



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY - FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

First Session

Number 34

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Thursday

[Preliminary Transcript]

16 November 1989

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage).

MR. GULLAGE:
Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a short moment to pay tribute to a national athlete who died just recently, Victor Davis. A great Olympic swimmer, a gold medalist in the last Olympics, and we pay tribute to this individual who died, as we know, as the result of a tragic car accident. I would like the House to send a letter of sympathy to his family and to his fiancée.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on this side of the House would certainly like to associate ourselves with the remarks made by the hon. Minister. It was a very tragic accident which took a young Canadian from us who had contributed a tremendous amount to sport and recreation in Canada. So certainly those of us on this side of the House would like to associate ourselves with the comments made by the hon. Minister.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker, I would ask the House if it would send a message of condolence to the family of the late Anne Morrissey. Mrs. Morrissey, as the House would be aware, passed away recently at the age of 107 years. She was certainly one of the oldest, if not the oldest individual in our Province.

I think one of the really interesting things about Mrs. Morrissey was pointed out today in The Evening Telegram. When St. John's became a self-governing municipality back in 1888, Mrs. Morrissey was a five year old girl living in Avondale - in the home actually of the Minister of Development (Mr. Furey) - and my own hometown. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be appropriate to send a message of condolence to the family.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We would like to concur with the sentiments expressed by the Member for Harbour Main (Mr. Doyle). To have lived 107 years is a feat in itself. And she leaves to mourn a large number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We endorse the sentiments expressed by the representative from Harbour Main.

MR. PARSONS:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask this House of Assembly to send letters of congratulations to a couple of athletes who did very well in world competition.

One name in particular is certainly on everyone's mind and that is Joy Burt who won a Silver Medal at the World Championships in Nova Scotia and also Vascol Simpson of Labrador City who won a Bronze Medal. I think that both of those athletes certainly showed great signs of what their calibre is all about; how they could compete nationally, world wide or whatever. I think certainly that this House should go on record in sending letters of congratulation to each one of them.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

We too, Mr. Speaker, would like to be included in those letters of congratulations to these two individuals. They compete in a sport that is a very difficult sport to maintain and to stay with, and to continue to be successful with. Through weight lifting we have been recognized more and more over the last few years, and have developed some fine athletes. In both Joy Burt and Mr. Simpson we have done well, by their contribution to the Weight Lifting Sport, and I would certainly like to have us included in that letter to them.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, on June 29, 1989, I informed all hon. Members of this House that the Government was proceeding to the implementation stage of a major project previously approved under the Canada Newfoundland Offshore Development Fund Agreement, namely, The Marine Offshore Simulator Training and Research Centre, which is to be established in association with the Marine Institute in St. John's. I also announced at that time the awarding of the principal contract for this project involving the supply and installation of the simulation equipment, to a consortium of companies led by KRUPP ATLAS of West Germany, an approximate value of ten million dollars. Members may recall that I indicated that this was the lowest bid received for the simulation equipment and that Newfoundland firms were to form a major part of the consortium with forty-five per cent of the work to be directed to twelve local companies led by The Bay Group. The commitment made by the consortium with respect to Newfoundland industrial benefits was viewed as an important element of the entire project in terms of maximizing local technology transfer opportunities and strengthening the Province's position to capture future high tech work of this nature. Mr. Speaker it is with some regret that I must inform the House today that in finalizing the legal documents for this contract, it became apparent that the consortium was not able to fully carry through in a manner acceptable to the Province with

its previously stated commitments concerning Newfoundland industrial benefits. I should also advise the House that all efforts to resolve this matter with the consortium over the past several months have proven unsuccessful. Accordingly and following careful consideration of the alternatives available to us, it has been decided to retender this contract. It is felt that retendering is in the greatest public interest, given the large sum of public funds involved, and that it also represents the fairest approach to all companies that previously expressed an interest in the project.

Mr. Speaker, all companies that bid on this project have been advised of our decision on this matter, and it is expected that a final contract award can be made before Christmas.

While these unexpected delays are disappointing to all of us, I can assure the House that Governments commitment to the Marine Offshore Simulator Training and Research Center project has not diminished in any respect, and that it remains Governments objective to deliver the project in a manner which will optimize the level of industrial and technology transfer benefits for the Province.

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

MR. HEWLETT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for an advance copy of his statement. While I regret delay, I am pleased the Government is concerned about the degree of local content in the Marine Simulator Project, and I hope they continue this attitude in their Hibernia negotiations. However,

it must be pointed out that NORDCO, a Newfoundland company, made a statement of claim on this very project because of the tender procedure used. The matter may end up in court depending on how things turn out.

Some time ago, this Government awarded a tender to a company in the Bay d'Espoir area other than the lowest bidder, based on the fact that locals needed the work. I am wondering if Government had given similar consideration to NORDCO in this case. As Members will know, NORDCO was a company originally created by the former P.C. Government to capture marine related high tech business. If consideration can be given to employment needs in Bay d'Espoir, then why not do the same in our developing high tech industry.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
Further statements by Ministers?

Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the hon. the Premier. In view of the fact that the Province and the Government of Canada have agreed in principle on a number of initiatives to address the present crisis in the fishery,

and in view of the fact that both Governments are well along, as I understand it, in the process of reaching some final agreement that will perhaps be announced before Christmas, and in view of the fact that the package that is about to be finalized by both Governments will, no doubt, affect thousands of people in hundreds of communities in this Province, would the Premier tell the House whether or not the Province has agreed in principle to remove all part-time fishermen from the fishery as a result of this pending agreement, thereby putting anywhere from 10,000 to 15,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians out of a part-time job which, in many cases, contributed significantly to the annual income of those individuals?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS:

They have not agreed in principle, okay?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, we are certainly delighted to have that commitment from the Premier. The question was, has there been an agreement in principle to put 10,000 to 15,000 part-time fishermen out of the fishery forever? And the answer is no!

MR. SIMMS:

The answer is no. And you do not intend to?

PREMIER WELLS:

Now, that is something else.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

So you do intend to. Now we have him.

PREMIER WELLS:

Why not ask the question, then?

MR. SIMMS:

You just answered it. We do not need to ask it.

MR. RIDEOUT:

We will follow through on that further.

Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Premier. Would the Premier tell the House whether or not the Governments have agreed in principle to remove workers in age brackets 45 years to 55 years from the fishery forever as a result of this restructuring package?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, would the Premier tell the House whether or not there has been any agreement in principle between this Government and the Government of Canada so fish processing companies in this Province, after the package is announced, will not be permitted to hire young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to work in the fishery, particularly those who are under 30 years of age?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I am not sure I followed it. As I understand it, what he said was have we agreed in principle with the Federal Government not to permit fish companies to hire anybody under thirty? No, we have made no such agreement in principle.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of part-time fishermen, the issue of taking workers in the 45 years to 55 years age group out of the fishery permanently, the issue of not permitting processing companies to hire young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to work in the fishery in the future, I want to ask the Premier whether any or all of those issues are under active consideration by the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland at this particular time?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I do not know what the task forces have discussed, say, in the last ten days, perhaps. I have not been brought up to date on the details of their discussions in the last ten days. They are meeting on a fairly constant basis. But, I do know that there was discussed all aspects of how this crisis that exists in the fisheries can be dealt with. It is clear that the loss of the allowable catch that is projected

is likely to result in a loss of some 6,000 jobs. Where are they going to be? How can we best cope with it? A whole host of possibilities have been discussed, some of which I personally have not even heard of because the task forces are doing it. What the task forces have been doing in the last few days I do not know. One of the three the hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned I do recall being discussed, it has been mentioned, the question of part-time fishermen and how that impacts. An individual who has a regular job driving a school bus for ten months of the year, is it right to maintain a fishing licence and provide for an allowable catch and deprive the fishermen or fisherwoman, who is relying solely on the fishery as their means of income for the whole year, is it right to allow part-timers in that situation to have access to the fishing and to compete with or affect the ability of the full-timers to catch fish? That is a question we have to face, and I have no doubt it will be coming up.

