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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Tuesday

30 May 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would, at this time, like to advise the members of this hon. House on the 1989 hemlock looper control program.

As you are aware, the Province's forests have been under attack from this insect since 1984. The population of the insect peaked in 1987 when 169,000 hectares were sprayed using mostly fenitrothion. In 1988, the infestation showed a noticeable decline as compared to 1987 and it was only necessary to treat 69,000 hectares. I am pleased to inform the House that the forecasted infestation for 1989 has shown a further decline and it will only be necessary to treat approximately 6,000 hectares in the Northwest portion of the Province, mainly between River of Ponds and Castors River.

In view of the declining population of hemlock looper, the relatively small amount of forest area to be sprayed in 1989 and the reasonable success of Bt. in 1988, I have decided with the approval of my Cabinet colleagues that the 1989 hemlock looper control program will use Bt.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:

In order to order a greater margin for success the areas in question will be sprayed with a double application. The timing of these applications will be determined by my staff during pre spray surveys. Plans are already in motion to obtain the necessary aircraft and materials to carry out the program. It is expected that the actual spray program will take place beginning in late June and continue until the third week in July depending on weather.

I would like to add that this decision by no means limits the options of this government, for insect control in this Province. It is our intention to protect our forests and the jobs it brings. As insect problems arise we will have to determine the best acceptable means of protection available to us including the use of chemical pesticides. In the current situation of declining population of looper, we feel Bt can provide the level of protection required and at the same time pose no environmental risk to the total ecology.

Consequently, this year's program to combat the hemlock looper is in keeping with my intention and my government's commitment to protect our invaluable forest resource with whatever acceptable means are available to us.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a great sense of satisfaction, and some pride, that I stand in this hon. House as Newfoundland's Minister responsible for Forestry and announce this Province's first chemical free spray program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I hope the hon. minister never lives to see the day when he has to eat those words. That is my only concern. There are a number of things that I want to say with respect to the statement. First of all, the minister has gone totally against the advice of his professional officials in his department.

MR. FLIGHT:

Not so.

MR. SIMMS:

He certainly has so. He has totally gone against the advice of the federal scientists, and he has totally gone against the advice of the professional foresters in the Province who work with the companies. There is no question about it, he has totally gone against all their advice and I can tell him that that is a fact.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a couple of questions. He talks about the double application of Bt. What is the additional cost associated with that, for example? Secondly, is that something new, or has there always been a double application of Bt, generally speaking, in most cases? Perhaps the hon. minister on some occasion will be able to tell us that. I will ask him, perhaps, on another occasion. What will the department do with the existing fenitrothion that is in stock? His officials say it either has to be sprayed or destroyed at additional government expense. Those are the words of his officials. So that will be an additional cost. There is no question about that. Will the

cost of the program still be cost shared - I did not hear the minister refer to that - two thirds by the companies and one third by the government? I refer to that, two-thirds by the companies, one-third by the government. Now, will information packages and advertisements, as always has been the case in the past, be applied in this particular case, during this coming spray program? The Minister can tell us about that.

Is the Minister absolutely certain that the effectiveness of the Bt is without question, knowing that in order for Bt to be effective, those insects must actually inject the Bt? If there is a day of rain, it is all washed away and the program will not be effective. So the Minister, therefore, is quite prepared to have hanging over his head the cloud for many, many years to come as the Minister who will be responsible for the collapse of the forests in this Province, which would be much more environmentally unacceptable than anything else that he is trying to do from a political point of view. That is the only point I want to leave with the Minister. We will see what transpires, and I hope to God that he is not going to be wrong.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I wish at this time to inform this hon. House of my Department's plans to call tenders

for highway improvement and construction projects. This Provincial capital roads program, totalling \$30 million, includes the upgrading and paving of gravel roads, the resurfacing of existing paved roads, together with the construction of new bridges and repairs to existing bridges throughout the Island portion of the Province and Labrador. All of these projects are 100 percent provincially funded.

Mr. Speaker, the projects to be carried out under the provincial capital roads program reflect the priorities established by my department to improve the overall transportation infrastructure of Newfoundland and Labrador. The approval of this \$30 million capital roads program brings the total budget allocation for highway improvement this fiscal year to \$107 million. Government realizes the projects I am announcing today do not meet the demand for highway improvements throughout the Province; however, our expenditure this year represents an increase of \$13 million in the budget allocation over the past fiscal year and given the limited resources available to government, this increase is significant and will result in an increase in jobs for the highway construction industry this year.

Mr. Speaker, tenders for the work will be called as soon as possible, and it is anticipated that all projects will be tendered by early July. The projects to be carried out under the program are as follows:

1. Completion of Creston causeway.
2. Upgrading of Greenspond Road

5.0 km.

3. Resurfacing 5 km of route 70 through Victoria.
4. Complete the upgrading of Shoe Cove Road 1.8 km.
5. Resurface 6 km of route 440 from end of last year's resurfacing towards Irishtown.
6. Upgrading 6 km of road between Bellevue and Bellevue Beach.
7. Resurfacing Pearltown Road and Doyles Road Kilbride.
8. Resurfacing 7 km of route 470 from Burnt Islands towards Isle Aux Morts.
9. Complete reconstruction and paving of Massey Drive 1.0 km.
10. Resurface 1 km of route 60 Holyrood.
11. Upgrading and paving of a short section of main road at Twillingate, known locally as Smiths Hill, Wild Cove.
12. Complete paving of New Harbour Barrens road 4.5 km.
13. Replacement of bridge at Culls Harbour with new galvanized Bailey bridge.
14. Widening of intersection at Traffic Lights, St. Anthony.
15. Upgrading 5 km of Raleigh road.
16. Replacement of Picco's Bridge on route 20 near Torbay.
17. Four-laning route 60 from the end of the present contract

- near Soper's store to Donna road.
18. Paving of roads under jurisdiction of the Department in L'anse au Clair, Forteau, L'anse au Loup, Capstan Island, West St. Modeste total 3.2 km.
 19. Paving 5.0 km of Cottrell's Cove Road.
 20. Resurfacing 5 km of route 10 from Fleet's Store, Goulds, towards Bay Bulls.
 21. Upgrading 5 km of the Grand Le Pierre/English Harbour East Road.
 22. Pave 9 km of route 331 from Horwood intersection to Rogers Cove.
 23. Resurfacing 4 km of Bryants Cove Road.
 24. Paving Duff's road, Holyrood, 2.2 km.
 25. Resurfacing old Broad Cove Road, 5.8 km.
 26. Upgrading of Loring Drive and Hamilton River Road intersection and installation of traffic light.
 27. Resurfacing 3.0 km of Hamilton River Road.
 28. Upgrading and paving 7.0 km of Ottenbury Road.
 29. Upgrade and pave intersection of Route 91 and Route 100 at Placentia.
 30. Complete upgrading Bartlett's Harbour Road 5 km.
 31. Upgrading 5 km of Reefs Harbour Road.
 32. Resurfacing 1.5 km of Indian Meal Line.
 33. Upgrading 3.0 km of Great Brehat Road.
 34. Continuing upgrading and paving between New Chelsea and Brownsdale on Route 80, 3 km.
 35. Paving of the Herring Neck Road 6.3 km.
 36. Paving Salt Harbour Island Access Road 2.2 km.
 37. Resurfacing 10 km of the Buchans Road.
 38. Paving Road to Lighthouse, Twillingate.
 39. Upgrading a 2 km section of Wild Cove Road.
 40. Resurfacing 6 km of Route 450 from the end of last year's resurfacing near Cooks Brook towards Frenchman's Cove.
 41. Replace wooden bridge at Mings Bight with culvert.
 42. Upgrading approximately 3 km of Markland Road.
 43. Construct a pedestrian bridge at Badger.
 44. Paving Mortons Harbour Road from Route 390 towards Bridgeport Intersection 5 km.
 45. Installation of new deck and repairs to the abutments St. Paul's Inlet Bridge.
 46. Resurfacing Springfield Road, Clarkes Beach 2.4 km.

- 47. Repairs to electrical and structural steel Sir Ambrose Shea Lift Bridge, Placentia.
- 48. Resurfacing 2.5 km of Lance Cove Road, Bell Island.
- 49. Upgrade 7 km of Port Albert Road.
- 50. Replace two wooden bridges at Cape Ray with culverts.
- 51. Resurfacing 3 km of Bishops Cove Road.
- 52. Upgrading and paving Bowater Drive, Appleton.
- 53. Paving Leading Tickle Road 5.0 km.
- 54. Four-laning Route 60 from Manuels River Bridge towards Kelligrews 0.5 km.
- 55. Resurfacing of local roads in Point Leamington.
- 56. Pave local road Rushoon 0.5 kilometers.
- 57. Resurfacing various portions of Route 70 between Salmon Cove and Flambro Head 5 km.
- 58. Complete upgrading of Cape Freels Road 3 km.
- 59. Repairs to deck on Salmon Cove Bridge.
- 60. Upgrade and pave 3 km of Newtown Access Road.
- 61. Upgrade two local roads in Hodges Cove.
- 62. Replace deck on Dunns River Bridge, Route 210.
- 63. Construction of walkways through the communities of

McCallum and Grey River.

- 64. Replacement of Crockers Bridge, Petty Harbour Road, with new concrete bridge.
- 65. Placement of calcium chloride on gravel roads in communities.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to those sixty-five projects I have announced, the following projects are carried over from last year's program, and included in the budget of \$30 million.

- 1. Upgrading Wild Cove Road.
- 2. Replacing the bridge at Wild Cove.
- 3. Upgrading Shoe Cove Road.
- 4. Paving and replacement of Armour Stone at the "Bluff", Bay of Islands.
- 5. Upgrading Markland Road.
- 6. Replacing bridge at Chapel Arm.
- 7. Concrete bridge at Little Bay.
- 8. Four-laning Route 60 Donovans Overpass towards Paradise.
- 9. Construction of a road from Black Tickle to Domino.
- 10. Recapping 5 km Route 10 from Goulds towards Bay Bulls.
- 11. Bridge at Sunday Cove Tickle.
- 12. Upgrading and paving Massey Drive.
- 13. Paving Seaside Drive at Hampden.

14. Recap Route 470 Rose Blanche, Port aux Basques.
15. Reconstruct and pave Argentinia Access Road.
16. Upgrade Bartlett's Harbour Road.
17. Paving local roads in Pouch Cove.
18. There is a grant to Logy Bay, Middle Cove and Outer Cove.
19. Pave local road at Bide Arm.
20. Replace the concrete bridge at Turks Cove.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the Provincial Roads Program for this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to thank the hon. gentleman for providing me with a copy of his statement. I say to him that I sincerely appreciate his dropping it off a few minutes before I came up to the House. That is greatly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, during the election campaign we heard a lot about fairness and balance from what we well thought was going to be the political god of our Newfoundland society. But what we have seen here today is probably the most scandalous and the greatest contempt that has ever been expressed towards the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Mr. Speaker, I happen to have

information which was prioritized not by the politicians, not by the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), not by the Provincial Cabinet, a list of roads in this Province, totalling \$48 million, roughly, that we were committed to deal with, and the hon. gentleman gets up in the House and he reads a statement about a \$30 million road capital works program, 'an increase of \$13 million in budget allocations over the past fiscal year.'

Let me say to the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, and to his colleagues, that what we have in this Province today is a system put in place as a result of the roads for rails agreement, whereby the funding for the major trunk roads in this Province is now being done through that roads for rails agreement and none of the provincial capital dollars have to go into the major trunk roads in this Province, because it is all coming out of the roads for rails agreement which the hon. gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and other members there, opposed. Here, today, they are talking about that extra \$13 million when in actual fact, Mr. Speaker, it is being paid for out of that roads program for major trunk roads.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we can go through this list and we can look at it and we can read about it. Then we can contemplate the fairness and balance scenario. Where is the fairness and balance for the people of Grand Bank district, Mr. Speaker, in this? Not one red penny for the residents of Grand Bank. Where is the fairness and balance for the people of Grand Falls, Mr. Speaker, in this? Not one red cent.

MR. WINDSOR:
Not a penny for Mount Pearl.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:
They do not like it.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. TOBIN:
If they want to laugh, Mr. Speaker, and make a joke out of the fact that Grand Falls did not get any money -

AN HON. MEMBER:
What about the \$250,000 for the (inaudible)?

MR. TOBIN:
Did you get anything?

MR. HODDER:
No.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, what about the fairness and balance for the district of Port au Port? All paved roads out in Port au Port?

MR. WARREN:
Torngat Mountains.

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, in my hon. colleague's district. Where is the money for them, Mr. Speaker?

AN HON. MEMBER:
How about the ones we announced?

MR. TOBIN:
Fortune - Hermitage, Mr. Speaker: Where is the fairness and balance for the people of that district, which has probably the worst roads in the Province and got \$500,000 allocated, I believe, or something like that?

Where is the fairness and balance, Mr. Speaker, for my own district? The Winterland Road in my own district, between Winterland and Salt Pond, has been an ongoing project for the past five years. Not a penny, Mr. Speaker. Where is the fairness and balance for -

MR. MATTHEWS:
People travel it to get to the new hospital.

