. In essence, you have done away with the Youth Division of the former government, and

decided to give the money to the Economy Recovery Team instead.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The member for Stephenville used to blow about (inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

Blow? How many times did he stand in his place and talk about youth unemployment in this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did he question you?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Youth. He used to ask me questions, when he should have been talking to the Minister of Career Development. About six times he stood here and he did not know what minister he should question, because at that time the Minister of Career Development was responsible for employment. But, anyway, he learned very quickly. He was a good member, a good critic, and a sincere critic.

MR. TOBIN:

Would he be a good minister?

MR. MATTHEWS:

He would be an excellent minister.

So I say sincerely to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, to have municipal affairs means 300 or 400 communities want to talk to you every week and come in and meet. And then he has the responsibility for Housing and for Culture. What else does he have, the poor man?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Youth.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He does not have recreation too, does he?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Oh, my God!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Historic Resources.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Historic Resources?

Well, why did you not just say you had the Premier and one man Cabinet?

MR. RIDEOUT:  
The Minister of Miscellaneous, everything but the kitchen sink.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
You know, it is funny and we joke about it sometimes, but -

MR. TOBIN:  
I heard he is Vice-President (inaudible) Finance.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I do not know. I think the Premier should listen to this because I am sincere. I know he does not want to listen to me, he is mad with me today, but that is fair enough. It does not bother me one bit that he is mad with me, but he should start listening to someone.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
He will not, though. If he will not listen to his own, he will not listen to us.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
There are so many divisions of this government that have become nonfunctional because he has cut the Cabinet too severely.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
It should be maybe seventeen or eighteen.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Seventeen or eighteen would be a fair number. Seventeen, that is two more. He could have cut the minister's responsibilities in half and given them to the member for Stephenville.

MR. RIDEOUT:  
He probably could take the kitchen sink and give it to somebody else.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No, seriously, it will not be long before the Premier will listen. He will not listen to me, but will listen to others out around the Province when he starts getting complaints about government slowing down; this new, energetic, innovative government has slowed to a crawl.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
(Inaudible) commission.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
There soon will not be any room for a commission. Where are they going to give them space to work?

[Books or chair toppled]

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Somebody else gone. Every day we have a collapse.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Noriega is back. We are falling apart over here.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Now, having mentioned ministerial responsibilities and how long ministers work, it is obvious from the last couple of days that members of the Opposition work long hours as well, and they get

very tired and they collapse and fall off chairs, and pull the drawers out and let them drop. We all work hard, all members of this Legislature. But all I am saying is that the Premier is not compassionate, he is not compassionate to the people of St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, and he is not even compassionate to his own caucus. Because he could spread around the responsibilities a bit more. He could have two more over there in his Cabinet easily, and not have a fat Cabinet. This Province needs seventeen Cabinet Ministers. It does! You can justify seventeen ministers in this Province. Seriously! But no, he does not want to listen. He keeps on reading. You should listen and take some advice, because you are going --

AN HON. MEMBER:

On what, the cucumber secret?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, listen! Listen!

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Sometimes you might.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Not all the time.

But he is going to have some of his ministers overworked. I am serious! He should listen to that. You know how long and how hard you worked. Well, they work just as long and just as hard, and some of them do have too many responsibilities. You have some good people in your caucus there to whom you could give those responsibilities. You would make the divisions that they take over more functional for the people whom you are here to represent,

the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. You would have two more backbenchers happier in your caucus, because I can tell you the rumble is coming out of there. You are soon going to have to allow them to have more than recess while sitting in the House. There is all kinds of trouble coming for the Premier, not only from the people of the Province because of his decisions but because of the dissatisfaction in his own caucus.

MR. WARREN:

The member for Naskaupi cannot even speak. He is not allowed to speak.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The member for Naskaupi?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he is allowed to speak. Sure he is. He will get to speak before Christmas. I am sure he will. He has spoken before in the House, when he was over here. He will speak again.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

But he was told to sit down.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Oh, I can understand the Premier telling him to sit down.