Has a decision been made in principle? No. I assume that ultimately a decision has to be made. Has that issue been discussed? Yes. I have no knowledge that either of the other two issues the Leader of the Opposition mentioned have been discussed, but I cannot say that the task forces have not discussed it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition on a final supplementary.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, can the Premier give this House an assurance today that

those three issues I have raised here today in terms of the fisheries package - first of all, have they been discussed by the Cabinet of this Province and, secondly, have they been rejected as options?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

The answer to both questions is no, Mr. Speaker.

MR. RIDEOUT:

They have not been discussed and they have not been rejected.

PREMIER WELLS:

No. If they have not been discussed, they could hardly be rejected. I mean, that sort of logically follows.

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Since nobody seems to know what is going on, let me ask the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. W. Carter) if the Member for Carbonear (Mr. Reid) was enunciating Government policy yesterday when he said, 'If plants cannot make it on their own, let them go,' despite the fact that the Minister has recently propped up one in his own district while letting four or five others die which affect other areas of the Province.

Is this the policy of the Government, to let them go if they cannot make it on their own?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, private Members do not speak for Government, do not articulate Government policy in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That is the type of answer I expected to get, so I ask the Minister is the Government, then, without consulting private Members who make up their own party, not to say Members who represent so many rural districts in the Province, coming up with policies that will directly affect these people, including the Member for Carbonear, the Member for Placentia (Mr. Hogan) and the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy), without any consultation at all?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, one of the advantages of being a private Member in the Liberal Party is they are given the right to express certain views, private views, personal views, and are not told what to say or when to say it. I repeat what I said a moment ago, that any statements by the Member for Carbonear certainly were his own, he was not speaking for Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. HEARN:

Mr. Speaker, then let me ask the hon. Member, in light of the answers given to my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, by the Premier, is this Government, under a veil of secrecy, developing policies and supporting policies that will see the closure of several plants in this Province, affecting several hundred jobs and closing markets that cannot be replaced for many fishermen, including the plant in St. John's South, where we are not only talking about plant workers, but a market for several hundred fishermen? Are they developing policies that will see those plants close, those jobs destroyed, without any input or consultation from those who are directly affected, the people of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. When it comes to consultation, the hon. Member might do well to read the newspapers and he will find that we just completed a series of twelve meetings around the Province, all parts of the Province, where we consulted with the fishermen.

MR. TOBIN:

When were you on the Burin Peninsula?

MR. W. CARTER:

We were on Burin Peninsula - maybe he can ask me the question after, Mr. Speaker, and I will answer it. But certainly it is not our policy to destroy plants. Our

policy, Mr. Speaker, is to develop a program and policies that will see the fishery reinstated in a healthy state, one that will give people engaged in it a chance to make a decent living for themselves.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. FLIGHT). It is concerning the Sawmillers Assistance Program that was instituted some three years ago. One of the main proponents of that program was the NLPA, which is the Newfoundland Lumber Producers Association in the Province. It was a program that was very successful. It had nothing to do with political patronage, it had nothing to do with seventeen years in power, it had nothing to do with certain Members on this side of the House or the other side of the House.

In view of the fact that the Sawmillers Assistance Program is so vital to the sawmilling industry in the Province, and in view of the fact that the sawmillers in the Province depend heavily on this program to build up their inventory for the upcoming season, would the Minister tell the House if and when that program will be instituted for the upcoming season?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I thank the hon. Member for his question. The answer is the program will be announced shortly. It is an improved program over what the sawmillers got prior to this year. And he is right, it is an excellent program, well received by the sawmillers in the Province. Very shortly the Government will announce its 1989 Sawmillers Assistance Program.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

Concerning the program, I know the last program was up for a three year period. Could the Minister tell me why you had to wait so late for the program to be approved? I am getting calls. I would say that Members on both sides of the House are getting calls concerning the program, and they are in limbo. Even the NLP is in limbo with regard to whether the program is going to be instituted or not. It is very vital to the rural fabric of our society in this Province, and a successful program. If the program is going to be improved, I commend the Minister, no doubt. But would he like to tell the House if the results of the survey being done by the Department of Forestry would have any bearing on whether that program will be approved or not?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

No, Mr. Speaker. The results of any survey done within the

Department of Forestry have no direct bearing on whether the program would or would not be approved. As I told the hon. Member, the Government's program will be announced shortly and the sawmillers will be, I think, very receptive to the program. As to his question as to why it has been delayed so long, I can simply say to him, Mr. Speaker - I do not know if other Ministers found this - that I have been so busy trying to straighten up things I inherited, we finally got around to it, Mr. Speaker. In dealing with some of the mess that was left around and some of the programs, we finally got around now to developing a good Sawmillers Assistance Program.

MR. WOODFORD:

A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

I can assure the Minister that the Sawmillers Assistance Program certainly was not one that was in a mess. It was a successful program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:

It was a motherhood issue in this Province. All the Minister had to do was simply sign on the dotted line, giving the sawmillers in this Province the right to access not grants, not a giveaway, but a loan that they can put in place and pay back - a 95 per cent payback - one of the best programs that was ever instituted in that Department. So there is no excuse for that.

Apart from that, one last question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister. Is the Government considering passing the responsibility for this program over to the banks and credit unions?

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker, this Government is considering all options that will make the delivery of Government programs more effective to the people who receive them. By the way, I talked to the sawmillers and the sawmillers' representative, and there is no concern that the program has not been delivered at this time. The concern might be whether or not it will be delivered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker, I want to put the Member's concerns at rest. In the very near future the Sawmillers Assistance Program will be announced and it will be as acceptable as it every was and maybe more acceptable.

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

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Humber Valley with a final supplementary.

MR. WOODFORD:
The Minister said they are keeping all options open. I just hope one of them is not to pass it over to the banks and credit unions. I do

not have to tell the Minister or any other individual in this House that the banks in this Province, or in Canada, have no social conscience when it comes to dealing with the rural fabric of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. WOODFORD:
I would submit to the Minister not to even think about it. It is a successful program, keep it in the Department it is in so that they can show flexibility to the rural parts of this Province. I ask the Minister, when he is considering whether to go to the banks or to the credit unions, for God's sake do not take something else away from the rural areas of this Province and put it to the conglomerates, the Banks of Montreal and so on?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. FLIGHT:
Mr. Speaker, the Member need have no concern about the Sawmillers Assistance Program. As I told him, it will be announced shortly and he will be very pleased with it, as will the sawmillers. However, I should say, since he is asking me if I am considering this and considering that, that the fact is we are considering everything that improves the forestry and maximizes the benefits to the economy from the forestry resource, and we will even look at improving the Sawmillers Assistance Program.