MR. TOBIN:
That is right, Mr. Speaker. As my colleague from Grand Bank said, people travel it to get to the new hospital. They have to travel over that to get to the new Burin Peninsula hospital, built by the Conservative Government. I will be watching the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker) to see what he does about that.

Mr. Speaker, where is the fairness and balance for the people of Rock Harbour, in my district? Improvement to their roads was prioritized. Where is the fairness and balance for the people of Go By to Little Bay? Mr. Speaker, there is also no mention in this, and I sincerely hope it is a mistake, of the carryover of \$100,000 on the Little Bay bridge in my district. That is not there.

Where is the fairness and the balance for the people of Conception Bay South, which the member now represents, as it relates to what was prioritized by the officials of the department and now is not in there?

Where is the fairness and balance for the people of the Placentia district? The road work that was approved by the officials for the Placentia area, that is not there. The member for Placentia

should be talking to his colleagues to find out what is going on here.

What we have, Mr. Speaker, is the greatest charade this Province has ever seen. We have in place here a government that is not worthy to represent the people of this Province, a government that spent seventeen years accusing the previous government of pork barrelling, when nobody could ever do the job we see here today. Impossible, Mr. Speaker!

Because the residents of Port au Port voted Conservative in the last election, they never got a red cent. I ask the Premier, is that fairness and balance for these people? Where is your conscience? Be fair. The people out there need this. Mr. Speaker, that is the justice we see. We can see what this Province is in for. This Province is in for the worst times we have ever seen. Not only are we seeing it today in the roads program -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Liberal times are hard times.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a different vision than that, because we have never had a Conservative leader in this Province before like we have today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

I disagree, Mr. Speaker, with that, because I believe that the Reaganism and the Thatcherism that has penetrated the Western World today is the same type of leadership that we are witnessing in this House and in Newfoundland. Let the people out

there who depend on roads work, let the people out there who have to survive on Crown Corporations and the like - I will have more to say about that later, Mr. Speaker.

Another very important issue in this: What about the roads that were not - some of them were struck that were prioritized - prioritized by the officials of the Department of Transportation? Would the Minister of Transportation tell us how these roads got on the list, Mr. Speaker?

MR. WINDSOR:

Where did they come from all of a sudden?

MR. TOBIN:

I do not begrudge it to the people who are going to receive it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, no!

MR. TOBIN:

Let the Minister of Transportation tell us how roads got on this list that were not a priority of the officials in the Department of Transportation.

MR. WINDSOR:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the \$40-odd million that our government was going to approve, \$48 million worth of roads that we would have put in place, a lot more than the \$30 million that they are putting in there, there was no mention, in that much larger allocation, of these roads that are here today. Now how did they get there, when they did not get there with the \$48 million allocation that this government would have brought in

For the Province? How did they get there, Mr. Speaker, with an allocation of \$30 million, if it was not politics, raw, ruthless politics?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I remind the hon. gentleman that his time has elapsed.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say about it later.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, Section 29 of The Financial Administration Act states that "the Comptroller General shall ensure that no payment of any public money is made for which there is no legislative appropriation."

In accordance with Section 32, Subsection (2) of The Financial Administration Act, 1973, I am tabling with this statement a report by the Comptroller General of Finance concerning certain expenditures, charged to the 1989-90 financial year, made over his objection.

On March 30, 1989, a Lieutenant-Governor's Warrant was issued in the amount of \$717,775,300. The Comptroller General informed Treasury Board and the Minister of Finance that he was declining to issue money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, pursuant to this Warrant, since there was no legislative authority for the expenditures.

On April 4, 1989, Treasury Board overruled the Comptroller General's objections and ordered payments to be made in accordance with the amounts authorized by the Warrant.

As of May 26, 1989, payments totalling \$383,500,960 had been made over the objection of the Comptroller General.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I am absolutely delighted to see that the Minister of Finance is allowed to speak today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WINDSOR:

I would point out that he is not allowed to say what is on his mind, he is only allowed to read a prepared text, made up for him, because everything has to be approved. So the Minister of Finance has been muzzled. I was delighted to see in **The Evening Telegram** today that the Premier has confirmed the fact that the Minister of Energy (Dr. Gibbons) has been muzzled and not allowed to get involved in Hydro talks with Quebec.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What!

MR. WINDSOR:

We will see how many more ministers are muzzled; we will find out before the day is over.

Mr. Speaker, on this particular

matter, this is a simple technicality. The Minister of Finance would have us believe that there is something unusual happening here. It has happened, Mr. Speaker, every time there has been an election. It is totally in accordance with The Financial Administration Act; it is a simple matter of Treasury Board having to overrule the Comptroller General. And I point out that the ministers of government on Treasury Board were elected by the people of this Province to rule government, not the Auditor General or the Comptroller General. Government has a responsibility to provide funds to pay public servants, to provide the funding required for our social programs, our health programs, our educational programs, and everything else. The hon. minister would like to believe that there was something illegal in government fulfilling the obligations that they have accepted from the people of this Province. What hogwash!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Before getting into Oral Questions I would like on behalf of hon. members to recognize the attendance today in the speaker's galleries of two or three people who attend our galleries from time to time and since this is our first session we would like to welcome these people. First, I would like to welcome to the visitors' gallery Ms Donna Butt the Chairperson for the Newfoundland and Labrador Artists Coalition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Secondly, I would like to welcome, again on behalf of all hon. members, Mr. L. R. Toms, High Sheriff of Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Lastly, I would like to welcome to the galleries another gentleman who will be attending from time to time, the leader of the NDP Party Mr. Cle Newhook.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. I understand the minister to have said, over the last several hours, that he has sent a group of officials from his department 'to see what kind of system of municipal government is in operation in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.' Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the minister if he and his officials are not aware of the Whelan Royal Commission Report which did a major survey of municipal government not only in Newfoundland but in all parts of Atlantic Canada? Is he not aware that the county system of government is in place in the Maritimes and has been for decades? Why can he not get his officials home instead of having

they going off to the wild blue yonder finding out things they should know about and he should know about?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, my officials were in both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on business of the department and I simply asked them to check with the officials while they were having discussions on matters pertaining to government organization, county government in one province and another system in another, and to report back to me. I am very familiar with the Whelan Commission and other commissions dealing with the formation of government. My request to them was simply to update me in case there were any changes in the formation of government in those two provinces.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, could the hon. minister tell the House and tell the municipalities of Newfoundland and Labrador this? Is he and this government contemplating introducing a system of government to municipalities in this Province that passes over to them the administrative costs and the burden for social assistance, hospital operation, education and many, many other services that county governments perform in Atlantic Canada?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

No.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Well, why are they wasting their time up there, Mr. Speaker? Could the hon. minister also tell the House this: Since in the first year funding for water and sewer programs and 60/40 programs is provided by government guaranteed loans, why is it that the minister cannot, before this week is over, bring in his capital works program for this year, have contracts called and get municipalities and people working? Or is the real reason because the chartered banks have informed this government they will not honour loan guarantees because of the irresponsibility of the Premier? Is that the real reason?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the reason why the list of capital works has not been brought into the House is because the House has not been open for almost a year. It was not the doing of this side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman will be very happy to know that the list of capital works will be

forthcoming when I am ready.

MR. WINDSOR:

Yes, when the construction season is over.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is also for the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. I am very surprised at that last comment from the hon. member because the last one over there that I would expect arrogance from is the hon. member for Waterford - Kenmount (Mr. Gullage). Mr. Speaker, it is a poor sign. But I do have a question for him. During the election campaign, and again here in the Throne Speech, the Premier has announced a program of a municipal water and sewer corporation to provide water and sewer throughout the Province. The hon. minister is quoted as saying in a council meeting, I think it was April 5, that the statement made by the Leader of the Opposition during the election campaign 'is not correct and that the monies would not come from the City of St. John's.' Mr. Speaker, I would ask the hon. minister if he would explain his different approach to this policy than the Premier's?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

I think I explained yesterday in the House that we were examining the feasibility of a water and

sewer corporation to answer the many, many problems that we have throughout many, many communities, hundreds of communities in this Province, in delivery of water and sewer systems. We are doing that, the Department is presently examining such a corporation and I will be reporting back to the House.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. minister prepared to pay the municipalities who have existing water and sewer services, with equities built up in these services, who have paid for them themselves? Is he prepared to pay them for these water and sewer services? How much will this cost the Provincial Government or the new crown corporation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

That question is all part of the process that we are carrying out right now, examining existing infrastructure throughout the Province, whether it would be in the urban or rural areas, identifying the needs for water and sewer systems, and then coming up with a rationale and a policy that we will present to this House.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Kilbride, a final supplementary.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Mr. Speaker, I am very surprised to hear the answers from the hon. minister on a policy statement that was prepared for a group that were over in opposition for seventeen years, a policy that was announced without any preparation whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. I find it very surprising.

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. minister aware that the present Municipal Financing Corporation is in debt some \$350 million to pay for the existing water and sewer services that are in the Province today? Mr. Speaker, is he planning to transfer this debt to the new corporation, and have every man, woman and child in this Province burdened with a \$600 or \$700 per capita debt when this corporation is set up?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member said, we do have in fact a corporation in place now, the Municipal Financing Corporation, whereby interim financing can eventually be transferred into that corporation through a bank or otherwise. That mechanism is in place and being used right now and used very well. The connection, however, that the hon. gentleman chooses to make between a water and sewer corporation and a municipal financing corporation, at this stage, whether there will be any connection or not I simply do not know. We are examining a water and sewer corporation; whether that will have a tie in to our financing corporation is a question that I will answer in due time.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the same minister.

The minister had a meeting today with the Federation of Municipalities, in which about twenty-five issues were placed before the Federation for consideration. One of the main issues continues to be the provision of capital funding. Since the government has said on a number of different occasions that the capital funding will be increased this year to municipalities, although we did not see it by the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), can the minister give the House any indication now if government is going to be keeping its commitment this year and making additional funding, much more capital funding, available to municipalities around the Province? Towns and communities are waiting for the minister to come forward and say that he is going to be providing more capital funding this year than what has been previously provided.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, I can say what I said earlier to a previous question, that the capital works funding will be presented in the House very shortly, and whether or not that amount will be increased or not over last year will be seen at that time. I can say that the

needs are great and we will be addressing as many of those needs as we can in this budget.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker, there is a real fear, and I think the minister's knows there is a real fear, amongst municipalities in the Province that the axe is going to fall at budget time, Mr. Speaker, and the people who are going to have first blood drawn from them are the people who can least afford to pay in Newfoundland and Labrador, the municipalities of this Province.

Now, can the minister forget the fancy footwork for a minute and tell the municipalities straight out that his hand is not going to be in their pocket this year at budget time? And can the minister confirm, or maybe deny, that the 20 per cent contribution that municipalities make as their share toward the retirement of capital debt, is that going to be increased? Because we are hearing, Mr. Speaker, that the 20 per cent contribution that municipalities make is going to be increased, and probably increased drastically this year. Can the minister confirm or deny that?

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

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker, I can categorically deny that. The 20 per cent of revenues that you speak of, in many, many cases throughout this Province, poor communities that

have a very inadequate revenue base do not in fact contribute to 20 per cent. It is not always 20 per cent. Sometimes the government contribution is by far the greatest percentage. We will, in fact, be addressing that item when I present the capital works. But to answer your question, no, we are not changing that formula. And, in fact, the poorer communities that can least afford to pay will continue to be greatly subsidized by this government.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:
People serving on Municipalities now all across Newfoundland and Labrador over the next couple of months are going to be making up their minds as to whether or not they intend to run in the November municipal elections. Would the minister make it clear to almost 400 councils and local service districts in Newfoundland and Labrador that they need not have any fear this time around, of this government, that the existing programs are not going to be ripped apart, and a lot of them eliminated completely, that the utilities corporation that the minister is talking about will not be financed on the backs of the municipalities of Newfoundland and Labrador, and that the minister will make that commitment to these municipalities today? Because I am sure the Federation is waiting to hear from him on that score.

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

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the Federation has already heard from me on that score and I have assured them that this department stands on its own, like other departments do, in consideration of the needs of this department, in particular the water and sewer services as you speak about. And there will be no reduction in a shifting of dollars from one department to another. I think both the Federation and the municipalities they represent throughout the Province will be very pleased with the capital budget that I will present to this House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to observe the poor Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen)! Not only is he not allowed to speak, but now the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs has tied his hands in announcing that there will be no increase in charges to municipalities in the budget. So we already have one piece of the budget down. There will soon be nothing left for the Minister of Finance to do.

Let me ask the minister this, Mr. Speaker. Since he will not tell us what his capital works program is, he may recall that somewhere back, about the middle of April, I announced at a press conference on behalf of government funding in the amount of \$1,134,000 for the City of Mount Pearl. That money to be used under the 60/40 roads program to upgrade and pave certain streets within the city. That was all in accordance with a five year plan submitted to the department by the city and

recommended by the officials. Will the minister confirm that he will honour those commitments? And not only commitments, but the announcements made on behalf of government by me at that time to the City of Mount Pearl.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows this government has a new mandate, a mandate to deliver, and on behalf of the government we have examined all priorities in each district of the Province, including Mount Pearl, including Waterford - Kenmount, your adjoining district, and those priorities will come forward when I present my capital works budget.