MR. WARREN:

Why?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Because the Premier, on any topic, knows more than anyone else.

MR. WARREN:

He only thinks that.

MR. MATTHEWS:

But he believes it. He pulled the



President of Treasury Board down in his seat the other day when he went to get up. He almost pulled the sleeve out of his coat. He said, 'Sit down, Winston, I am getting up on this one.' That is what he did. How long do you think the old biologist is going to put up with that? It will not be long.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

As painful as going into a class or a lab with thirty or forty biology students is, as painful as that is - I know I would not want anyone to sentence me to that. I would rather they took away what is left of my salary than say, 'Bill, you have to go back and do it', and I am sure the President of Treasury Board, the Government House Leader, as well as I know him -

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Do not touch my arm again.

MR. MATTHEWS:

That is what he will say.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You might have to eat your words, you know.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No. I will eat other things, I will not eat words; I might eat the budget document. But he is not going to tolerate that, you see.

MR. RIDEOUT:

He could spray the Premier with Bt.

MR. MATTHEWS:

He could feed a little bit of Bt into the water and drinks and stuff. You never know what might happen. Perhaps he has

aspirations to be over in that Chair. The aspirations might grow if he gets the sleeve pulled out of his coat every now and then when he tries to get up. How long are the members over there going to tolerate that?

AN HON. MEMBER:

He ran for the leadership, did he not?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Yes, he ran for the leadership and it is too bad he did not win.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

You should have been there.

MR. MATTHEWS:

If I could have gotten the proper credentials I would have gone and supported him. I gave a donation to his campaign, you know. A number of us did because we liked him so much. We are not going to like him as much now that he is going to put the old Bt out around the Province and destroy the forests. He is going to fall out of favour, and he is going to be proven not to be the pronounced biologist that he has told this House he is, the same way the Premier is going to be displayed and shown in this Province for what he really is. We have attempted to do that over the last week. Do you know something? Word is filtering out, word is getting out and about the Province. And, as I said yesterday, there are two things that have increased in my district since this government took over: Every tax that could conceivably be paid was increased, to the tune of \$95 million in additional taxes, Mr. Premier.

I am glad to see you are smiling, because it is refreshing to see you smile. I hope you will learn

to be like most of us in this Chamber, where we have to have a bit of humor and smile occasionally, else, as I have said, we will have found a use, if you did not hear me, for the hospitals in Grand Bank and St. Lawrence, there will be psychiatric wards for the members of the House, things will become so unbearable if we do not smile.

The other thing that has increased, I would say almost in direct proportion to the tax increases in my district, is the consumption of Gravol. The upset stomachs! Can you imagine how much Gravol the workers in St. Lawrence and Grand Bank have taken since last Tuesday?

I will tell you something: I am really scared, Mr. Speaker, that when the Minister of Health goes down there we could have a couple of overdoses of Gravol.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Maybe that is what they will do to fill up all the beds. They will all take Gravol. I do not know. But it is very upsetting, and word is out. People cannot believe what this administration has done in such a short period of time.

Who sends these notes?

MR. SIMMS:  
Will you soon be through with your preamble?

MR. MATTHEWS:  
It is a note from the Minister of Finance. He says, 'I really apologize that I was not familiar enough with my Budget to know if there was any money budgeted for Grand Bank and St. Lawrence.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
That is not true, by the way. It is not true.

MR. SIMMS:  
You were kidding us?

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I do that on occasion. But we are allowed to do that, are we not?

Again, getting back to real change, there is no real change in what the Premier and his government are doing. We have been through a resettlement program in Newfoundland and Labrador before, so to say it is a real change to go back to resettlement is not true. Now, it is a change from what we have been used to for the last seventeen or eighteen years.

MS VERGE:  
Back to the Future.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, I guess it is like Ron Pumphrey when he does his ad for a show. What does he say? 'The future is not what it used to be'. I think that is a very good line to tie into what this administration has done and will do over the next three or four years in this Province. We will look forward to a new budget speech next year, and please, Mr. Premier, please -

MR. WARREN:  
Do not let the (inaudible) get up.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I am sure you will still be Premier. I am sure you will.