MR. DOYLE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Social Services, whoever he may be. I guess in this instance it would be the Minister of Health, who is celebrating his birthday today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DOYLE:

Having said that, let me see if I can make the Minister's day as happy as possible.

The Minister will be aware, Mr. Speaker, from his visit last week to the St. John's Youth Center in Torbay, of the absolute horrible conditions that exist in that building. You presently have nineteen boys and six girls, between the ages of 14 years and 18 years, young offenders, who are serving terms of between one month and three years, housed at that Youth Center.

The staff at the Center, as the Minister will be aware, is on the edge of a nervous breakdown because of conditions that exist there; they feel that they are in grave danger. The institution, Your Honour, is not getting the proper guidance or supervision. Water is coming down through the ceiling of that building. I want to ask the Minister right now if it is the intention of Government to keep these young people living under these horrible conditions, or will Government do the decent and very humane thing and have these young people immediately moved to decent habitable living

quarters, with proper supervision?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman for remembering my birthday. It always seems that for some reason undesirable things happen to me on my birthday, and I see this birthday is not going to be an exception, Mr. Speaker; I am going to be harassed.

As the Member says, I did visit the Youth Center, Mr. Speaker. It is not something I would want to see made into a political football, but I -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DECKER:

- was not the least bit impressed with what I saw when I looked at the building. I was impressed with the dedication of the staff, and I think it is unfair for the Member to even suggest that the staff are not doing their work. They are working under very trying circumstances, and they should be given credit for what they are doing. There should be no suggestion by the Member that the staff are somehow responsible for this.

Mr. Speaker, the building was not built to be a remand center or an institution to keep people in, which is really, as bad as the word may sound, a prison for children. That is the unfortunate thing. These things are never attractive. They are not homes. Basically, they are prisons for children. There is a leak in the roof. There were some pipes broken, and there were holes in the ceiling while I was there. It

is not a nice place.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member will be pleased to know that the Department of Social Services and the present Government have plans to alleviate this problem once and for all. The Member will know that construction is started on the new youth center in Whitbourne. There are plans, Mr. Speaker, for some remand centers in various places throughout the Province, in Labrador and Western Newfoundland and on the East Coast.

I suppose the short answer is, it is not a place we want to keep open, but it was just impossible to build a suitable building in the last six months that we have been in power. It was something that we inherited, and we are trying to address it as fast as we can. I would certainly hope that in a very short time we can have a place for that element of society. There is an awful lot of concern in this Government because we do have a conscience. We do have a lot of concern for those people, but we cannot blame it on the staff, and I do not think the Member should do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

First of all let me say, Mr. Speaker, that nobody is blaming the staff. I want to get that straight and on the record.

Is the Minister not aware, Mr. Speaker, of the grave seriousness of this particular problem? Is he not aware of the grave morale problem that exists and the strain

that both the staff and the young offenders are under down at that facility? Maybe the Minister would like me to table for him, as I will, some pictures of what is going on down there, and the condition of that building. It would not be a very nice birthday present for the Minister.

Is the Minister aware that a staff member was recently beaten up down at the youth center? And in spite of repeated attempts, repeated requests to have interviews done with the staff, requests that were made to the Minister - the current or the previous Minister of Social Service - to have interviews conducted with the staff down there, the Minister did not accede to that. I would ask him if he would have interviews done with the staff down at the Youth Center so that he can hear first-hand the problems that these people are having, because the Minister of Social Service would not do it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I will tell the hon. Member something I will not do, I will not panic. I will not enter into crisis management. There is a problem there. As to the staff being beaten up, I am not sure which specific incident the hon. Member is referring to. It is not a daily happening, but in such an institution it is not uncommon for staff to be, as the hon. Member says, beaten up.

There were some incidents recently where some of the residents had to be restrained. That building 43 was not designed to have a place so that residents could be restrained, so some of them had to be taken back to The Remand

Center, Mr. Speaker, which is designed for that, it has a place where you can lock them up. I should caution the Member that this is a very serious matter.

As to interviews, I would have to take that under consideration. I do not want to see this becoming a big political issue. I can assure the hon. Member that our concern is with the residents of that institution. We have a problem in our society, and we are trying to address it. But we are not able to wave a magic wand and have that building replaced tomorrow. As soon as it is possible we hope to have a new building which is more in keeping with the 20th century. We inherited that building and we are trying to deal with the problem, Mr. Speaker. But we are not magicians. It takes a little bit of time for us to do it, and the hon. Member knows that. But we are attempting to overcome the problem, which was thrown in our laps by the hon. Member.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

I would say to the Minister if it was not serious we would not be bringing it up here today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. DOYLE:

It was this Government who made the decision to build the Whitbourne facility, which will not be ready for at least two years. So that is why we want the Minister to do something about it now.

Is he aware that offenders at The Youth Center who are sentenced and

are serving anywhere between one month and three years, serving terms for anything from break and entry to sexual assault, are being mixed in and taken to the Pleasantville Remand Center where you have young offenders who are awaiting their day in court? People are taken from the Torbay Youth Center or the St. John's Youth Center, and housed in with the people at The Pleasantville Remand Center, who may or may not be guilty. Does that bother him at all? And what measures is he taking to address that particular problem?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman raised an example which does bother me very much. He refers to it as the people who are serving sentences for, in some cases, what could be very severe crimes, who are mixed in with people who are waiting for a day in court, people who have been remanded. This concerned me very much, and on my visit, I drilled all the people who are working there: Just what is involved in this remand? Who is the person and why is he there? Is he not being treated unfairly? Is he not innocent until proven guilty? What I have been told, Mr. Speaker, and I believe, the persons who are remanded to this centre are innocent under the law, but they are repeat offenders, they are people who, in the opinion of a judge, have to be kept in custody for their own protection as well as for the protection of society, in some cases.

So, it is not a simple matter of going and getting some innocent little young fellow who goes out

and lets the air out of some tires, and putting him in the Remand Centre to be mixed in with people who have been convicted. That is not what is happening. The people who are being remanded are people who have already committed crimes a judge considers so serious that these people should not be on the street until they have their day in court and are judged. They are not sent there because some social worker or the Minister of Social Services think they should be put there, they are there because some judge has said that it is important for those people to be there.

The hon. member raised a point which concerned me personally and concerned a lot of members, as it concerned the Minister of Social Services very much, Mr. Speaker, and that is that innocent children are mixed in with convicted offenders. But it is not quite that black and white. They are there because a judge says they should be there. That decision is made, and if there is any erring it is on the Conservative side. I am sure all people who are charged are not sent there, but the ones who could be a danger to themselves or to society, are sent there.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health acting as Minister of Social Services.

I noticed the Minister said the centre was not a nice place, and he would not enter into crisis management. But, I say to the Minister, he had better enter into some kind of management. In light

of the fact that no guidelines exist for youth correctional workers in the handling of the more aggressive residents, is the Minister aware that youth workers when physically attacked cannot respond because of fears of charges of assault? Is he aware that if a youth worker is charged with assault, that youth worker is then suspended until proven innocent? Will the Minister take action to see that better guidelines are put in place to protect both the youth workers and the young offenders? Would he not agree, and this is the case here, Mr. Speaker, that there is a complete breakdown of management and control in that centre? And would he not agree that something should be done about this?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I am not capable of remembering all the questions the hon. gentleman asked, so maybe he should put them on the Order Paper. However, I should point out to him that people who work in this institution are not told, nor are they encouraged, to physically beat up on the people who are staying there. If this is what the hon. member is suggesting, that is not in keeping with the way in which we treat people in this day and age. We do not order, we do not ask or advise the workers to physically beat up the children who are staying there. That is not our intention, and we are not going to do it. If the hon. member is suggesting that, I would suggest he is suggesting it to the wrong people.