MR. SPEAKER:

The member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker, I certainly hope that is true, in fairness and equity, that we do see that. I remind the minister, in case he does not know, that the streets to be done are Markley Avenue; Pine Bud Crescent; Delaney Avenue; Birch Avenue and Valleyview Avenue, all within the hon. member's district, none within my district at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WINDSOR:

So I would encourage him to follow through with that, Mr. Speaker.

I also ask him, now that the City of Mount Pearl has made known at a formal meeting of council last night that they intend to establish a fire department, how does that fit in with the

minister's new concept of regional government and with the Premier's plan to bring in a whole new system of municipal government in this Province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, I might say that Markley Avenue and the other streets mentioned were denied to the City of Mount Pearl for years and years under the previous administration, and I would hope, as he does, that they would surface as a priority in this capital works budget.

Speaking to the fire department question, I have already said to the City of Mount Pearl and other cities and towns within the region, we are examining fire protection from a regional standpoint. The City of Mount Pearl knows that. I would hope that they would stand by their word that they would leave the status quo until we make a decision on the Woods - Gordon study and on whether or not to regionalize the fire department. The City of Mount Pearl and I have had discussions on that very matter.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

In view of the article in **The Evening Telegram**, and in fact discussions with the town manager

earlier which confirmed to me that the city has indeed passed a resolution that they are intending to establish a fire department, and in accordance with Section 188 of The Municipalities Act which says, "A Council may establish, operate and maintain a fire department," is the minister now saying that he is going to deny the City of Mount Pearl the rights given under The Municipalities Act to own and operate their own fire department, or is he actually representing the City of St. John's in this House?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, even though it is called the St. John's Fire Department anybody who lives in this region knows that it is, in fact, a regional fire department in many cases because it does provide fire protection to other than the City of St. John's.

The question is whether or not Mount Pearl should have a separate fire department, separate from the region. That question is being addressed by my officials. We are examining the Woods - Gordon report, examining the regional concept of services per se, and the City of Mount Pearl has assured me they will not proceed with the full establishment of a fire department until I make a recommendation on a regional servicing authority. In fact, anything they may have done so far with relation to a fire department could very well be fitted into a regional servicing authority if such a decision is made, and the City of Mount Pearl has agreed with that.

MR. PARSONS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. PARSONS:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the same minister, believe it or not, the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, there is so much emphasis being placed on sport, recreation, physical fitness, and our main resource, youth, and there was a Minute of Council allocating monies from last year's budget for a sports facility to three then Liberal districts, namely Bonavista North, Fogo and the Connaigre Peninsula, so I ask the minister, will he honour those commitments?

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

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker, once again I have to say that, along with other parts of my department, we are examining various reports. There was a Green Paper done some years ago on regional sports facilities, arenas, swimming pools, ball fields and so on. That report did, in fact, recommend some seven to nine regional facilities that could be viable. Minutes in Council passed by the previous government have no bearing on this government. We are bound by decisions determined by our mandate and our decisions and our policies.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the regional facilities are concerned,

a decision has to be made on whether or not to proceed. That will be made in due course.

MR. PARSONS:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. PARSONS:
The cheques were actually issued.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
What!

MR. PARSONS:
Cheques were issued. Now, I ask the minister, where are the cheques? Are they mislaid?

MR. SIMMS:
To the municipalities?

MR. PARSONS:
To the municipalities.

MR. SIMMS:
They were issued.

MR. PARSONS:
Yes. Where are they? Are they stolen?

MR. SIMMS:
Are they lost?

MR. PARSONS:
Are they lost?

MR. WINDSOR:
They went out from the Department of Recreation.

MR. PARSONS:
They went out from the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. SIMMS:
Where did they go?

MR. PARSONS:

Where did they go?

MR. WINDSOR:

The Liberal campaign fund.

MR. PARSONS:

Where are the cheques?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, absolutely no cheques were issued from the department to any municipalities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Not true! Not true!

MR. GULLAGE:

Not by me. They may have been by the previous

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

No, no. Before you.

MR. WINDSOR:

The hon. gentleman is misleading the House.

MR. GULLAGE:

No cheques were issued out of the department to any municipalities. It may have been done by the other side, but certainly not by this government.

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Speaker has great difficulty in hearing the question posed. I ask hon. members to my right to refrain, please, from the noises and interruptions they have been making during the past five minutes.

MR. BAKER:

A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. BAKER:

I am concerned about a precedent that is being set here. The questions that are being asked are being asked of a present minister concerning a decision that was made and something that was done out of the previous year's budget. The previous year ended March 31. If in fact there were decisions made previous to our taking power by the previous government and the previous ministers, that were going to come out of last year's budget - last year ending March 31 - then we cannot be expected to account for these particular decisions.

I understand during Question Period that you ask a minister a question on a matter for which he is responsible. This incident took place last fiscal year, coming out of last fiscal year and I think it is improper to ask that kind of a question of this Minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Government House Leader is dancing a very fine jig over there now. It is not a point of order to start

with, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that the Order in Council was issued by the previous administration, the cheques were struck by the previous administration, and it was the orders of this administration that canned them and did not allow them to be sent out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
That is the ministerial responsibility we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, and it is our right to question that minister or that Premier as to why those orders were given not to mail those cheques to Fogo, and to Harbour Breton and to Bonavista or Wesleyville, or wherever the other place was. That is this administration's responsibility, Sir.

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

MR. BAKER:
I do not really understand what is going on here, in the sense that if there were certain cheques that were issued while members opposite were in control of the administration, what happened to those cheques between March 31 and May 5, when we took over, what happened to that whole process when these people were actually in charge of the process, they obviously were responsible for affairs that happened during that time and during the last number of years. I would also like to add, Mr. Speaker, from Beauchesne, paragraph 359, subsection (6), "A question must be within the administrative competence of the Government." And this incident was obviously within the

administrative competence of a previous administration. We have been here three short weeks, and these answers members opposite have, I am sure.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
The hon. gentleman certainly knows the difference and is trying to dance around the real answer, which is this: This administration ordered the senior bureaucrats in that department, before the transfer of power, not to send the cheque to Fogo, not to send the cheque to Harbour Breton and not to send the cheque to Wesleyville. The Premier-elect ordered it, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
That is a fact.

MR. SIMMS:
That is what we are told.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, my name has been brought into the matter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
What? What?

PREMIER WELLS:
To the point of order. I am speaking to the point of order,

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, we have seen an attempt by the government House Leader now, because the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs was getting a bit of heat and found he was not able to answer the questions that were being asked, to try to take up the time of Question Period. There are only seven or eight minutes left. Your Honour has allowed a fair bit of debate back and forth on a point of order which is not a legitimate point of order, from my own point of view, and now the Premier wants to enter into the fray. Let him raise a separate point of order, or let him get up and answer a question on behalf of his minister, if he so desires, but please do not take away the time that members on this side of the House have to question the ministry. It is a waste of time.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

In addressing that point of privilege that has been raised, it is not, I suggest, a point of privilege at all. I stood up to address the point of order because the hon. the Leader of the Opposition mentioned my name and said that I had directed cheques to be stopped. That is untrue. Mr. Speaker, if the government issued cheques prior to 31 March, which is the only time they could issue it on last year's budget, what were they doing holding it

for five weeks until 5 May when we took power? Did it take them that long to get it to a mail box? What are they talking about? There is no point of privilege.

MR. RIDEOUT:

To the point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

The hon. the Premier knows that there is a full month permitted to go by between 31 March and the last of April from which the previous year's funds can be applied to projects that were approved. Let him get his facts straight.

The fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is that the Clerk of the Executive Council was ordered by the Premier-elect not to send the cheques to those three communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I have allowed a fair amount of debate on a point of order and a point of privilege, all as it is. It is very difficult to determine what is precisely the questions that ought to be asked particularly at this particular point in time. The Speaker can just listen to the questions as they are posed. Every minister, of course, has the right not to answer a question or to take the question under advisement, and I rule there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Forngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for

the Premier. Before the election, the Premier and the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland) showed a lot of concern about the gate that has been erected in Happy Valley - Goose Bay by the military.

In the Throne Speech on page 13, the Premier mentioned that he is quite satisfied with the action of the federal government to date. I would like to ask the Premier if he or his ministers have met with officials of the Department of National Defence concerning the build-up of tensions that has developed in Happy Valley - Goose Bay with the erection of the security gate on Loring Drive. Since there is a very short time left for me in Question Period, I am asking two supplementaries at the same time, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier confirm that the citizens of the town have been restricted in their daily activities due to tight security by the Department of National Defence? And, furthermore, has the Premier asked the Department of National Defence to remove and/or relocate the gate to a position to protect the security of the base but, at the same time, to allow free access to the two schools, the movie theatre, the air terminals, the bowling alleys, the dental clinic, the hospital and the civilian housing area?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, he got all his supplementaries in there as he said, so I would hope I get to cover all of them. If I do not, I am sure the hon. member will

understand.

Mr. Speaker, there are obviously divergent interests in the Goose Bay area. People in the Goose Bay area want to see the economic development that will come -

MR. WARREN:

Some people.

PREMIER WELLS:

A large proportion of the people in the Goose Bay area want to see the economic development that will come from the development of a NATO base. Another significant portion of the people in the Goose Bay area, native people in particular, are concerned about it and the impact of it, so there is a divergence of interest. The military have their own interests; they have to run a military base. I do not intend to tell the military how to run a base, but I do intend to say to the military that they cannot maintain in perpetuity a situation where they maintain a gate that prevents normal public access to routine public buildings. That situation cannot continue. If they need a gate for military purposes in the particular location where that gate is located, then they have to start to plan immediately to remove from within that blocked area the public buildings to which people need access. You cannot block that, and that is obvious.

Now, in the meantime, there may be a bit of a difficulty for a period while plans are being made to change it and to develop the base in the way that it should be developed, if it is going to be developed at all, and that is not a certainty. That depends upon a number of factors; whether the NATO countries decide to locate the larger base there; whether, if

NATO does not, the countries that are using it will continue to use it as it is and the federal government will continue to maintain it. If it is going to be continued to be maintained as an operational base with a gate in that area, then clearly the public services and public buildings that are behind that gate must be moved outside the gate so that the public can have unrestricted access. It is not something you can, say, take a sudden position on. As a result of the differences that have arisen largely between the native groups and the military, it is a difficult situation, and I do not want to inflame it and make it any more difficult, as I am sure the hon. member does not want to inflame it and make it any more difficult.

Suffice it to say, Mr. Speaker, this government will take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the overall interest of all of the people of the area are protected, bearing in mind that you cannot give perfect answers to everybody where those views and opinions conflict.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Torngat Mountains has time for one final supplementary.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The first part of my question the Premier never answered. I will ask it one more time. The Premier was elected on April 20, now it is May 30. Could the Premier advise this hon. House if he has met with any officials of the Department of National Defense asking for the removal or the replacement of that gate? Yes or no?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

We were sworn in as a government on May 5, Mr. Speaker, and between May 5 and now, the answer is no.

MR. WARREN:

Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for Oral Questions has elapsed.

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to advise the House that after consultation with the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Simms) I announce today that the members of the Public Accounts Committee of the Legislature will be: the member for St. Mary's The Capes (Mr. Hearn); the member for Burin Placentia West (Mr. Tobin); the member for Green Bay (Mr. Hewlett); the member for Placentia (Mr. Hogan); the member for LaPoile (Mr. Ramsay); the member for Carbonear (Mr. Reid); and the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Gover).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I second the motion.

MR. SPEAKER:

It has been moved that the following members be appointed to the Public Accounts Committee. The hon. member for St. Mary's the Capes, the hon. member for Burin - Placentia West, the hon. member for Green Bay, the hon. member for Placentia, the hon. member for LaPoile, the hon. member for Carbonear and the hon. member for Bonavista South.

Shall the motion carry? All those in favor 'aye', contrary minded 'nay', carried.

Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Order 2, Mr. Speaker.

Committee of Supply

MR. CHAIRMAN(Snow):

Order, Please!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I noticed yesterday that on a couple of occasions we posed some very pointed questions to the President of Treasury Board (Mr. Baker), in particular, and to some other ministers, and I noticed that the answer we got from the President of Treasury Board yesterday was, 'We will take note of those questions and when we get a whole range of them, we will provide answers.' Then, of

course, we had the Premier jump into the fray and say there were no questions, so, therefore, there was nothing to provide answers to. Then we had the President of Treasury Board, according to news reports today, provide a significant number of the answers to questions on capital account to the news media before he provided them to this House. When this House on a number of occasions yesterday asked the minister, in particular I asked him myself, and there were others - for the breakdown on current and capital account, and then to have ministers providing that same information that members asked for in this House to the media before it is provided to this House is discourteous to say the least. There are other things I could call it, Mr. Chairman, but to be as kind as I can, it is certainly discourteous.