But will you do us all the favour of at least having a Minister of

Finance. If there is Interim Supply, have him deal with that and present it to the House of Assembly, and have a new Minister of Finance bring in a budget document that he or she fully understands. Because as Premier of this Province, I make no wonder that you sometimes sit there and shake your head, and it is not all the time that you are shaking it at us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No. If I were some of those fellows over there I would not be getting too comfortable about getting the big pension they are going to get if they are in Cabinet for three or four years. I am sure the thought has occurred to the Premier already, and he has a couple of openings coming up pretty soon for some of his more capable private members. The member for Stephenville will be the first choice. He will bolt him over the member for Exploits. He should.

MR. WARREN:  
Yes, after today.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
He will bolt him right in over him.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
What did he do, embarrass the Premier, did he?

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No, no, he did not embarrass the Premier. You cannot embarrass the Premier. That is absolutely impossible. If you had all the money in the budget to spend on devising methods to embarrass the Premier, you would not be able to do it.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
He is too arrogant.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
And to think that he used to stand in this House of Assembly as Leader of the Opposition and accuse the then Premier of being arrogant, out of touch with the ordinary Newfoundlander and Labradorian!

MR. SIMMS:  
How the world turns!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Exactly. And how the stomach turns, and how the sale of Gravol increases. That is what we have witnessed; to sit in a meeting today with people with their livelihoods on the line, the more reason they want some employment, and because of the health service deterioration they are inflicting on the people, and to not want to listen to their opinions, he did not want to hear tell of it. 'What did they know about it anyway? I am Premier. What do you know about it? You have only lived down there for fifty or sixty years.'

MR. SIMMS:  
He did not say that.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No, he did not say it directly, but that is what he meant. And I will tell you the people went away very insulted today. They could not believe that they had met with the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador today. They could not. If they had met with General Noriega they would have gone away and said, 'Well, what do we expect from him?' He even rigged the elections and tampered with the ballot boxes. He would do anything.'

MR. WARREN:

Maybe this Premier did the same thing.

MR. MATTHEWS:

No. They would have accepted it moreso. For democratic, decent people from St. Lawrence and Lamaline and up through to get that kind of reception from a man who was just elected a few weeks ago to run this Province. They expected more than that. And, as I said yesterday, no person, regardless of position, should be too big to admit that he or she is sorry or that they have made a wrong decision. You will be a better person for doing that, regardless of who we are, to admit that you have been wrong. People will respect you more for admitting you have been wrong, for saying 'I am sorry.' And if this Premier is smart, that is what he will do. We have seen him backtrack on a couple of things already, and he should do that.

MR. WALSH:

You should have admitted that today.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Me? I did not say anything wrong today, Sir.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Chicken wing.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The old chicken wing is flapping again up there, Old Chicken Wing and Ribs. Now, if he is not careful I will tell you something. Speaking of budget and finances, he is going to lose one of his best customers if he is not careful. The old chicken wing member for Mount Scio - Bell Island broke off one wing, by the way, of the people of Bell Island when he took away the ferry, he

cracked one wing off them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:

In fact, he winged them. It is like Buddy Wassisname when he sang the song about moose hunting, he said, 'I will wing it with my car.'

MR. HOGAN:

What?

MR. MATTHEWS:

He said he would wing the moose with his car. He would run into the moose, boy! You do not understand Newfoundland talk. You are only from out towards Long Harbour. How would you understand Newfoundland talk? You are from Long Harbour. We might even consider you to be a townie. I would not tell the people today you are a townie, though. But the old member who broke a wing off the people from Bell Island, cracked a wing off, took away one of their ferries, that is the same as breaking a wing off a chicken. You half-crippled them. He winged them. He might as well stand and admit it. He is embarrassed but he will not say it. He has aspirations, I understand that. Some people will tolerate anything if they have ambition to get in the Cabinet and to be in with the Premier. I can understand it, but there comes a point where you have to, like I said today, stand up for the people who you are most responsible to, the people who sent you here. You lose sight of that and you are going to be in trouble in politics, I will tell you that, and you do not have much of a majority now. I do not say that to be derogatory either.