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a youth centre, which is a euphemism for a jail for

children. It is not a pretty place. It is not a place I would want to visit very often, but someone has to.

Mr. Speaker, we are trying to approach this in a Liberal way. It is a problem which has developed over the last seventeen years. It might take us a few months to deal with it, but we are attempting to deal with it. The people who work there, a lot of them are experienced people. Some of them are trained in social work. They are doing the best they can. I am not aware of any management crisis. But if there is a management crisis, we certainly will take that under review and address it.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I was extremely impressed with one of the managers who took me through the institution, so much so, that I told him I would not want to have his job, but that he is doing a tremendous job under very trying circumstances. Hopefully, shortly we will be able to give those people some decent buildings to work in.

I do not know if I missed any of the questions. If I did, I ask the hon. Member to put them on the Order Paper and I will try to address the ones I missed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the Minister that nobody is suggesting that anybody is beating up on anybody or that anybody should beat up on anybody down at that centre. The problem here is not beating up on people. There is a crisis in management at that

centre and the Minister should know that what we have here is a complete breakdown of the system, where people lack the right guidelines on how to handle these young people.

I ask the Minister, in light of the fact that it seems from his answers to previous questions that it will be two years before this situation will change and the Whitbourne facility is open, will the Minister not try to find alternate facilities, especially in view of the conditions down there, the lack of space, etc. — and I think the Minister glosses it over. In light of the fact that youth who are in for minor offences are being mixed in with youth who are in for major offences, and that does not do the youth of this Province any good; they are supposed to be there to be reformed and not to be hardened, I ask the Minister is he intending to find alternate accommodation before the Whitbourne facility is open?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member will know that that is impossible. As he pointed out, it will take up to two years to build a centre at Whitbourne. So the hon. Member will know that we cannot go down and put another building next to building No. 43 immediately. But the hon. Member will be pleased to know that we are doing renovations to that particular building. While I was there, I saw that one particular wing had been closed down and there were carpenters there doing renovations on the building. So it is an ongoing, daily thing which we have been desperately trying to do. The

Minister of Social Services was involved in it while he was there, and we are trying desperately to get it. But carpenters can only work so fast. The decision has been made, the will is there, the building is now being renovated.

But the hon. Member may not be painting an accurate picture. In the recreation room, Mr. Speaker, the walls are beaten up, where the residents have been playing floor hockey. My first impulse was to think that those people were being reckless. But I am quite certain -

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of order.

MR. SIMMS:

This Minister has totally and absolutely abused Question Period. He totally and absolutely ignored your lecture earlier today, and is trying to be a smart aleck - a big grin over there, a big smile. The fact of the matter is, Oral Questions have expired anyway, Mr. Speaker. I just cannot sit and listen to any more.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I agree that things are a little bit different from what they should be. The Member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) got up and asked, I think, a series of thirteen or fourteen questions altogether, a series of questions

that are better suited to the Order Paper rather than to Oral Question period.

I would like to point out to the Opposition House Leader that he should make sure he controls Question Period from his side, and the questions asked, a little better than he does. Maybe, then, things will work out better.

MR. SIMMS:

Why do you not control your side?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order.

There were a couple of things the Chair was going to reserve until the end of Question Period to elaborate upon, but since the point of order has been raised, I will now do it.

There were two things: One, yes, the Minister was taking up too much time in answering the questions with a lot of repetition, and I was about to tell the Minister that. I also want to make the point that in a couple of instances there were three or four questions raised, and it was difficult to tell when the questions were answered. Hon. Members, if they want short answers, should make it a point to ask one question and then the Chair can decide when the question has been answered. By asking double-barrelled, triple-barrelled questions, then, of course, it is an opening for Ministers to give long answers. The Chair listens to all the questions and tries to determine when the answers are made; but, yes, the Minister was making long answers, but it was partly due to long questions.

The other thing the Chair would want to comment upon is the babbling and the bantering that goes on during Questions. That makes it difficult for the Chair, I do not know about others, to listen to the question and to the answer. So I would ask hon. Members, as well, to please refrain from the babbling and the bantering, and that will assist the Chair in making the right decision.

Question Period is over.

That was the other comment the Chair wanted to comment upon. We do not stop somebody in the middle of answering a question, but Question Period was over. Question Period is now over.

The hon. The Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I raised my point of order, I believe, at 2:53 and according to the Clerks at the Table, Question Period should have expired at 2:50, so here was an example of the Minister taking three minutes to respond to the question, not only that, three minutes after Question Period had expired. Now I would like to know: if Question Period is expiring at 2:50 and we are asking a question, would it still be appropriate then not to allow the Minister to answer the question or to cut off the person asking the question, in other words, would Question Period then be over at 2:50, if that was the case.

MR. SPEAKER:

My experience always has been that if a question is asked then the Minister is extended the courtesy of answering.

MR. SIMMS:

I have to raise a point of order again, because I think it is important that we know what is going on here. Either the rules in the Standing Orders are that Question Period lasts for thirty minutes, or those are not the rules, and that is what we need to have clarified. I am not aware that the precedent necessarily is, and I do not mean to be debating or arguing the Speaker's ruling, but I do want to have clarification for Members on this side in particular, the understanding is, the Standing Orders are, that Question Period lasts for thirty minutes. In this case today, it was 2:53, three minutes after the expiry of Question Period and it would not have stopped then, if I had not got up on a point of order, most likely, so I want to know if the Question Period is thirty minutes or is it extended beyond that, at somebody's discretion or what are the rules.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order Mr. Speaker. The Opposition House Leader is obviously, in a backhanded way, trying to intimate something that the Speaker should be doing that he is not doing. He is indicating that somehow Question Period went on longer than thirty minutes, the Opposition House Leader knows full well that rulings on the timing and rulings during Question Period are the sole prerogative of the Speaker and the Speaker is in sole control of Question Period and of declaring when Question Period is over. I would also like to point out, Mr. Speaker, to you, that in

the four years that I have been in the House, Question Period has always ended, always, absolutely in every single instance, at the end of an answer to a question, so that Speakers have consistently handled Question Period in this House that way, and that has been the custom in this House Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, now I will not allow the hon. Government House Leader to suggest that somehow I am giving you a backhanded slap, because I had no intention of doing that. But it is important that we clarify the rules. What the House Leader has said with respect to your experience of four years may very well be so, but I do not believe, if we accepted that as the practice for all the time in the future, that a Minister, if he happens to be answering a question, should be allowed to go on for three or four minutes beyond the expiry. That is what happened today, and that is the point that I am trying to make. Usually there is a courtesy extended if a Minister is in flight and answering a question and the Speaker or somebody would say you have only got a few seconds to finish. But this Minister callously threw out the rules and went on. Now the other point I want to make is this Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, it is not the Speaker's responsibility to decide when Question Period is over, we have that in our rules and our Standing Orders now, and thirty minutes is the time allotted for Question Period and that is what the rules say. Now if we go beyond the rules, it has to be by agreement