The other thing, Mr. Chairman, is the Minister of Finance (Dr. Kitchen) himself. I do not know what the Minister of Finance is going to do today. I do not know if he is going to get to his feet and speak or not, but, Mr. Chairman, let it be known from one end of this Province to the other that for a full day of debate on Interim Supply, under a bill standing in the name of the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Finance refused to be hand-spiked out of his seat. You could not get him out of his seat, Mr. Chairman, with a hand spike if you tried. Now, I do not know if the hon. gentleman is still seatbound today or not, Sir, but I hope the hon. Minister of Finance will get out of his seat today, because it is a slap in the face to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to have a minister physically present in the House,

with a bill standing in his name, and for him not to have the common decency to stand in his place and defend that bill. I have never seen it happen before. The Premier goes before the cameras and say, 'Oh, anybody can get up and introduce a bill on behalf of a minister. Of course, they can, Mr. Chairman. We know the parliamentary rules. We know as well as they know the rules of this House, but, Mr. Chairman, it is not good enough for a minister of the Crown to sit in his place in this legislature and have another minister, a colleague, take the heat for him. That is not good enough. And now we find that the President of Treasury, who will not provide answers to the House of Assembly, provides them to the media. Mr. Chairman, let me tell the government this: We may or may not give our approval to this Interim Supply Bill before this day is over. We are not going to be stampeded, we are not going to be pushed over, we are not going to be browbeaten into giving approval to an Interim Supply Bill until we are ready. Let that be clearly understood.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
We are not going to do it, Mr. Chairman, until we get some answers. I do not mean the discourtesy of answers in the media before we get them in this House, I mean answers in this House as they should be given. I can tell you this, Mr. Chairman, that we will not pass Interim Supply before the end of this day, or the next day, or the day after, or next week, until the Minister of Finance gets to his feet and presents his Bills.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
We will not do it, Sir. Never that I know of in the history of this Parliament has a Minister of Finance sat in his seat hogbound, hidebound, muzzled, tongue-tied, not allowed to say a word about his estimates. These are his estimates and they will stay on the table of this House until the seventy-five hours run out if that hon. gentleman does not get to his feet and defend the government, defend the estimates and provide the answers that we asked for yesterday; not provide them to the media, which is nothing but a service of discourtesy to Newfoundland and Labrador and to the people who sent us there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Chairman, the problem has been that I have been waiting for some sensible questions, having to do with Interim Supply, to be asked by the people opposite.

Yesterday, I took note of one sensible question which the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout) asked, I have the information that he requested, and I would like to give it now to the Committee. That is the breakdown between current account and capital account. Under Consolidated Fund Services, the total amount of \$11,378,100 is all current. Under Executive Council, the amount of \$5,240,800 is all current. In Finance, \$17,828,900 is current,

and \$500,000 is capital. Under the Legislature, \$5,073,300 is current. Under the Public Service Commission the total amount of \$1,341,900 is current. Under Public Works and Services \$30,899,500 is current, and \$22,674,600 is capital. Under Development and Tourism \$16,432,400 is current, and under capital \$4,044,000. Under Energy \$21,741,700 is current, and \$109,000 is capital. Under Environment and Lands \$4,780,600 is current, \$2,134,000 is capital. Fisheries: Current, \$9,707,700, capital, \$11,139,700. Under Forestry \$14,652,300 is current, \$2,135,000 is capital. Under Mines, the total amount of \$3,998,800 is current. Rural Agriculture and Northern Development: \$17,629,400 is current, and under capital \$9,455,000. Transportation: \$60,139,600 is current, \$120,615,500 is capital. Under Career Development and Advanced Studies \$74,077,300 is current, \$9,480,000 is capital. Consumer Affairs and Communications: \$958,800 is current, there is no capital. Under Culture, Recreation and Youth \$14,508,300 is current, \$4,781,100 is capital. Education: \$183,198,300 is current, under capital \$5 million. Health: \$288,154,300 is current, \$2,798,700 is capital. Justice: \$30,636,800 is current. Under Labour the \$3,382,500 is current. Municipal Affairs: \$46,978,000 is current, and \$9,515,100 is capital. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation: \$4,253,500 current, \$1,500,000 capital. Under Social Services \$82,518,000 current, \$65,100 capital, for a total current of \$949,510,800, and under capital, \$205,946,800.

Mr. Chairman, if there are further

questions that make sense, we will try to answer them.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance just proved that he knows numbers.

MR. WARREN:

Yes, he can add one and one.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, Tom Head from Fleur-de-l'ys could have gotten up and read that out and it would have meant just as much. The Minister of Finance has outlined a total budgetary figure of \$205 million on capital account, for example. Now, the minister has to tell us, Mr. Chairman, where that \$205 million is going to be spent.

I remember for years and years, in doing Interim Supply in this House, it was the rage of the Opposition, 'You have to tell us where it is going to be spent. We are not going to vote for it. You have to tell us where it is going to be spent.' Now, Mr. Chairman, if that is the best the minister can do after a day and a half of trying to hand-spike him out of his seat, then he should go back to his officials, get some more information, come back to the Legislature and tell us where the capital is going to be spent, the \$205 million that the hon. gentleman is talking about.

Mr. Chairman, while the hon. gentleman is at it, the people in Wesleyville, the people in Fogo, and the people in Harbour Breton want to know who stole the cheques. And we want to know who stole the cheques.

I want the Minister of Finance --

MR. DOYLE:

There is capital there (Inaudible).

MR. RIDEOUT:

Well, that was last year's capital. It has nothing to do with what is here right now.

The minister has a responsibility to tell this House why Orders in Council that were legitimately issued by a legitimately elected government, and officials processed the cheques as they should on direction of the officially and legitimately elected government, why those cheques were not sent out. Where are they? Are they lost? Were they burned? Were they stolen? Were they donated to some charitable fund? Where are the cheques? Fogo Island deserves to know where its cheque is, because the people of Fogo Island raised their share of the money. They qualified in every respect for a regional recreational facility. It was a Liberal district when we approved the funding.

Fortune - Hermitage raised their share of the funding. They qualified in every respect under the program. Wesleyville, as I understand it, the same thing. So there is no hidden agenda. All Liberal they were, I believe. We were spending last year's money, which we were entitled to spend as the legitimately elected government of the Province. So we want to know from the Minister of Finance, where are the cheques? Who has them? Are they torn up? Are they destroyed? Are they stolen? Where are they? Those people deserve to know?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The exercise we are going through here now might be good for the leader of the Opposition's image. I sincerely hope it is --

MR. RIDEOUT:

I know that is a big concern of yours, but thank you.

MR. BAKER:

-- within his own caucus. However, it is not really particularly good for his image in terms of common sense and what he is saying.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Another lecture.

MR. BAKER:

Let us deal with the cheques, first of all. He is really concerned about the cheques. The past history of the government that existed in this Province before May 5 is that during an election campaign they would go around and in areas where they thought they could buy a few votes, Mr. Chairman, they would come out with promises. Now, it would be put to the people of the Province in such a way that it did not come across as an election promise.

I would like to remind members of one classic example, in 1985, when the then Premier of the Province went to St. Barbe and made commitments, wrote letters committing all kinds of roads money in St. Barbe district. The people thought they had a commitment; they had letters; they had it in writing. The district voted Liberal by sixteen votes,

and for four years St. Barbe saw none of the money.

I would also like to point out that that is what this government did. That is what this government that existed before May 5 did consistently, all the time. I could go down through district after district after district, documents in writing, in press reports, statements that did not come across as election promises; they were not put in such a way that, 'Well, we will consider and I promise that sometime down the road I will do for you, or sometime during my mandate I will do for you,' but it was put in such a way that, 'Here is a letter with the signature of the Premier, or the signature of a minister which says, "This money will be provided for you." But it was never provided if the district voted Liberal. It probably was provided, sometimes, if the district voted Tory. This was a despicable practice, absolutely despicable!

Now, then, let us get back to this election. Promises were made, and, obviously, if members opposite had been returned to office, some of the promises would have been kept, maybe. I can guarantee the people of this Province that the promises that were made in districts that eventually voted Liberal would not be kept. That is the history. An obscene, obnoxious, despicable way of operating in politics, and that is the reason politics has such a bad name in this Province. Now, then, that is what has happened. That is the perspective on what the members opposite are talking about.

The questions today revolved around, if I understood correctly,

decisions that were made last year to spend money out of last year's allotment budget, and somehow they claim that since May 5 some cheques disappeared. Now I would say to members opposite that if they intended to do what they said back in March, or whenever it was they made the commitment out of last year's budget, they were in power up until May 5, so how come the process was not carried through, if they intended to do it? There were lots of other things that happened in that time. Why was this not done?

The second point is that if in fact this was to come out of last year's budget, that assumes, then, that money had been put aside for it last year in the budget. As far as I can determine, that did not exist. So what we are seeing here is a scam.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Yes, it did. There was a million dollars for (inaudible).

MR. FUREY:

A political slush fund.

MR. BAKER:

What we are seeing here is an attempt by Opposition members to somehow slough off their despicable method of behavior in past years, and during the election, on members on this side. Well, Mr. Chairman, that is not going to work. That is not a legitimate kind of question to ask in terms of Interim Supply. Interim Supply deals with this year. We are providing money to tide us over until we can get the budget passed. We are actually saving their necks, morally. Morally, we are saving their necks by going through this process. There is provision made in the Financial Administration Act for

unexpected expenses, for emergency situations, whereby a process is gone through and money is obtained by government. It is done through warrants. That is a legitimate process. I agree it is a legitimate process. However, for unforeseen - unforeseen is the word used in the legislation - for unforeseen expenditure, that has to be there. That is legitimate.

However, Section 38 (3) of The Financial Administration Act says that the Comptroller General can control this - it is his job - and if there is abuse of the system, if there is abuse of these warrants, then the Comptroller can refuse to extend funds where there is no legislative authority. But where funds have been expended that were foreseen, because, you see, the fact that the government of this Province was running out of money March 31 is something that could have been foreseen twenty-five years ago. It was not an unforeseen. It could have been foreseen anytime during the year; everybody knew about it. It is not an unforeseen circumstance. The government of the day knew it was going to happen and they should have made proper allowance to take care of the eventuality by opening the House in lots of time to get Interim Supply and then do things properly.

However, the members opposite, some of them were there then and some of them are happily gone, chose not to take the proper course of action. So the Comptroller General comes back and says, 'This expenditure, this over \$700 million has no legislative authority', as he should.

Now, then, there is another safeguard in there. The Financial Administration Act is a wonderful

document, is it not? There is another safeguard in there just in case the Comptroller General oversteps his authority. So Section 32 (2) of The Financial Administration Act, just in case the Comptroller General improperly refuses to expend funds, allows Treasury Board to overrule the Comptroller if, and the words used in that section of The Financial Administration Act are, 'If his objections are not sufficient.'

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is a lot more democratic than (inaudible).

MR. BAKER:

That is absolutely right, and I agree with the process. However, what Treasury Board did was something that is totally different. If they are to overrule the Comptroller General, they have to say his reasons are not sufficient; he did not have good reason. What Treasury Board has done consistently, and did again this time, is say, 'Comptroller General, you are okay. What you have done is right. You were right in refusing the money.' Then they overruled it anyway. Now, that is not what is stated in Section 32 (2) of The Financial Administration Act.

They could say at that point, 'Comptroller General, you did not do this properly. Your reasons were not sufficient, therefore, we are going to overrule you.' They cannot have it both ways. If the Comptroller General was right, then they were wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I was going to say a few words to Dr. Kitchen, whom I consider to be a renowned Newfoundlander. I have the highest respect for him. Why he did not get up and try to bring through Interim Supply I do not know.

MR. WINDSOR:

He is not allowed.

MR. PARSONS:

I just found out why. The House leader, to add to his ego, had something to do with not letting him. I do not know if he thought we could not comprehend what went on today as it pertained to the questions that were asked about the missing cheques, but then he lectured us and, I am telling you, everything changed then. Then I said I knew why you, Sir, did not get up until today. But think nothing of it, we still think you are a very fine person.

MR. TOBIN:

Who is a very fine person?

MR. PARSONS:

Dr. Kitchen.

MR. WARREN:

No, no! The member for St. John's Centre.

MR. PARSONS:

The member for St. John's Centre.

MR. TOBIN:

Do you know him?

MR. PARSONS:

Oh, yes. I have known of him over the years. He is a fine, respected gentleman.

On The Interim Supply Bill: When you look at it there is a lot of money out there and there are a lot of areas of concern for me and, I suppose, for everyone else. But the two areas of concern to me particularly are municipal affairs and transportation and, I suppose, a little bit on environment.

I have already seen my friend - I am not going to ask him another question today on the cheques - the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and asked him to have a look at some of my areas of concern. Sometimes it confuses me and I get irritated to hear about all the pork barrelling that went on.

My area consists of the urban part, which is here in East Meadows, down to the rural area, right down to Cape St. Francis. Let me just tell you about some of the municipal features of that area as it pertains to water and sewer. We will start off down in Pouch Cove where problems, because of land conditions, are such that it is 60 per cent serviced. Pouch Cove is such morally it should be 100 per cent completed to give people just the basic needs. The land just cannot associate itself with the sewage aspect of it. There are problems there. People are crying out for water and sewer.

We then go over to the Conception Bay side, over to Bauline, where they have one two-inch line coming down from the hill that services all the bottom part of Bauline down by the shore, down by the wharf there. That is a two-inch line that freezes up in the first

frost of winter. That is the services of Rauline.

Come over, then, to Flatrock. There is a five or six year plan there and two years have been completed. The main water line is three parts out to the main highway. They have no services whatsoever. When I speak about Flatrock, Torbay and those places, this is perhaps the fastest growing area now, with the exception of, perhaps, Conception Bay South, in all Newfoundland.