MR. TOBIN:

Old chicken wing is trying to be

the colonel.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Why the colonel?

MR. TOBIN:  
That is what he is trying to be, the colonel, old chicken wing.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No, his chicken is better than Kentucky Fried, I tell you that, and good ribs. But if he really wants to make a name for himself outside the restaurant business he will go to the Premier and he will say, Mr. Premier, you broke one wing off the people of Bell Island, now how about putting it back? Let us give them the second ferry, Mr. Premier. You know that it is necessary, so why have you done this? No, he will not do that you know. Why will he not do it? I do not know why he will not do it.

MR. TOBIN:  
Old chicken wing had better get crackin.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
He is too chicken to do that.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
He is done.

MR. WINDSOR:  
More love letters coming over here.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Boy, they are coming fast and furious.

MR. TOBIN:  
Old chicken wing had better get crackin.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Whoever is sending these notes is doing very well. As a matter of fact, I am going to send them back across to the Premier to let him

know. The thing about it is that there are no names on them. They just say, love, members opposite, and that really worries me, because, you see, the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations is not in her seat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Am I ever getting worried, and I thought I knew a lot of you fellows pretty well.

MR. WINDSOR:  
Do not turn your back on them, boy.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No. I know that as long as I am in this Legislature that I will not be getting any love notes from the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, because I have proven her to be not in control, or not to understand her department and the programs that she cannot justify cancelling.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Oh, oh!

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
Oh, oh! No more notes.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
No, I am sure it was not the Minister for Energy. No, it was not him. It is not his printing.

MR. R. AYLWARD:  
No, it was not him. Two or three over.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
They are talking about extrapolating on erroneous issues. How can they honestly say that? I have not extrapolated on anything erroneous here today. You have winged the people of your district. You have taken away a

ferry. And I am going to tell you something, I hope you do not replace it with the fairy who sent this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
The Minister of Social Services, I did not say anything erroneous about him. He got a 4 per cent increase for social assistance recipients.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
Wasted Efford.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I said yesterday he was Effordless.

MR. TOBIN:  
Today he is a wasted Efford.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
But to go out and try to take \$8 million back. I did not say anything erroneous. The minister has admitted it publicly. In the Budget document, by the way, the Minister of Finance states that he is giving them a 4 per cent increase. That is in there. I have not said anything wrong, erroneous. What I said about the Premier today, I am sure he thinks is very erroneous.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
He is not impressed with you.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
I know the Premier is not impressed with me, and I will tell you that I did not come to this Legislature to impress him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. MATTHEWS:  
He will see pictures of me in his sleep.

MR. SIMMS:  
You will have to stay in after school.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
From the Wells Express when it went to the district.

AN HON. MEMBER:  
He will call that a nightmare.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, he might call it a nightmare. I am sure he had it that night. He could not believe it. He said, my God, what is going wrong? How could these many pictures of one person be not on poles, but in the windows of houses?

AN HON. MEMBER:  
They were ugly too.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
Yes, ugly as sin. Yes, ugly I admit it, but it begs the question Why was there not more pictures of that member in Gander? There should have been more, if it was based on being ugly. There should have been more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:  
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:  
If that is the criteria.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
If that is the criteria, there is no question he would have had the biggest majority in this Legislature today, but he did not. The member for Port de Grave

MR. SIMMS:  
Now, there is ugly.

MR. MATTHEWS:  
- is he saying that that is why that member got such a high vote?

And is he saying that is why the members for Mount Scio - Bell Island and St. John's South had such small majorities, because they are so handsome?

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He is a good looking man.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I do not know. Maybe he is.

MR. SIMMS:

Tell us something about the member for Stephenville?

MR. MATTHEWS:

No, no, no! He is a good member.

MR. TOBIN:

What about the member for Port au Port?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The only thing I will say about the member for Stephenville is I pray to God that he is not the one who sent the note.