Mr. Speaker, I submit, and that is the only point I am making, and I think the matter is serious enough today to raise it so that we can all be aware of it in the future. I would certainly accept responsibility for Members on this side, in developing their questions, to try to do it in a proper fashion, yes, but surely, Ministers on that side of the House, particularly some of them, and particularly some - they are not all the same - but some, one or two in particular, abuse the Question Period and that is not fair for Members who want to ask reasonable questions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. We realize that a Minister should not go on too long at any time during Question Period and more especially at the end. However, that matter has been dealt with, Mr. Speaker, by yourself. In terms of what happened today in Question Period there were, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, a lot more than the three or four questions that you alluded to. I counted quite a few more than that in the question, and the answer was necessarily long. I would like to point out to the Opposition House Leader, and to you, that this side believes that the Opposition House Leader, knowing the rules of procedure and the rules of the House so well, I believe this is the third time he has got to his feet in the last ten minutes on a point of order, the first two obviously were not points of order and I would suggest to you this is not either.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order. I would suggest that my understanding is that all matters related to the Question Period are decided by the Speaker. When I am talking about the thirty minutes I do not think ever we could answer is it thirty minutes? It has never been that way. There is some leeway. To do that we would have to say that the Question Period could not be thirty because the Speaker would have to decide, when the question has been asked in twenty-nine minutes, that there is not time for an answer, and cut the Member off at the twenty-nine minute mark and say there is not time for the question. We try to keep it within the thirty minutes. There is no question, as I said today, and I will say again, the Minister was speaking too long, and without the point of order, the Chair would have stood in it's place. I have nothing new to say other than what I said before and will ensure that in the future Ministers try and keep their answers short, as well as hon Members asking a particular question.

Before we get into the next item I would like to welcome to the galleries today a visitor from Labrador West, Mr. Alonzo Drover who is presently the President of the Labrador West Caribou Hunters Association.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

Answers to Questions
for which Notice has been Given

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, on yesterday's Order

Paper, I believe, there appeared for the first time a question about automobiles assigned to the Premier's office. There were four questions. The first one was, how many publicly owned vehicles have been assigned to the Premier's office in St. John's and in any other area of the Province? The answer is there are two vehicles on permanent assignment to the Premier's office at the present time. An additional two vehicles, one was the car that the full-time chauffeur - bodyguard used to drive the former Premier Peckford around in. That is used now as a V.I.P. car and it will be run out of the Ministry of Works, Services and Transportation. Occasionally, when it is necessary for me to be driven anywhere as Premier by somebody, as occasionally it is necessary, a car from the motor pool will be used for that purpose, and in all probability that car. That car and a car that had been formerly assigned to the Premier's Parliamentary Assistant in the former Government, got inherited automatically without my even knowing it, I only became aware of it recently. My Parliamentary Assistant was given these keys and told here, these belong to the Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier.

AN HON. MEMBER:
You did take them back to the (inaudible)?

PREMIER WELLS:
I most certainly did.

AN HON. MEMBER:
It was the Minister of Finance's.

PREMIER WELLS:
Well, whoever car it was, it was a car that the Parliamentary Assistant in the former Administration was assigned. The

Parliamentary Assistant in this Administration inherited and used that car without my knowledge for some considerable time, and as soon as I became aware of it I put an end to the practice immediately. The answer, Mr. Speaker, is there are two cars.

MS VERGE:

What about the one in Corner Brook (inaudible.)

PREMIER WELLS:

It is his own car. He purchased a new car some time ago, a month or two ago. There was a car in Corner Brook. There were two cars in Corner Brook that were being put on the auction block.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Again, I must interrupt. The Premier was answering a question and the very thing that I alluded to in Question Period, somebody came out and asked, how about another? The Chair is not going to tolerate that. The Premier is answering a question and I ask the Premier to answer the question as on the Order Paper.

PREMIER WELLS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There were four questions on the Order Paper. The second one is: provide the names of the individuals to whom the vehicles referred to in (a) have been assigned? The name of one individual is Clyde Wells, and that is one that I drive. It is a shorter wheel base car than that big monstrosity that was there before, because I cannot get out my driveway in the big one.

And the second one, Mr. Speaker, was a four-wheel drive car that

was assigned to the Premier, and I do not remember whether it was the Premier or the Premier's wife that used to drive it formerly. It is a four-wheel drive Blazer vehicle, and that is now used generally in the office when it is necessary for somebody in the office to go somewhere on public business. That car is used for that purpose. We also decided, Mr. Speaker, that it might be wise to keep it, because it is four-wheel drive, and it may be advantageous in the winter. So there are those two cars, the one I drive personally and that one.

The third question was: provide the position and title of each individual referred to in (b)? The first individual is Clyde Wells, and his position is Premier; the second is no specific individual. It has been on occasion driven by special assistants in the Premier's Office, a parliamentary assistant, other staff in the Premier's Office and the Clerk of the Executive Council, Mr. Stanley, has on occasion driven it as well. So it is used by both the Premier's Office and the Cabinet Secretariat, the Executive Council.

The fourth question is: Have any of the vehicles referred to in (a) been purchased since May 5, 1989? If so, provide a list of such vehicles and the purchase price. Indicate whether or not public tenders were called. And whether or not the tender was awarded to the lowest bidder. So there are three or four parts to that question. The first part is; the vehicle was assigned to me. It was purchased, I think, in October, I am not sure which, it is since May anyway, but probably is sometime in October, I believe.

The second part of the question is; the price was \$22,334.35. Then there would have been Provincial sales tax which would have come back to the Treasury on top of that. The third question is: invitations to tender were sent to nine automobile dealerships in Newfoundland. And the fourth part of the question is: the tender awarded was to the lowest tender that met the specifications. I think there were four tenders that did not meet the specs. But it was the lowest tender that met the specs. I can provide a written summary.

MR. BAKER:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to provide an answer to a question that was raised on Tuesday by the Opposition House Leader (Mr. Simms), "my question to the President of Treasury Board, does the present Government intend to follow the commitment of the previous Administration to find a way to put this program, that is the health care thing, the early retirement in place for health care workers?" And I gave an answer, I am just about to explain now, that I thought was rather good, but it did not satisfy the Opposition House Leader and he waved around a document. He indicated it was a Treasury Board, Cabinet Secretariat one. And he said this concluded that it would be feasible to extend the program to the health care sector. And there was advice from Treasury Board officials there and so on. And

that he suggested that the current President of Treasury Board read it. And he asked the question how can we tell them that they are still going to have to pay for the plan?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could not answer that question and I indicated that I could not. And my understanding is that everything that the Member opposite said was not true. I now since have researched the document and I can now answer the question for the hon. Member.

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

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

MR. SIMMS:
Now, Mr. Speaker, here again we see an occasion where the Government is trying to beat around the rules. I think if Your Honour would take the time to do some research this matter has come up in the past, risen or raised in the Legislature, my recollection is, by Members on this side of the House some time during the past three or four years. I am sure the Clerks will be able to help you in the research.