Torbay is a big community, perhaps with somewhere in the vicinity of 4500 people, and it is 38 per cent serviced. Outer Cove, Middle Cove and Logy Bay have no services. That is right here. When you drive down MacDonald Drive you run right into Logy Bay, where there are no services whatsoever, no water, no sewerage. In 1987 I had a call on Christmas Eve to come in and see what was going on on one of the avenues in Airport Heights. I will not say what avenue.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Down around (inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

You just take it easy now. Let me tell you. This is serious business because it pertains to people, it is about people.

I went in and here was a guy's sewerage coming up through his driveway. That is right here. That is only three kilometers from the city. Now, granted we did succeed, as government, through my initiatives, have some of the area with the main line gone in there. None of the places have been hooked up as such, but we are hoping that this government is going to continue with that

program. When we talk about the services part of it, what money is in this for the services that we need in our area? Will the minister continue to supply the services so necessary to an area adjacent to St. John's? We need not go down to Labrador. We need not need go around the bays anywhere. We can just go right close to St. John's and here we are with almost nil services.

The other area of concern I have is Wedgewood Park. I have heard some rumblings that perhaps Wedgewood Park should be part of St. John's, and that is the day when I will really start a racket in this House. That is the day I will come to fight, when someone from the other side even mentions that Wedgewood Park is going to be part of St. John's. The Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs I think is perhaps leaning that way. He and I are good friends and, like I said, we have been friends for years, but that is the way we are going to part.

MR. WARREN:

You have more friends over there than (inaudible).

MR. PARSONS:

No, I do not. He and I go way back to when he was a Commissioner and did a Commission of Enquiry between the town of Flatrock and Torbay.

MR. TORIN:

He is not half as old as you.

MR. PARSONS:

He is, too. How old do you think I am?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. PARSONS:

I want to say to the minister now, leave Wedgewood Park alone. It is viable. The people are happy. They do not want to go with St. John's, and if they are doing alright, if they are financially stable, why change the situation? Leave it alone. People are happy, and that is 99 per cent of it. "Don't worry. Be happy."

Now, I want to speak a few words to the Minister of Works Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), who has gone, but he can hear me because he is out in the Common Room. I was delighted today, and I certainly want to thank the minister for that new bridge that he is building on the new line. He said, close to Torbay. The hon. Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs can verify this because he did the Commissioner's Report. On one side you go down to this bridge and it is Flatrock, and on the other side it is Torbay, so it is betwixt and between. Anyway, I was delighted that the minister did give the go-ahead for the bridge, because it was essential. It was a dangerous bridge. We had test holes done on it again last year, and again I am quite pleased. I am also pleased that he saw the needs in Torbay and the Indian Meal Line, and that is going to be repaved and some other work done in Pouch Cove. But there are many areas of concern, many areas where the pavement needs resurfacing. And I hope that the minister will have some extra money. There is always a few extra dollars out there, and I intend to see the minister and speak with the minister about other concerns I have pertaining to that area.

I want to say a few words also to the Minister of Education (Dr. Warren). You know, I was a member

of the St. John's School Board for fourteen years. I was a member of the board when the School Tax Authority came into being. I heard the Premier say, on a couple of occasions at least, and other members of government, that the School Tax Authority has to go. And, you know something? For the longest time I had misgivings myself. But last year I went and looked into the thing about the financial aspect of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave! By leave!

MR. PARSONS:

May I finish my line?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Yes.

MR. PARSONS:

What I am saying is the St. John's School Tax Authority took in \$11 million last year, \$11 million in funds that went directly into the schools for just basics. For governments to offset that \$11 million we would have to increase our sales tax between 2 per cent and 3 per cent. And I think that our personal income tax, if we did it on that side, would increase by 6 percentage points. What I am saying to the minister is he should have reservations and should give considerable thought before anything is done pertaining to the School Tax Authority.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to add a few words to the important debate now underway in the House and to say what a pleasure it is to rise in the House in the shoe that is now on the other foot, and say how comfortable that shoe is; and I trust the other shoe, which is on the other foot does not pinch all that much in the time we have to put in there in our respective positions.

MR. TOBIN:

Would you try that again for me?

MR. KELLAND:

Read Hansard tomorrow.

I would like to, in my few remarks, Mr. Chairman, make comment on the member opposite who made his maiden speech yesterday, because he did reiterate and exemplify exactly what we had been saying when we were Opposition members for the past four years, and no doubt the members in the Opposition have been saying for quite a number of years: In the distribution of funding for projects within the Province, it was done, in the belief of everybody in this Province, on a purely political basis. The member had the fortitude, and I commend him for that, in his maiden speech to reiterate and re-enforce that thought, because it is one that I personally have shared with him, and others who were former Opposition members shared as well.

I would also like to indicate to my colleagues who represent the other three ridings in Labrador of my willingness as a colleague, as a M.H.A. and as a minister, to work in a spirit of co-operation

with them. Labrador, in my opinion and in the opinion of many people in the Province, legislators and otherwise, has over the years fallen well behind the other part of the Province, the Island part of the Province in a lot of the basic services and infrastructure and things like that. I would like to express that in all sincerity to the three colleagues representing Labrador seats, that I would be more than willing to work in the spirit of co-operation with them during my term, this current term.

I agree with the Minister of Finance, who did respond to what was detected by this side as being one of the very few meaningful or significant questions raised in the House. I believe it was raised by the current leader of the Opposition.

MR. GILBERT:

He will not be there long.

MR. KELLAND:

— and the information was provided by my colleague, the Minister of Finance.

If the question makes no sense when we do get a good question, you get forthright answers — or has no substance, then I doubt very much if you would get an answer that would be acceptable. I say to those of you who put forth a question that does not have any basis.

But I would also like to make reference to at least some comments made by the current House Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Simms), and he made some specific references to resolutions raised by some of our members, some of our colleagues while we were on the other side. He made specific

reference to the former member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) who was our Opposition House Leader. He also made reference to a resolution that I put forward as an MHA from Naskaup district.

And perhaps I should take a few minutes, Mr. Chairman, if time permits to explain how I understand the philosophy of those sorts of resolutions coming from an Opposition. What we were faced with in this Province, not just on the Island but in Labrador perhaps more particularly in Labrador, the fact that of all the departments of Government no single minister appeared to be paying particular attention to areas of concern. Now every member of the House who has spoken on the rural development movement has said how important it is to our economy and our future. Still the Ministers who had the responsibility under RAND for rural development appeared not to be paying attention, was having difficulty in dealing with their colleagues in Ottawa, with respect to agreements and so on.

So speaking for my former colleague, who was a Member of the House at that time, his attempt in asking for a separate department of rural development was to convince the government, which was handing out ministries in a willy-nilly fashion, to whoever was left on their back benches, that perhaps to get the proper focus on the rural development in the province we would need a new minister, a separate minister, someone who could devote some attention to it, because it was not being done by any of the ministers I saw in this House who occupied that position. And that was the attempt by our former colleague to bring some focus to

the problem that we were having in rural development and the lack of interest and concern the former administration displayed on a continuous basis.

By the same token, when I raised the issue of separate department of Labrador Affairs, if rural development was being ignored, then Labrador was certainly being ignored. And I thought, if I was to focus attention as one of the Labrador representatives, I better ask the former Premier, twice removed, nevertheless removed and once removed to do something about it. So I thought the only way to focus attention on the concerns of Labrador was to have a Minister of Labrador Affairs, a separate minister.

MR. TOBIN:

Do we have one now?

MR. KELLAND:

Well, if you hang on you will find out what the philosophy is. Be patient. I do not think you have much choice but to be patient. It is a long haul to the next election. But anyway I decided that I would focus the attention on Labrador by bringing forth that kind of resolution, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TOBIN:

I bet you will not be in Cabinet when the next election is called. I make that prediction today, by the way.

MR. KELLAND:

By the way, first of all, we should say there was a Minister of Northern Development by the twice removed Premier, once by his party, and once by us. He created the Department of Northern Affairs, which was nothing more than a clearing house for all government departments. He did

not have a separate department, he was a co-minister within RAND, and later, I believe it was during last year's annual general meeting, Mr. Chairman, of the Combined Councils of Labrador, the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. G. Warren) announced that the Premier was simultaneously announcing that he had now created a Ministry of Labrador Affairs, which, by the way, the once removed Premier dropped when he did his famous Cabinet shuffle. The announcement again was that there would now be a Minister of Labrador Affairs. But again he had no department, he had no authority, he was still only a clearing house of information for all other departments as they relate to Labrador. And the concept in my mind to do that without some meaningful effort to put together a department that could deal with the affairs of Labrador was the sort of a king concept.

MR. TOBIN:
King Kong?

MR. KELLAND:
A king concept. Read my lips.

MR. TOBIN:
Oh, your leader, King.

MR. KELLAND:
King concept in that they put the member for Torngat Mountains in the position of Minister of Labrador Affairs, and in effect created a kind of a little kingdom, a King, the King of Labrador. He took that so much to heart that he went and tried to build himself a \$22,000 throne, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. KELLAND:

From which I am told some of his greatest efforts came forth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear! Hear!

MR. KELLAND:

Here is what we are faced with; now our concept, Mr. Chairman -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Chairman, it is very difficult to continue speaking when you upset the other side because it is reflected in the decibel rating. You know, when you upset them the noise goes up. That is graphic proof, Mr. Chairman.

Anyway, our concept was, under a much more efficient, effective Cabinet than we have ever seen in this Province certainly in the last seventeen years, was that every single department of government should and will impact on Labrador, that every single minister on this side, within their departments, has a responsibility to make sure their individual ministries pay attention to the concerns of Labrador. And it is that concept that we put forth, that we do not need a King system along with a throne.

MR. SIMMS:
You have got one.

MR. KELLAND:

thrown in. What we need is a government sensitive to the regional needs of this Province, Labrador being one of the regions. And every single minister, I have confidence, will address individually and collectively in Cabinet the

concerns of Labrador. And it becomes the job of the MHAs., the four of us from Labrador, to make absolutely certain that all the concerns from all of the groups, ethnic origins and so on, impact on every department of government. And I thought I should make those points so that the former Government House leader, also once removed, would be aware that when he makes statements in the House and perhaps casts aspersions on other members without knowing the rationale behind the resolutions, that it should be explained to him as graphically as possible, which I hope I have just done, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the indulgence of the members of the House and I will perhaps add more words, should we have some other comments worthy of considering, from the other side.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder would the hon. member elaborate a little tiny bit more and tell us =

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Grand Falls.

MR. SIMMS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Who is the minister, then, responsible for Labrador? In the context in which you have just described and explained the philosophy, is there a minister now sort of responsible for Labrador on a regional basis or what?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister for Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Yes, we have a Cabinet responsible for the affairs of Labrador made up of fifteen members, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SIMMS:

Yes. But there is no minister responsible.

MR. KELLAND:

All ministers are responsible.

MR. SIMMS:

I know, but no specific minister. What is next?

MR. BAKER:

There is nobody standing.

MR. SIMMS:

No. I just asked a question.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Go ahead, Ollie.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Chairman, yesterday when I spoke in the House -

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

I am sorry. I am a rookie at this, you will have to forgive me.

Mr. Chairman, yesterday when I spoke in the legislature during the introduction of The Interim Supply Bill I duly noted that this would be a memorable forty-first sitting of the General Assembly. We were looking forward, as were the people of the Province, to seeing a new philosophy implemented in government.

The hon. the Premier, whom I have referred to as an honourable man, a man with integrity, a man with fairness, a man with a genuine

desire to be fair to all this Province regardless of political stripe, who would set a new tenor for this Province, would zero in on the major problems facing the Province, Mr. Chairman, today I find that this compliment that I have genuinely and sincerely presented, has been somewhat shattered.

When I see the estimates presented by the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation and when I see 20 per cent of the funding, some \$2.6 million, going into resurfacing at the expense of roads that have not been upgraded and paved, I find it somewhat difficult to accept. When I see resurfacing of local roads given priority in this document with good pavement already - I know what I am talking about - where only a few people live and they are not main thoroughfares and ask people to drive over gravel roads in Fortune - Hermitage and some of the other rural districts in this Province that are inferior and are dangerous, then where are the priorities and where is the fairness?

The question, then, that I would like to ask for the people of Fortune - Hermitage - I can address it to the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation - is: Is there additional funding to be allocated this year from federal and provincial funds so that there can be funding provided for a major trunk road in the district of Fortune - Hermitage? That is the major trunk road from Hermitage to the bottom of Hermitage Bay. Will that be included in the federal - provincial funding that would be included for this year's estimates that are not already duly presented?

PREMIER WELLS:

If my hon. friend would permit, I would just like to respond first to a couple of comments that have been made.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

He paid me some nice compliments about his confidence in my sense of fairness and my integrity.

MR. LANGDON:

They were sincere.