MR. TOBIN:

What about the member for St. George's?

MR. MATTHEWS:

I do not know the man. I cannot comment on anyone I do not know.

MR. TOBIN:

(Inaudible).

MR. MATTHEWS:

I wonder again, talking about being erroneous, and I look at the Minister for Works, Services and Transportation, I wonder is there any chance that the old Thruster might thrust a Minute-in-Council on us today or tomorrow? Will he thrust it on the Table and say, here it is?

MR. GILBERT:

There was no Minute-in-Council.

MR. MATTHEWS:

There was a Minute-in-Council.

Maybe the Premier might thrust a Minute-of-Council on us. Perhaps they are giving it to the discovery team to see if they can discover the Minute-of-Council they lost.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I have a copy.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I do not want to see your copy. I want to see the Premier, as he said he would, undertake to look and table it in the House so we can all see it.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes, that is what he said.

PREMIER WELLS:

I did not say I would table it.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I am sorry, you did not say you would table it. First of all you had to see if there was one.

PREMIER WELLS:

(Inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, I would submit to you, Sir, that you have a very serious situation on your hands in this Legislature. Because what I did today was minor, and I took the consequences for standing up for the people I represent, as I did today, believing in what I said. But to have a situation where we had a minister stand in his place and state emphatically that there was no Minute-in-Council and that a decision was not made -

MR. WARREN:

It is in Hansard.

MR. MATTHEWS:

It is in Hansard duly recorded, on two occasions, but explicitly asked by the member for Burin - Placentia West and emphatically answered by the minister, no. And to hear the Premier say today, there is one.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

There is one.

MR. SIMMS:

What is the date?

MR. MATTHEWS:

Now, talk about - what is it they called it? - 'extrapolating on erroneous issues'. Now, if that is what I have to do, then I will do more of it, and I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will do even more. But I really think the Premier should do the honourable thing and table it in this House. Then we will know once and for all what the real truth is. And that is everyone's responsibility in this House, to know the real truth.

MR. WINDSOR:

If you make a decision you have to stand behind it. Table the MC.

MR. FUREY:

Tell us about the fishery?

MR. MATTHEWS:

The fishery is too big an issue to start talking about with a couple of minutes left on the clock. The Minister of Fisheries is not here. I do not know where he is. I mean, seriously, we cannot talk about the fishery with the minister not here.

MR. TOBIN:

You still have seventy hours.

MR. MATTHEWS:

I have only seventy hours left now? Well, maybe we can strike a deal. If the Premier will allow his troupes to have recess once a session for ten or fifteen minutes so they can get fresh air and come back, and the member for Mount Scio - Bell Island will agree to provide the old wings and ribs, maybe I will make a deal to talk less than seventy more hours. Maybe we can negotiate. This side believes in negotiation, unlike the Premier and the Minister of Health. They do not cram things down people's throats. Liberal times are lean times, and what the Tories gave to St. Lawrence and Grand Bank, the Liberals are very, very determined to take away, Mr. Speaker. With that I would like to adjourn the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a couple of announcements for members.

The Resource Committee will meet this evening in the House at 7:00 p.m. to examine the estimates of the Department of Development. The Resource Committee meets again at 9:00 in the morning, in the House, to review the estimates of the Department of Environment and Lands.

This is one of the few instances where two meetings are scheduled at the same time, and it happens tomorrow night: Social Services will examine the Department of Health and that is here, and



Government Services will examine the Department of Labour in the Colonial Building. So this is, I believe, one of two occasions when there is a doubling up of Committees.

MR. SIMMS:

What was the one after Government Services?

MR. BAKER:

Government Services, the Department of Labour. This is the Committee schedule.

MS VERGE:

The Social Services Committee agreed to change Health to Thursday morning.

MR. BAKER:

If there is a change, then members can make it, but I am announcing now that this is what is scheduled. If there is a change, then members can work it out amongst themselves on the Committee.

I move, Mr. Speaker, that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow, and the House do now adjourn.

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