There is very specifically a rule that talks about answering questions under the heading Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in this case I am absolutely certain the President of Treasury Board did not indicate in his response to my questioning the other day that he was taking notice of that question. No where did he indicate that. He is now simply

hoping that I will ask him another question so he can answer it. Since I did not today, of course he is trying to bend the rules as best he can to somehow try to say something about this particular issue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not care about the answer. I do not mind listening to the answer or anything else. But it is very important again for the rules, and I am surprised that the Premier, an individual who pretends he thinks so much of Parliament and the use of the rules in the Parliament and everything else, is there counselling his House Leader. Counselling him! I am sure he is counselling him. Now that is wrong and the Premier should know it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that before this matter is agreed to today, because I certainly do not believe it was given notice, and there is no urgency in getting a response today, he can give it tomorrow if Your Honour so rules, I would ask that Your Honour take this matter under advisement, consider it, and let us set the rules straight so that there is no trickery played by anybody on either side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Your Honour. It has been the practice in this House that when questions are asked during Question Period - if Your Honour checks back he will find many examples - especially when a document is used that is not subsequently tabled by the person asking the question, when a document is used that the person

to whom the question is asked does not have immediate access to that document, and the question was asked concerning information in that document, that at the next opportunity, once the Minister has had a chance to have a look at the document, he can then sensibly respond to the question. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, this would make a complete sham of Question Period.

The purpose of the Opposition House Leader asking the question was to elicit information. I did not have the document in front of me that he was referring to, that contained the information. If he honestly wanted to elicit information from me about that document, then he would not object to me now giving the information he asked for, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair, will take that under advisement for a little while this afternoon.

The normal procedure, obviously, for Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given, is precisely that, for which notice has been given. It has been customary in the House, in the meantime, over the years that I have been here, if a Member felt a question was not answered satisfactorily that he would get up in this period and generally, by-leave, answer the question. In this particular case, the Minister has the option of making a ministerial statement as well.

The Chair will take it under advisement and rule on it, but it is the custom, for this particular item, to give notice, obviously, or ask for leave of the House to do it. The Government House Leader has not asked for leave,

and maybe he will want to do that. That is up to the Government House Leader.

Orders of the Day

MR. SPEAKER:

Motion 1.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Give Effect To The International Convention On The Law Applicable To Trusts And Their Recognition," carried. (Bill No. 30)

On motion, Bill No. 30 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The United Nations Convention On Contracts For the International Sale Of Goods," carried. (Bill No. 31)

On motion, Bill No. 31 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Motion 3.

Motion, the hon. the Premier to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Economic Recovery Commission." (Bill No. 40).

On motion, Bill No. 40 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Motion 5.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation to introduce a Bill entitled, "An

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

On motion, Bill No. 33 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Motion 9.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture to introduce a Bill entitled, "An Act To Revise The Law Respecting The Management, Harvesting And Protection Of The Forests Of The Province." (Bill No. 38).

On motion, Bill No. 38, read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Order 14.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 14, second reading of a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs." (Bill No. 29).

I assume the debate was adjourned by hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West, and it looks as if he wants to carry on again or, in any event, wants to speak to the Bill.

The Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I most certainly do want to proceed with this Bill, as many of my colleagues will be doing over the next several days, discussing this very important Bill as it relates to the Province.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill gives us the opportunity to discuss in great detail some of the devious methods which the present Government are using to scuttle rural Newfoundland, and now, Mr. Speaker, they have moved in for the kill in the City of St. John's. As one goes through this Bill in detail, you can see where some of the changes are coming about as it relates to municipalities in this Province.

We now have the opportunity, as you have said, to go through it in detail, clause by clause, and you can see that the powers of the Minister and the powers of the Department, Mr. Speaker, will be something if they continue on the course in which they are now headed, if they continue on the course of amalgamation, the course of resettlement that has been advocated in this House by Members opposite.

The Minister of Fisheries said today that private Members did not speak for the Government. I certainly hope that is the case in the comments by the Member for LaPoile when he suggested that we resettle the islands in Green Bay.

I certainly hope that when the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs gets up to deal with this Bill, whenever that is, whatever day we move to clue up this debate, that he will clearly give us some indication of whether or not the comments of the Member for LaPoile are what his Government endorses. And for the benefit of the Minister, and he can see it in Hansard, Mr. Speaker, we talked about the three islands that you are trying to amalgamate.

MR. RAMSAY:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Walsh):
A point of order.

MR. RAMSAY:

The comments to which the hon. Member is referring are not on the record. I would suggest that he speak only to comments which are on the record.

MR. TOBIN:

They are on the record.

MR. RAMSAY:

That is all, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order, the Chair believes that we may have a disagreement in terms of a misunderstanding of what may or may not be on the record. We will certainly take a look at it by tomorrow, and we can answer for sure then. I think we have a difference of opinion more than anything.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The record in Hansard will clearly show, and I will have it in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, that when I was speaking in debate in this House and I referred to the three islands in Green Bay which they are trying to amalgamate, the Member for LaPoile clearly stated 'move them'.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Move them.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, move them. To me, that is going back to the resettlement days. The people in

the Member's District, the people who live in LaPoile and other places, Mr. Speaker, will not in any way tolerate that type of commitment, that type of belief and that type of philosophy from the Member for LaPoile. He should be ashamed of himself, representing people in this Province and recommending that they be resettled, particularly people on islands.

MR. HOGAN:

He does not know what he is talking about.

MR. TOBIN:

No, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Placentia is right, he does not know what he is talking about and he should not have said it. I agree with the Member for Placentia wholeheartedly. What he said is right. He does not know what he is talking about, and he should not have said it.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we get into not knowing what you are talking about, the Member for Placentia has spoken in this House two or three times and he has proven, as well, that he does not know what he is talking about. But we will accept it from both of them, Mr. Speaker; they are still learning the ropes.

And I suspect they are going to cry that they did not know what they were doing when yesterday they voted against a resolution for an all-plants-open policy. The Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy), and the Member for Placentia, as well as other Members over there, will cry one of these days that they did not know what they were doing when they voted against a resolution that was clearly calling upon the Government for an all-plants-open

policy. They stood in their places, and it is recorded, and they voted against a resolution to keep municipalities in this Province alive.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Walsh):

Order, please!

I would like to remind hon. Members that the Member for Burin - Placentia West has the floor and the Chair is having a little difficulty hearing what is being said because of some of conversation coming from both sides. I would ask hon. Members to please allow the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West to carry on with a degree of comfort.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

It is unfortunate you could not hear it, because I am making a good speech.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

They are getting rowdy.

MR. TOBIN:

Probably I should speak louder, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me say they can squirm all they like, the fact of the matter is, there was a resolution in this House yesterday that would see all plants kept open -

That is there. Have you got a copy of the resolution? I will read it.

- that would see all the plants kept open, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

Where is it?

MR. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, the hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

We are now, Mr. Speaker, in the process of debating Bill No. 29, second reading of a Bill "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs," and I would like to draw the attention of the Member opposite to the rule of relevancy. I would also like to point out to him that the next Bill that is going to be called is, "A Bill Respecting The Department Of Fisheries," at which point I could not invoke relevancy on this particular item.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I am pleased to respond to the point of order, the spurious point of order raised by the Government House Leader. I am surprised he would waste the time of the House with this.