PREMIER WELLS:

I have no doubt they were. I appreciate the hon. member's compliments. I just want to assure him they are not misplaced. When it came to deciding what the priorities would be in terms of road work throughout the Province it was my wish, and I can tell you it was the wish of every member of the government, that they be done with complete fairness for everybody and that there be no political interference whatsoever. So we instructed the officials and the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation to tear up every political list that has been prepared by the former government. Ignore them totally. Whatever their lists were, ignore them totally. You are the experts. You know what is right. You know where the priorities should be. You have no political constituency to answer to. You are independent civil servants. Exercise your judgement on a totally fair and proper basis based on the priority of what is right for all of the people of the whole Province. Quite obviously we do not have the funds to meet the total needs. Do not let anybody from any side

of the Legislature interfere with your judgement. Use your sound, independent judgement and judge it and prepare a list of priorities solely and totally on the basis of what is right and proper to respond to the needs throughout the Province.

That means that some areas are not going to get what the people in that area think they should be getting. Unquestionably that is going to happen and that did happen. But the list was prepared and the list of road work that was read out today by the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation was exactly that list, with no variation from any politician on either side of the House. Now if that turns out to be bad judgement, the government has responsibility for it, ultimately, because we set up the means by which it was done, we assigned to those people the responsibility to do it.

I just want the hon. member to know that I did not betray the trust that he said he had in me, that it was done on a proper and fair basis.

I have no doubt that he and others in that fine district that he represent feel that not enough priority was assigned to roads in their district, but so does the member for St. John's East Extern, you heard him in the House, and you heard somebody else speaking on behalf of the poor district of Grand Falls, that their interest should be protected, too. So it should in the proper place. But is that right, that the government should spend money doing road work on the streets of Grand Falls, which are largely already paved if not 100 percent paved - the hon. member would know - when the roads

in the district of the hon. member for Fortune - Hermitage were not done? So not everybody is going to be satisfied. As a matter of fact, perhaps even all of the people will feel that we have not treated them fairly, which means we probably done the right thing. If you have not totally satisfied everybody, you have probably done the right thing. That is the way it was approached.

Mr. Chairman, while I am on my feet I just want to say a couple of other things about those so-called missing cheques. I have asked the Clerk of the Council to inform me totally as to exactly what happened with any cheques or any amounts between March 31 and May 5, what directions, if any, were given by me, and I will inform the committee in detail of exactly what happened and to what extent what cheques, if any, were stopped; whether they were issued, whether they were not issued. Whatever is the reality of it I will inform the committee and I will tell the committee exactly why we acted in the way we did. If we did anything to cause them to be changed, the committee will be informed in due course.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Chairman, in replying to the Premier I have no doubt that that is the way that was done. However, I still find it very difficult to accept when roads, that are already paved within municipalities and are in good, excellent condition, take priority over areas that are not paved in the rural areas.

I take exception to that and I will look forward, as I said, to hearing the hon. member for Burgeo Bay d'Espoir to reply as to if there will be any funding for the major trunk road from Hermitage to the bottom of Hermitage Bay this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

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

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Premier answered the question about the priorities very well, I thought. But I would like to point out to the hon. member that the condition that we found was that there was no priority other than a politic one when we came into this situation. I asked the officials to give me a list and to tell me what the criteria was for the priority that they had.

I will just point out to the hon. gentleman, so that he will know, that the provincial roads program has three components: road and bridge rehabilitation; improvement and construction to bridges and causeways; and projects recommended in the rehabilitation area are primarily the asphalt bridges and that which has deteriorated over time. So, I asked the civil servants to give me a list of the roads on a priority basis and the roads that should be done in the funding that we had available in this Interim Supply. They told me the criteria is this: The first thing is what are the maintenance problems they are having with those roads, because this is a provincial road program, it is a maintenance program primarily, so the first part of it is maintenance. So where are the most serious

maintenance problems that have to be looked after? The hon. member will possibly realize, if you look at it, there are roads in every district that have to be upgraded, and down through the four years that I have been here roads had to be done. But there are roads that have to be maintained. It is no good of just building a road. As you know, if you have a car and it started to go on you, and you do not put it in for regular maintenance, it goes and it is destroyed in a short time. In other words, the first criteria is maintenance. There is a certain part of this roads program that maintenance has to go to.

The second thing they have to look at when they are upgrading the roads in the Province is the volume of traffic that is on the roads.

MR. SIMMS:

He was telling us about asphalt.

MR. POWER:

Stop re-reading what I told you.

MR. GILBERT:

It is too bad the hon. member did not listen to it and listen to his officials, because if he did he might still be around instead of sitting where he is now. But the thing is this problem has to be addressed first through maintenance and then through the volume of the traffic that is on it.

Now the other thing is the hon. member for Grand Falls, as I said to him before, was not very good when he was selling cars, and he was no good in government and he is not much good in Opposition.

MR. SIMMS:

You just do not like me.

MR. GILBERT:

I hired you; that was a mistake.

MR. SIMMS:

That is when I ran (inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:

And I ran yours unfortunately. But, I mean, I launched you on your career anyhow. Car salesman was not it. Kinsman was the one I launched you on, because I had to do something to get rid of you.

Anyhow, the next thing that I will tell the hon. member is that there is the public request. This is where my officials made the decision and the paving program that was outlined today, or the provincial road program, was outlined and given to me by the officials of the department based on those criteria. Now bridges and causeways are recommended because they deteriorate and they have to be repaired otherwise, we could run into serious problems. So I tell the hon. member that we on this side would like to pave all the roads in Newfoundland. Unfortunately we do not have the money. What we have to do now is follow the priority list that is established by our civil servants and we will then, over a period of time, put fairness and balance into the whole system so that everybody feels that he is getting a fair deal. You know, I can assure you that there are people in Burgeo today who feel they are not getting a fair deal because they did not get any pavement in this. But it was a list that was prepared by the civil servants and on a priority basis and that is the way we intend to operate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, if you could just go back probably almost a year to the day, certainly to the month, you would certainly recall my colleague, the member for Harbour Main (Mr. Doyle), saying all of those things to me then, I believe, official Transportation critic for the Opposition, and you could hear the howls coming out of him, that this was not the way it was, and it was done politically and the officials did not have a chance to have any input into it.

MR. SIMMS:

Read Hansard. It is probably almost verbatim.

MR. RIDEOUT:

It was pork barrelling and it was this and it was that. It was everything but anything good. And all of the explanations now, Mr. Chairman, is completely to the contrary. I accept what the Premier has to say in terms of asking the officials to prioritize the list of roads for him. I have no difficulty with that. In fact, I would have less difficulty with it if the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, who came into the House today, were able to say to us that he accepted the professional advice of his officials on the spray program.

MR. FLIGHT:

I did.

MR. SIMMS:

No, you did not.

MR. RIDEOUT:

And that we know, Mr. Chairman, for a fact is a fact. The professionals in the Department of Forestry did not recommend to the minister the course of action that was taken today.

MR. SIMMS:
That is correct.

MR. RIDEOUT:
That is correct.

MR. FLIGHT:
A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. SIMMS:
Be careful! Do not get yourself in any hot water, old boy.

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

MR. FLIGHT:
If the leader of the Opposition believes what he said, I wonder if he would, in private, deliver to me the names of the officials who suggested that. I say to him that he has not got them.

MR. DOYLE:
So you can get a purge on the go.

MR. SIMMS:
To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
Can the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture stand in his place today and categorically deny that his officials did not recommend a combined program using fenitrothion and 8t? Can he categorically deny that they did not recommend that course of action?

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Chairman, I can categorically say that my officials placed in front of me various options. We looked at the options and my officials, and anyone else who might have been involved, indicated that given the scope of the program, given the level of infestation, that 8t was indeed as good an option as any.

MR. SIMMS:
But to the point of order, Mr. Chairman -

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
The question is can he categorically deny that his officials did not recommend a program using both products that we are talking about?

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Yes.

MR. SIMMS:
Oh! Yes. We shall see.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
To the point of order, there is no point of order.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Chairman, I think the minister

who is just leaving the House has answered his own query, he has answered his own question. There obviously was a recommendation from the professionals for a combination of fenitrothion and Bt. Everybody know that. That was the recommendations, I guess, that were before us when we were there. That was the professional recommendation, from the professionals, the experts involved, so any change from that had to be a change politically. That is what it had to be. I accept that. There is nothing wrong with that. What is wrong with that is say it, if that is the case. There is nothing wrong with political leadership. We do not have to apologize, Mr. Chairman, for political leadership. You might have to defend it, that is what our system is all about, but do not hide behind it. If that is what took place, when the question is asked say so, that is all we are saying. If the Premier asked the professionals in the Department of Works, Services and Transportation to give him and his administration a list of roads and he did not touch them one iota, I accept that. It might not be the right thing to do but there has to be political leadership shown by the government as well. I think it was the Board of Trade who only, a few days ago, indicated that one of the concerns they had with this administration was that perhaps the government would not lead as much as the bureaucrats would be leading. Maybe, we will see. Only time will tell.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did the Board of Trade say that?

MR. RIDFOUT:

The Board of Trade said it, yes, or the spokesman for the Board of

Trade. I suppose his commentary is not worth anything either, is it not? It seems to me, Mr. Chairman, that very quickly we are arriving at a point with a new administration that really comes down to, I guess, what I spoke about briefly on opening day. If the administration is going to get so cocky, all of a sudden, that every time somebody opposed to it says something it cannot be any good because somebody opposed to the administration said it, then this administration is very quickly, and very arrogantly, moving in the wrong direction. It was only the other day I saw a quote from a close advisor to this administration who said this, 'If we said it is wrong, then it is wrong.' I suppose if we say it is right then it is right. If the Opposition says it is wrong, then no, the government has to say it is right. Very quickly, Mr. Chairman, we will soon see, over the next number of months, if that is going to be the direction that this administration is going to take. I hope that the administration retains an open mind. I hope that they will listen to good advice wherever it comes from. Once in a while there might be a lightning bolt strike somebody over here. Even though we are Opposition there might be a lightning bolt strike us and there might be a piece of good thought, or good advice come out. If it is, listen to it. That is the only point I was making on opening day.

Now, I want to direct a question in this part of the debate, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Mr. Cowan). I would like to know that if, in the Interim Supply arrangement that we are debating here today, there is any

additional funding in this Interim Supply for the special panel of the Labour Relations Board? A special panel of the Labour Relations Board, as the hon. minister knows, was struck some year and a half, almost two years ago to deal with the special labour problems facing the fishing industry in Newfoundland and Labrador. It has sat almost permanently for almost two years. It has cost the taxpayers of this Province a lot of money, but it had to be done under the labour legislation of Newfoundland and Labrador. I understand, as well, that that special panel has now been called upon to do a similar tour of duty in the organized sector of the forest industry.

So, is there special funding in this Interim Supply Bill for that special panel of the Labour Relations Board? Is it going to continue as a special panel? Will it continue to hear the balance of the fisheries related cases and the new cases emanating out of the dispute in the forest industry? What people? Are there the same people on that panel now as were on it previously? How long more can be expect there to be a need for that special panel, that is costing several hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to work, to operate in the Province?

You wanted some specific questions.

MR. STIMMS:

There are specific questions. Is the Minister of Labour going to respond?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The minister can answer specifically as she sees fit in a moment. I have been trying on a couple of occasions now to simply elaborate a little bit concerning the capital/current account amounts. In doing so I will probably partially answer the question just asked by the leader of the Opposition.

What we have before us is a segment, a proportion, a fraction of all of the ongoing expenses of each department, first of all. This could be split between current and capital. We have a segment and it is front-end loaded because a lot of the expenditures happened early in the fiscal year. So all of the ongoing programs of government, every one of them, are partially funded under this program. So I guess really the question is: Have we cut out this program? Because all of the regular programs of government are partially funded under each department.

MR. RIDFOUT:

I am just wondering if you have a feeling about how long more than special panel is going to be necessary.

MR. BAKER:

Well, she can answer that.

I would like to very briefly go down through and point out a little more detail. First of all I would like to point out about the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. The capital amount recommended in the Interim Supply is \$120,615,500. A lot of this, Mr. Chairman, has already been announced as part of the Trans-Canada Highways agreement that was signed with the federal government, and construction is ongoing there. As a matter of

fact, as soon as the snow went construction started on a lot of these projects and the construction is continuing. As you will see if you drive across the Province there is a fair amount of road work underway. So a large portion of that, close to \$100 million, maybe \$70 to \$80 million, would be the Trans-Canada Highway money.

Today we announced a capital project in highways and a significant portion of that capital project - I guess all of it would have to be because we hope to tender and so on soon - would be included in that \$120 million. So that is the largest amount.

There is \$205 million capital there and \$120 of that is in transportation and it is basically made up of the roads program plus the program related to the Trans-Canada Highways agreement. Obviously, as members opposite know, there are other capital projects underway having to do with some buildings and so on and salt sheds and what have you in transportation, capital money that would also be included here but it would be a very small proportion. Most of that money is roadwork.

In municipal affairs there is \$9 million capital. Again the members opposite know the types of programs that municipal affairs undertakes that are ongoing, some of them continuations from programs of last year which we had to keep going. The new initiatives, I cannot give detail on because some of them will be announced as part of the budget and I cannot really do a budget leak here myself. It would not be proper.

In terms of NLHC, members know their capital requirements in terms of building houses and all that kind of thing, providing shelter for the less fortunate people in our society, the work is ongoing and \$1.5 million is a portion of that work that is ongoing this year.

Public Works, again some of that is building expenditure that had to carry on, public buildings, and I bring hon. members attention to this particular block of the Confederation, the east block. There was work ongoing that was approved by the previous government that had gone too far to put any stop to, and has to be ongoing and there obviously has to be an amount of money in the budget related to the continued improvements of this particular building, and a fairly large segment of that money is needed early in the year and is in the Interim Supply.