He might as well get it in his mind that we are going to speak to this Bill, and that we are going to debate matters that we debated under this Bill last day. There were no interruption last day, no points of order, the Speaker sat there intently listening to everything that was being said, so we already had the precedent on this particular Bill. But I am really glad he raised the

relevancy. He used as his reference for Your Honour to consider this matter, the rule of relevancy. He neglected of course to tell Your Honour what it says, and he neglected to read it, but I will read it for you out of the fifth edition. I am sure it has not changed from the sixth edition. Page 98 in the fifth edition says, "Relevancy is not easy to define. In borderline cases the Member should be given the benefit of the doubt." And, Mr. Speaker, not much more needs to be said. This is certainly a borderline case at best, and in that case, certainly the Member from Burin - Placentia West should be given the benefit of the doubt. There is no point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Further to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I thank the Opposition House Leader for reading the rule of relevancy to me. I am quite familiar with what it says.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that a full flown debate on the fisheries and fisheries resolutions that were in the House yesterday, do not adequately fulfill the conditions of relevancy with regards to this particular Act in the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Opposition House Leader:

MR. SIMMS:

A final point, and that is all I

will make because there is not much point in -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

There is not much point in beating it to death because it is not a very serious point of order in my view. But clearly what is happening in this particular debate, Mr. Speaker, you are talking about a change in a Department that deals with a whole range of issues, one of which is culture. One of which is culture, and certainly talking about almost anything, amalgamation, fisheries or anything else relates to the cultural - historical significance of the people of this Province, and therefore, Mr. Speaker, the Member was about to tie in his argument on the fishery with respect to taxation that communities will not receive, the Government will not receive, the Department of Municipal Affairs will, therefore, not receive and be able to get back to other Municipalities. I mean it is all relative, and surely the Government House Leader should be able to give Members on this side the opportunity to express their opinions, and not be so narrow minded as to try to interrupt every time somebody tries to make a relevant point.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! To the point of order I agree without doubt the hon. Member for Buring - Placentia West, as many of us have in the House, strayed somewhat from the topic, but I am sure he will tie it in for us very quickly, and we will get back to discussing the Bill at hand.

The hon. Member for Buring -

Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for that ruling. Now let me say, Mr. Speaker, let me get back to my point that irritated the Member from Gander (Mr. Baker) who knows absolutely nothing about the fisheries, Mr. Speaker. I was saying that there is a need for an all-plants-open policy in this Province, Mr. Speaker. Because if we look at this Bill, The Municipalities Act, -

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

- I have an hour. There is something wrong here, Mr. Speaker. There is something gone astray.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! There is a slight error, please carry on.

MR. TOBIN:

I knew that I had more time left than that. I have a lot to say here this evening.

The point I was trying to make here is that if the plants in this Province or if the Government do not accept an all-plants-open policy, which the Member from Placentia voted against yesterday, Mr. Speaker, then where are the Municipalities that depend on the fisheries going to get the taxation? Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is not applicable to what I am saying, and I say it again for the benefit of the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy), "what the resolution said, 'whereas it is vital that any Government

response to this crisis recognizes the necessity to adopt an all-plants-open policy.' Now, when that was put to the floor of this Legislature yesterday evening the man who stood in front of a mike in St. John's last Sunday voted against the all-plants-open policy. In essence, Mr. Speaker, he and his colleagues voted against keeping open the plants in St. John's and that cannot be denied. Hansard will show it. It will be recorded and Hansard will show that that resolution -

MR. MURPHY:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the member for St. John's South.

MR. MURPHY:

I do not think the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West is addressing what needs to be addressed. He is definitely misleading the House. If the hon. Member would read the whole resolution then I would concur that he is addressing it, but he did not read the whole resolution. He read a single part of the resolution and he is misleading the House.

MR. TOBIN:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with the Municipalities Act and the right for councils in this Province to have the right to collect taxes from the fish plants. I am saying that they will be handicapped if there is not an adoption of an

all-plants-open policy. If plants close these councils will not be able to attract that type of funding. That is the point I am making, Mr. Speaker. I said quite clearly that in part of a resolution yesterday, Hansard will show, that there was a resolution put here yesterday and part of it included an all-plants-open policy. I spoke the truth and Hansard will show that that resolution that was put to the floor with that included was defeated.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

To the point of order, and with the liberty of the House, I would probably quote Robert Frost's poem, "There Were Two Roads." I have reason to believe that possibly the Member for Burin - Placentia West is travelling a little further down one of the other roads than he should and should probably come back to the topic at hand. I have no doubt that the resolution that was put forward on the fishery is in Hansard and hon. Members in the House know what was said, but I would like to invite the Member to please come back to the road that we are trying to travel.

There is no point of order.

MR. SIMMS:

Just for a moment. I believe I heard the hon. the Member for St. John's South accuse the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West of misleading the House. That, of course, is unparliamentary and I would hope if, Your Honour, did not hear the remarks would at least take it under advisement, check Hansard to see what was said, and maybe ask the hon. Member to withdraw.

MR. SPEAKER:

The Chair will take it under advisement.

MR. SIMMS:

Unless the Member wants to do it now.

MR. BAKER:

To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

In terms of unparliamentary language, Beauchesne, 6th Edition, Paragraph 490: "Since 1958, it has been ruled parliamentary to use the following expressions." The word 'misleading' is there.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He said intentionally misleading.

MR. BAKER:

He did not say 'intentionally misleading' Mr. Speaker. I heard him. I listened quite carefully.

MR. SIMMS:

What page (inaudible)?

MR. BAKER:

Well, the Member opposite, I believe, has the 5th Edition.

MR. SIMMS:

No, I have the 6th.

MR. BAKER:

This is on Page 148. From the Debates, April 12, 1960, Page 3175, that word has been ruled as being not unparliamentary or unacceptable.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, it is rather interesting that the hon. House Leader would try to point to one reference, of course, and not point to another reference because in the same 6th Edition of Beauchesne, Your Honour, will see on Page 144, Paragraph 489, moving right over to Page 146 that since 1958 it has been ruled unparliamentary to use the following expressions, and included in those expressions is the word 'mislead' on page 146, so he should not try to just simply tell Your Honour that there was only one ruling ever given, there is also a ruling given where misleading has been not accepted and unparliamentary. So I am sure Your Honour has already addressed it by saying he is going to take it under advisement, so I do not think it is right for us to be questioning Your Honour's decision.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

I would like to point out to Your Honour, that in the paragraph that the Opposition House Leader refers to, the word 'misleading' is not there by itself. The word 'mislead' and the phrase 'misleading the public' have been ruled unparliamentary. But neither one of these expressions were used Your Honour, simply the word 'misleading' is being objected to. If the Member had said deliberately 'misleading' then I agree it would have been unparliamentary, but the word 'misleading' is not in itself unparliamentary.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. SIMMS:

The Government House Leader is absolutely and totally wrong. He should not be telling Your Honour that. On page 146, near the bottom of the page under the list of words that have been used since 1958 and ruled unparliamentary, is the word by itself 'mislead' from the Debates, January 18, 1958. Do you see it now?

MR. BAKER:

What page?

MR. SIMMS:

Page 146.

MR. BAKER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

Yes, but the one above that. The word 'mislead', I mean you are playing a silly little game here now Mr. Speaker. I mean the point is that it has been ruled unparliamentary, as well as parliamentary on occasions, depending upon the context in which it is used. That is not the argument that the Government House Leader gave Your Honour and I think Your Honour should be made aware of that.

MR. SPEAKER:

To that point of order, the Chair did not hear the comment and I am willing to take it under advisement until I have an opportunity to look at Hansard and make a subsequent ruling from there.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am not particularly worried what the hon. gentleman said. I can say, Mr. Speaker, that if precedence is to be set here and we can use the word 'mislead' and 'misleading' in this House it is fine with me. I have the right to use it as well as the Member for St. John's South, if that is the decision of the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Chair in its wisdom, although it may be somewhat limited, does not agree that the words 'mislead' or 'misleading' are appropriate to be used. The Chair simply said that it did not hear the word and will take it under advisement.