In terms of fisheries as well, assistance to fish plants and all that kind of thing, members opposite can pretty well go down through and decide for themselves; they know the programs that are ongoing, that have to be kept going, and that is how the figures were arrived at. There are very few new initiatives in here, very few.

But there is one that was referred to and, again, a question asked, I believe by the leader of the Opposition although I am not sure, it might have been some other member yesterday, in terms of the economic recovery team. The question was asked: Are there any funds in this Interim Supply for the economic recovery team? It was perhaps an oversight on my part in the beginning that it was

not mentioned. I am told that built into the Department of Development budget here - I will explain something about that in a moment - is approximately \$500,000 for the economic recovery team. This is to provide some money for any action that might be taken previous to the end of July. So there is approximately \$500,000 in there coming from a variety of headings, coming from a number of headings, under, in this case Development and Tourism.

The reason I have got to be a little bit vague about this as well is, number one, it is a new initiative and I have to tell you that it is there, but, number two, you will notice that the breakdown here is as the breakdown exists in the old departmental structure. The reason is this was done on legal advice. The original Warrants that were passed, that were done by the previous government, had the listing according to these departments, and legal advice had it that if we were doing an umbrella Interim Supply Bill that we had to continue on with the same headings. Therefore funds from departments are split in some cases, and it is difficult to tie down exactly where, but I would say about \$500,000 is targeted for the economy recovery team.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Will that change with the budget?

MR. BAKER:

Yes. In doing this we have to go through quite a process, because we did our budget process, after we took over, from the point of view of the new departments, and it was with some difficulty that this had to be readjusted to all the old departments. But the budget will deal with the new

departments and all the appropriate headings will be in there and things will be spelled out. I just wanted to add these few things because I wanted to mention the economic recovery team because it was specifically mentioned by members opposite.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Before I recognize the honourable member for Torngat Mountains, I want to recognize the Mayor of Tilton, who is the gallery this afternoon, Mayor Joseph Smith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to give notice of a matter, if I may at this point in time, with respect to a possible point of privilege, which would require, of course, being raised at the earliest possible opportunity. Since it will take some time to get some information together I thought it would be appropriate to give notice of the matter right here today, at least in the committee, just to keep the options open.

I just want to give notice of a possible point of privilege with respect to the exchange earlier between myself and the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to participate in

this debate for the next ten or fifteen minutes if you will allow me, Sir.

I noticed that after two days debating the Minister of Finance finally stood up in his place today and actually spoke for three minutes and twenty-two seconds. Since then, for some reason unknown to us, but I would think it must be on orders from the Premier, he has not been allowed to speak. Now whether that is the way it is going to work or not, I do not know, but I understand the Premier told him that is enough for today, you cannot say anything else.

Mr. Chairman, today I asked the Premier a question in Question Period which I considered very, very important. I am sure the Premier, in his last comment in Question Period, considered it very important, too. We have in Happy Valley, Goose Bay, a situation that is at the boiling point. I think we have to face the fact as politicians in this House, that we have a situation that is at boiling point and unless this government acts very shortly, it may be too late. I asked the Premier a question about that situation today, and I was surprised that although he came back and said they were sworn in on May 5, he had not met with any National Defence officials. Now from May 5 to May 28, in my calculation, is twenty-three days.

Two federal ministers visited St. John's last weekend and he met with them on other issues, but he never met with anyone on this issue. I think it is very, very serious.

Mr. Chairman, we have to address this issue very seriously. I

would like to ask the Premier to consider what the previous government had instituted; we had only one meeting. Now that they are the government, I think the Minister of Environment and Lands (Mr. Kelland), the minister from Labrador, should Chair a meeting of members of this House to deal with the NATO and the Native concerns in Labrador.

Mr. Chairman, I am willing, with the concurrence of my Leader, to participate in such a meeting, or such a committee, to deal with this very, very serious problem. It has to be addressed. And we cannot put it all on the federal government. We, as the government of this Province, have to deal with it also. I would suggest to the Premier that we have to look at this very, very seriously.

Mr. Chairman, the last two or three days have been very, very interesting. I understand the Assistant Deputy Minister of Development, with the new set-up - I will not mention names, because we all know who the individual is. He has been stationed in Labrador for ten years. The member for Naskaupi, the Minister of Environment and Lands - I know he is not looking, but he has ears and I am sure he is listening - has advocated time and time again that the first thing this government would do if they were elected would be get rid of that particular individual. The hon. gentleman has said this publicly. Now, that is number one. I still consider the gentleman in question an hon. gentleman. I think he is a smart individual and I think he has much to offer.

For a number of years, and my colleague sitting in front of me will vouch for this, it has been

the intention of bureaucrats within government to get rid of the government stores on the Labrador coast.

This has been a contention of many officials of government. But because of the persistence of this hon. gentleman, when he was Minister of Rural Agriculture and Northern Development, because of my position as a member and as a minister, recently, the previous government decided we needed to upgrade those stores, and in the last year and a half we finally got around to bringing those stores up to a position where they were giving good service to the people.

Now, this government was elected on April 20, they were sworn in on May 5, and already - I want to say this - a number of meetings have been held and a number of telephone conversations have taken place between senior officials of the minister's department and major companies within Newfoundland and Labrador, and major companies outside of Newfoundland and Labrador, to get rid of those stores.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me say one other thing. The government in power now has to realize that the previous administration did not get rid of those stores when other companies wanted to take them over. We have had offers on the table for the last seven or eight years from potential buyers of those stores, and the reason we said no is the same reason that this member will continue to give, that those stores were built from monies from the federal/provincial Native Peoples' Agreement. They were built for the people. But all of a sudden, within fifteen days, we have senior officials

talking about getting rid of those stores to major companies.

I have to say this, Mr. Chairman, it is so ironic. Starting next week, the Assistant Deputy Minister is going to be travelling the Northern coast of Labrador. Now, Mr. Chairman, in the last ten years he only went up there four times. He did not want to go there. He did not want to talk to the Native people. Now, all of a sudden, he is going to go up to ask them, Can we get rid of the stores?

Mr. Chairman, what a sham! What a sham! I can tell the hon. minister. I think I have the letter here somewhere. I showed it to him today - he has a letter in his possession, and the Premier has a letter in his possession from the LIA. I know the Premier has not had a chance to read it, because he is trying to protect his Minister of Finance. I mean, you cannot do everything at once. Mr. Chairman, here is a letter from the LJA asking the Premier of this Province to make sure that the people of Rigolet are protected.

Now, Sir, let me go back one more step and remind you, Sir, as Premier of this Province - I can go back six and a half years, when I wanted to bring a resolution into this House, as an Opposition member, and two of your colleagues, one of them, Sir, being very instrumental in working behind the scenes in your election - I will not mention his name. You know who the person is.

AN HON. MEMBER:
The former leader.

MR. WARREN:
At least we are working together.

My hon. colleague said the former leader. Yes, that is true. He suggested that a resolution from the people on coastal Labrador should not have another person speak in support of it; there are only a few people up there, so why should we support them?

Now the hon. leader is following this same train of thought. Why? Those people - I hope the Premier realizes what he is saying in the Throne Speech - need services just the same as the people in Waterford - Kenmount or in St. John's.

Mr. Chairman, today the hon. the member for Burin - Placentia West, in response to the Minister of Transportation, spoke about highroads and transportation.

In a paper on the minister's desk there is mentioned the upgrading of roads in Eagle River. My good friend from Eagle River, who worked with the previous government for two years, who travelled the Labrador Coast for two years, went into communities and, without mentioning one word about his job, held public meetings talking about the Liberal Party. He went into two communities in the past two years and never had one meeting concerning his position or the job he was doing, but had meetings asking for peoples' support in the next election.

PREMIER WELLS:

What were the communities?

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Premier, if you want me to tell you the communities and the people he spoke to, I will tell you, Sir. I will tell you exactly what he did for two years.

Mr. Chairman, we had the paper that was supported by the officials of the Department of Transportation saying there would be road work carried out in St. Lewis, in the hon. member's district. It was announced. But the minister comes in today and he does not announce it. What happened to it? Priorities!

Mr. Chairman, the Premier said those people were walking around on cow paths. Here was his chance to do some work, but today the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation came into this House --

MR. DECKER:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

The hon. member just made his first attack on the member for Eagle River. I am sure, when he reflects on what he said, he will withdraw his remarks. He does not have the right, because we have legislative immunity in this House, to get up and attack and accuse a person of not doing his job, but of going out and holding those meetings on government time and with government money. I think the hon. member will withdraw that when he realizes what he said.

MR. RIDEOUT:

To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

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

MR. RIDEOUT:

That is not a point of order. If

it is anything it is a difference of opinion between two hon. members. I doubt if it is even worthy of that consideration.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To the point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I will say to my hon. colleague, the Minister of Health, that it is a fact. It might not be a point of order, Mr. Chairman, but it is a fact and for the two years the hon. gentleman had been paid by the taxpayers of this Province.

Let me tell you one other thing. And the hon. member for Naskaupi can vouch for this, because he was associated with the printing company that had this hon. gentleman's brochures completed within twelve months of the election. The hon. gentleman knows that, because he showed them to me.

MR. KELLAND:

A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

A point of order, the hon. the Minister of Environment.

MR. KELLAND:

Since March of 1985, I have not been associated with any printing company. I thought I would make that point for clarification's sake. Now, the period referred to occurred after that, when the member is making reference to the member for Eagle River. So I cannot verify anything that the member for Torngat Mountains is mouthing, because I have had

absolutely no connection with any printing company since March of 1985.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

To that point of order, there is no point of order.

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Not to the point of order, Mr. Chairman, but just to continue.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

There is no point of order.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sure the hon. member for Naskaupi, the Minister of Environment and Lands, knows exactly what I am talking about. Why would the hon. member go around telling people about the brochures that were printed up by the company that he was associated with? It is very, very interesting, Mr. Chairman.

MR. WINDSOR:

Printed up for who?

MR. WARREN:

For the member for Eagle River.

MR. WINDSOR:

The existing member?

MR. WARREN:

Yes, the existing member, while working with the Department of Career Development.

Let me just say one other thing. This government now has plenty to do with the people of Labrador. The Premier knows about this and this is very, very serious. They are going to use Happy Valley -- Goose Bay as a central location

for the destruction of all PCBs in the Province.

MR. WINDSOR:

What! Where is the Minister of Environment?

MR. WARREN:

The Minister of Environment is right here, Mr. Chairman. They are going to use the Department of National Defence as the main source of the destruction of PCBs in this Province, and they are going to be transporting PCBs from all over the Province to Happy Valley - Goose Bay to be destroyed by the Department of National Defence.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. WARREN:

The Minister of Environment, who is also the member for Naskaupi, where is he?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

I do not want to overwork this position -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. KITCHEN:

- but I would like to assure hon. members that you shall hear from me for many years, hopefully, or certainly for several years, or perhaps for a few months. My purpose for rising is merely to indicate that members may wish to know that our plan is to introduce

the budget on June 6.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. KITCHEN:

In all likelihood, it shall be read by the Minister of Finance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

Is that all you have to say about Interim Supply?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Chairman, I want to continue. In the next three or four minutes, in this debate on Interim Supply, I will direct my questions to the Minister of Health.

I ask the Minister of Health if there are any funds in Interim Supply for the new Board of the Grenfell Health Services of Labrador. The past administration looked at this and considered it. In fact, I say to the hon. minister, every single person on that Board agreed with a division of the Grenfell Health Services Board except the Director of the Grenfell Health Services, the brother of a former leader of the Liberal Party. Mr. Chairman, he is the only person who disagrees with a division of the Board. Why? It is very simple. He is going to lose his power in St. Anthony. He is going to lose his power in St. Anthony, Mr. Chairman.

Now, I will say to the Minister of Health that I understand the relationship between the Minister of Health and the Executive Director of the Grenfell Health

Services Board is not the best. I would think that the Minister of Health would agree with the Board's recommendation that the Grenfell Health Services Board should be divided. The people of the coast of Labrador, Lake Melville, have suffered too long being administered to by a person, an individual in St. Anthony, who could not run the affairs from Nain to Roddickton. It is impossible to do so. Geography dictates that you cannot do it.

Mr. Chairman, the federal government decided through the regular process to have a federal member for Labrador. The provincial government through the regular process, over the last number of years, have gone from one member for Labrador to two members for Labrador, to three members for Labrador, to the present four members for Labrador, because they looked at the geography and they decided, in their wisdom, that it was the right thing to do.

But over all those years the Grenfell Regional Health Services Board has decided to remain as one board for the whole area. I would suggest to the Minister of health that he seriously consider the recommendations of the Task Force, established by the Grenfell Regional Health Services, stating that the Board should be divided.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I understand that the Minister responsible for Tourism (Mr. Furey) is planning a press conference within the next five or six days.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:
Mr. Chairman, I understand from

reliable sources between now and Tuesday, because the tourism season is ready to go, and because of this government's commitment to making sure that there were vending facilities available, Woody Point and Norris Point will be connected by a tourist ferry.

I understand he has a press conference coming up. He is going to be announcing it very shortly. One of the things the previous administration did was make sure that we had the proper facilities in place between Norris Point and Woody Point for the convenience of tourists. Mr. Chairman, I have to say this. After working for government for the past ten years as a politician, and working within government for twenty-two years, you do have one or two friends, one or two at least, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN:
No. No. In fact, I think we got the first budget leak today from the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. In fact, if we had looked at the expression on the faces of the Premier and the Minister of Finance when the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs was speaking, you would not know but Michael Wilson was back again.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Wilsonitis (inaudible).

MR. WARREN:
Mr. Chairman, let me say to the hon. member who just made that comment, open zero.

MR. TOBIN:
That is low. That is really low.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Order, please!

MR. WARREN:
Mr. Chairman, I say to the Minister of Fisheries, and I am serious about this, because we only have a short construction season on the coast of Labrador, tenders closed for the new fish plant in Nain over two weeks ago. The lowest bidders realize they have the lowest bids and they want to order supplies for the construction of those two major fish plants, which is mainly financed by monies from the federal government under the inshore fisheries program, something like \$5.5 million for those two communities. Why, Sir, has your department not allotted the tenders to those two companies so they can order supplies now and get the materials up there as soon as they can to construct those two fish plants?

Sir, I would suggest that you got orders from your Premier to make sure not to allot these so that it would be too late for this construction season. Your Premier has gone back to the Joey days; things will happen only when I say they will happen. It is unfortunate that in this Province today we have a Premier who was part of the Joey days and now is dictating to the Ministers of this Province: you will say nothing, you will do nothing, and nothing will be done unless I say so. I think we are in a bad state in this Province when we have to listen to a dictator telling his ministers when they can say something. I say this to you, Sir, because I consider you one of the most honourable gentlemen in this House. You are an outstanding gentleman. I have campaigned for you, and I have

knocked on doors for you.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What?

MR. WARREN:
Oh, yes. The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, I consider him one of the most outstanding gentlemen in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:
The hon. member used the term dictator, which is unparliamentary, and I would ask him to withdraw that statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Order! Order!

The hon. the member for Torngat Mountains has used a word which is unparliamentary. I would ask him to withdraw the word 'dictator'.

MR. WARREN:
Oh, yes, Mr. Chairman, no problem. Whatever word it was, I will withdraw it.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
Dictator.

MR. WARREN:
Oh, no, he is not a dictator, Mr. Chairman. No, that is too good for him.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me carry on. The Minister of Fisheries is a real honourable gentleman. I would suggest to the hon. gentleman that he has his duties to perform as minister and, for once, tell your leader that those people on the Labrador Coast need those two fish plants constructed as soon as possible. And, at the same time, tell your leader, on behalf of the member for Eagle

River, that you have to bail out the Cartwright people. You have to bail out the people in Cartwright. They need help. They are a fishing community. The mayor and the people of Cartwright have been begging on hands and knees for assistance. All that is needed is \$185,000 to get them going again. So surely goodness your government, through the newly elected member - I do not know, Mr. Chairman, time will tell whether he will be more effective than the last member. I hope he will.

Mr. Chairman, I know I only have thirty seconds left, but I would ask, Sir, that the people on the Labrador coast, from Red Bay to Nain, be looked after. They need help. They need it from this government. They got it from the other government. Let us show where our true feeling are for the fishermen of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Chairman, I told the Committee just now that I would find out what the situation was with respect to those claimed cheques. Here is what happened: I have been provided with a Minute-of-Council dated March 31, 1989 ordering that the following three regional authorities be provided funding of \$1.5 million each under a regional recreation facilities program, subject to review of the financial ability of the municipalities involved by the Department of Municipal Affairs. Centre Loop Arts and Recreation Association, Fogo Island Arena Committee, Fortune Bay - Connaigre

Peninsula Arena Commission. Fiscal committees for this program, and I assume that is an error, that it meant 'commitments'. It says 'committees', so I assume it means fiscal commitments for this program to be paid in three installments, the first installment of \$200,000 to be paid in the 1988-89 fiscal year to each organization. The second and third installments of \$650,000 to be paid in each of 1989-90 and 1990-91 fiscal years, subject to verification of total cost. That was March 31, while the election campaign was on, and it was announced during the election campaign.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible) Cabinet (inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:
I have no idea. This meeting is dated March 31.

AN HON. MEMBER:
The Cabinet meeting was before the election.

PREMIER WELLS:
The Cabinet meeting was probably before the election, I would think, yes.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

PREMIER WELLS:
I do not know. All I know is the date stamp on this is March 31, and I assume the Cabinet meeting was sometime before that. It would be a guess on my part.

In any event, it was then announced during the election campaign. The election results are well known; I do not have to advise the Committee of that. As a result, during the course of

changeover, of transfer of power, there was a team of people that we had appointed and a team of people that the Leader of the Opposition had appointed to attend to the details. The civil servants asked for direction. Not on this specifically, generally. What do we do?

The general instruction given was hold all matters, given on my authority. The general instruction given was hold all matters in transition that are not now in place; hold all matters that have any significant long-term financial commitment until we have a chance to look at them. Without speaking to me or anybody else on the basis of that general instruction, and that is why I did not know about these particular cheques when they were raised here today, the civil servants held the cheques. There is a letter here from the Deputy Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth to the Clerk of the Executive Council asking specifically what was to be done with these three cheques, and that is dated April 25. The Clerk of the Executive Council wrote back instructions, and I have seen these letters now for the first time, saying, 'You should hold these cheques within your department and await further instructions.' I am sure you are aware of this already, but in my experience, unless the Department of Finance is very specific in saying they would be sent out by the Department of Finance, they should be held in his department pending approval. I am told that there was no other instruction and at the end of the thirty days the cheques lapsed, as they would in the normal course, not having been sent out. The cheques were not sent out, they were held. What

this government will or will not do with respect to these long-term obligations will be announced in due course, either in the Budget or by the minister, at the appropriate time. That is exactly what occurred.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, we finally solved, for now, the case of the missing cheques. We know where they are now. What the Premier had to say, again, as I said earlier today, would have a lot more credibility to it if I did not know for a fact that at least one member of this side of the House wrote to the Premier about commitments that we made during the election process, and the answer back from the Premier was, We cannot touch this because there are no MCs, and he was right. He never heard a word from me on it. He was right. But in this particular case, Mr. Chairman, the legitimately elected government of the day, in a program which was legitimately financed and voted by this Legislature, made commitments. The appropriate MCs were issued and the people of those communities have every right to expect the first installment of their financing. The cheques were drawn up and on orders of the Premier-elect they were held. The cheques were drawn up, and it is the Premier-elect who owes an explanation to His Honour, the Speaker, about Wesleyville, it is the Premier now who owes an explanation to the people in Fogo, and it is the Premier who owes an explanation to the people in Fortune Hermitage. You could have had the review, you know it was done legally, legitimately and

aboveboard, and if you wanted to say that we are not going to fund year two or year three, that was your political decision. The first installment could be held in a trust account, in the bank. Those communities have already raised several hundred thousand dollars themselves, so it is not good enough. But we finally did find the answer and the answer, I suspect, Mr. Chairman, is not one that the people in those communities will like.

Mr. Chairman, we have not at all been impressed with the answers that we have gotten from ministers over the last two days. In fact, we are not at all impressed. It is almost like flicking a salmon fly across the floor to see if you can get a rise. They are glued to their seats, Mr. Chairman. It is so difficult to get a rise out of the ministers on the other side that you would think they are glued to their seats. Unlike the government when they were in Opposition, we are not ones, Mr. Chairman, to unduly delay supply. We do not like the answers we have gotten. We will have more opportunity to debate this in the Budget debate, and we will, and I hope ministers will be more forthcoming then. But we will not unduly delay supply and, as we committed before, we will allow this Supply Bill to pass.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Resolution

"That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the Public Service for the financial

year ending the 31st day of March, 1990, the sum of One billion one hundred and fifty-five million four hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred dollars (\$1,155,457,600)."

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Shall the resolution carry?

On motion, resolution carried.

A bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending The Thirty First Day Of March One Thousand Nine Hundred And Ninety And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service."

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the resolution and a bill consequent thereto, carried.

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. L. SNOW:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered the matters to it referred and has directed me to report that it has adopted a certain resolution and recommends that a bill be introduced to give effect to same.

On motion, report received and adopted.

On motion, resolution read a first and second time.

On motion, a bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain

Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending The Thirty-First Day Of March One Thousand Nine Hundred And Ninety And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service", read a first, second and third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 2).

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Can we assume the clock is stopped for a few minutes?

MR. SPEAKER:

We shall assume that the clock is stopped. Agreed.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of announcements to make. First of all, tomorrow is Private Member's Day. I have suggested that Private Member's Day, upon agreement, be modified slightly, in the sense that after recently coming from the Opposition, I recognize some of the shortcomings of that particular day.

One of the obvious shortcomings is that resolutions have been debated in the order in which they appear on the Order Paper. This has been rather inconvenient, because, I believe, and I think the Opposition members will agree, that at certain times when they have matters of pressing importance that are on the Order Paper, and are way down on the Order Paper, it is quite frustrating when something is topical and they cannot debate it on Private Member's Day.

I have had discussions with the

Opposition House Leader and we have reached an agreement, and he can comment on it, that first of all we allot one day to private members debate on a bill unless there is some pressing reason to have the two, and we can decide by agreement. Members of the Opposition as well as government, but primarily the Opposition, can choose the order in which the resolutions will appear, or will be debated on the Wednesday, with the condition that on Monday the House be notified which resolution will be coming forth on Wednesday. We have suggested that flexibility be allowed in terms of Private Member's Day, and the degree of flexibility would be a matter of discussion between myself and the Opposition House Leader. The attempt, of course, is to make Private Members' Day a day that is more meaningful, especially for the Opposition. That is one announcement.

The resolution being debated tomorrow is the resolution from the member for St. Mary's The Capes (Mr. Hearn), so members can prepare for that.

Just to continue on: We will be doing the private member's resolution tomorrow. On Thursday and Friday we will be debating the Speech from the Throne, and again on Monday. I say that so that the new members of the House, particularly, can prepare their speeches, and so on, for these particular occasions. Then, of course, as has already been announced by the Minister of Finance, budget day will be Tuesday, June 6.

That is the lineup for the next few days.

One final piece of information,

really a request on my part, is that I would like unanimous consent for the House to send congratulations to the newly re-elected Premier of Prince Edward Island, Joe Ghiz.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, the Opposition House Leader will have a few brief comments on the other matters that the Government House Leader raised, but I would like to, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House, join with the government in passing the unanimous congratulations of this Assembly to the newly elected government of Prince Edward Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:
I would like to note, Mr. Speaker, that unlike some governments in our jurisdiction, they polled by far, without any doubt, a majority of the vote, in excess of 60 percent, I believe. That is more than this government can say. And I would also like to congratulate Premier Ghiz on his personal re-election, in his own seat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, just a couple of comments I will make with respect to the points raised by my hon. friend opposite.

May I first of all just mention that during Committee I gave notice of a possible point of privilege which I think the Chairman of Committee, perhaps, should have reported. It is not a big point or anything, but I would just mention it now so that it is not overlooked.

On the issue of the debates, I am not going to go through it all again, I agree. We have discussed it. I have discussed it with my Cabinet colleagues, or my caucus colleagues. Oops!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:
Wishful thinking, I guess. I have to say this, though, in all honesty. In discussing it with my caucus colleagues initially, there was not total agreement. There was far from total agreement and I have to tell you why. It was because they were very, very suspicious that the government would be offering something like this to us - you know, one day debate. In any event, we agree with that and hopefully it will work out much better. I think it will, and it will correct the story that appeared in **The Evening Telegram**, I guess it was yesterday or today, where the impression was given that we would be continuing on with the rules, and that there was no ability to negotiate agreements. Obviously, there is.

The other question I would like to ask the Government House Leader, and maybe we can wait until tomorrow to get an answer on it, to give the government time to think about it, but traditionally after the Budget Speech is presented the House adjourns for a

day so members have a chance to peruse it and go through it and so on. That would be Private Member's Day as it stands now, would be your Private Member's Day, but perhaps you could give us a decision on it so all of us as members of the House could make our plans for next week, whether we are going to be here or whatever. Will we adjourn Tuesday?

PREMIER WELLS:

Are you asking that we defer Private Member's Day to Thursday and adjourn on Wednesday, or are you asking that we go ahead with Private Member's Day on Wednesday and adjourn on Thursday so that members will have a chance to peruse. I am not sure what you are proposing.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SJMMS:

I am not suggesting anything in particular. I am just saying traditionally the day after the budget is presented is a day when members take time to consider it. So I am wondering if the government intends to adjourn Tuesday after the budget until Thursday, as would normally be the practice, or does it intend to do some variation of it? Or does it intend not to adjourn?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This is a matter that I have not really fully discussed with my colleagues yet. It would be something that would be a matter of negotiation between the House

Leaders in the next few days. I realize traditionally the Budget Speech is on a Thursday, which then gives Friday, Saturday, and Sunday for consideration of the budget before we reopen again on Monday. In this case, it would simply provide one day. It is something that I will discuss with my colleagues and we will, together, make a decision. I will suggest something and see if you will go along with it, and then we will inform the House.

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

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