MR. TOBIN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now let me get back to the rights of municipalities, Mr. Speaker, in this Province to be able to collect taxes.

Everybody knows that the towns and communities in this Province are basically stricken. The Minister of Municipal Affairs advised the towns and municipalities to raise taxes. I have headlines here somewhere, here is another one, 'Amalgamation Scheme will save the Province \$50 million' he says on one day. The next day he tells the councils to raise taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the towns and municipalities in this Province need the fish companies, they need the fishery in order to survive. That is one thing that this Party here, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition believes in very strongly, that there has to be a

strong backbone to rural Newfoundland and urban Newfoundland. We believe that, Mr. Speaker, we believe that in order to ensure that, that all the plants in this Province must be able to stay open. We put a resolution, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the taxation system for these towns will be kept in place. We put that resolution to the floor. For the record, Mr. Speaker, I will just read the resolution: 'WHEREAS it is vital that any Government responding to this crisis recognizes the necessity to offer to have and to adopt an all-plants-open policy.' That was part of a resolution that went to the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for St. John's South voted against that resolution.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, now he is admitting that he voted against that resolution for all-plants-open and we have a responsibility on this side of the House to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that the people of St. John's South, and the people working in the National Sea Plant in St. John's South know exactly the position that the Member for St. John's South, St. John's West, St. John's North, St. John's Center, Pleasantville, Waterford - Kenmount, and where ever else. And who ever else went out and tried to scuttle the livelihoods of Newfoundlanders by voting against the resolution that would keep an all-plants-open policy and give the councils the right to collect taxes. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is what I believe in. The Members over there, Mr. Speaker, can squirm all they like. They are on record.

In my own District, what is going to happen? If I could just relate

how heavily my District is depending on the fishery Mr. Speaker, a district heavily depending on the fishery. Burin Plant was closed as a primary processing plant, they lost the tax base there, then there was another move under the utilities taxation with which the Minister would be very familiar. What was that going to do to the people of Burin and the people of Marystown and other places. The people of Burin, Mr. Speaker, would lose somewhere in the vicinity of one hundred thousand dollars, the Minister of Municipal Affairs is aware of that, under the utility taxation. They have already been scuttled by the closure of the fish plant, this is another one. Marystown and the future of the Marystown fish plant: the town of Marystown, in preparing their Budgets, do not know what to do, Mr. Speaker, they do not know what to do. They do know, as of yesterday, they have a Government of Newfoundland and Labrador that will not support an all-plants-open policy. Every council that is trying to prepare their budget for next year in this Province that has a fishery, that depends on fish plants, every community, every town in this Province that is in this situation, had difficulty in preparing their Budget this year, because they do not know what is going to happen. The only thing they do know is that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and all of the Members that were present yesterday, Hansard has recorded their names, will not support an all-plants-open policy, so we do not know what is happening. Then as all of that rotates, there is another industry in Marystown, namely, the Marystown Shipyard.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Barrett looks after that.

MR. TOBIN:

What is that? The chairman in Marystown? Now Mr. Speaker there he goes again, represents the St. John's Dock Yard and does not know who the chairman of the Board is, he thought that time that the chairman of the Board of St. John's Dock Yard was chairman of the Board of the Marystown Shipyard. Hansard will record that, what is he going to say tomorrow, something else. Now Mr. Speaker I would suggest that the Member for St. John's South should say nothing. He voted against keeping his plant open, now he does not know who the chairman of the Board of Directors in the St. John's Dock Yard is, so he should say very little. Yes, I just told you, Mr. Barrett, Hal Barrett, good man, very knowledgeable in the fishing industry. I have no problems with him being chairman as long as he does not take someone who is very familiar with the shipbuilding industry in this Province. Now Mr. Speaker the town of Marystown does not know what is happening with the fishery. What about the shipbuilding industry? We do know that the Federal Government will receive a present in the next few months from the Provincial Government of five million dollars because they would not let them subsidize construction of a shrimp trawler in Marystown, we know that, Mr. Speaker. We know that the Ocean Industries agreement is about to expire and which has five million dollars belonging to the Federal Government and which will go back there and which will not be spent. We do know that they wanted to subsidize the construction of the Marystown shipyard providing jobs for people

who had worked in the shipyard and would be able to pay taxes, build new homes and all that to assist the council, we do know Mr. Speaker that the Government would not permit the construction of the shrimp trawler in Marystown, decided to support Norway instead and sent five million dollars back to the Federal Government. What is that?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who advised against it?

MR. TOBIN:

Who advised against it? Advised against sending five million dollars back to Norway and building it. Yes Mr. Speaker, indeed I did advise against sending five million dollars back to Norway and advised against building the shrimp trawler in Norway, it should have been done in Marystown, I said it then and I say it now, and it is only a Government led by a Conservative Premier that wanted to interfere in the collective bargaining system that prevented it from happening, and that is the answer, we all know it in Marystown. We all know Brian Peckford negotiated an agreement and this man here who is our leader negotiated an agreement for twenty one million dollars that you, not you, do not blame you, blame the Premier on that one, that is what happened. And the people in Marystown, what are they doing, Mr. Speaker, they are doing the same as the people in Long Harbour are doing, the same as the people all throughout the Province are doing, they are moving to the mainland, because of the Government that shows nothing but contempt for the working people of this Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are in this Province facing a very serious crisis as it relates to the continuation and

the survival of Municipalities. Do not ever kid yourself Mr. Speaker. Where are the people of Long Harbour, where is the council in Long Harbour that had a base, that had a company, that had an industry when we were in Government, Mr. Speaker, how are they going to do their budget this year? Are they going to collect the money from the people who left in the Ryder trucks and the U-Hauls to move to the mainland? Where do they get the money? When they were doing their budget last year, Mr. Speaker, when we were in Government there was a plan there.

MR. GILBERT:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
Ah, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Gilbert), the old ad on the radio, 'when we become the Government the Hydro plant will be relocated to Bay d'Espoir.' He bought ads in the paper..

MR. GILBERT:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
Where is it, Mr. Speaker? Why did he not deliver on his commitment? That is another broken promise.

MR. GILBERT:
The Member for Burin - Placentia West (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, and he can shake all of that around he likes, he made a promise to his constituents and he refused to deliver.

MR. GILBERT:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
No tax base, Mr. Speaker. Could I

have the protection of the Chair, please.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Walsh):
Order, please!

The Chair is still having a little difficulty picking up on the entire conversation from the hon. Member because of some of the comments coming from both sides of the House. So if we could hold it just a little bit, please. Maybe the speaker can get on with his point.

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, Mr. Speaker, as I was talking about the rights for municipal councils to be able to have industry and collect taxes, I could not help but recall the commitment by the Member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation. He took out ads on the radio station, CHCM, Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews) got him recorded where he said, 'When we become the Government the Hydro plant will remain in Bay d'Espoir.' He became the Government, Mr. Speaker. I would suspect that that is one of the reasons why they became the Government. The only reason why the people up there wanted to vote for him was because they knew the decision that the previous Government, the Government of which I was a Member, had made. We did not change our position during the election campaign. But, Mr. Speaker, we did not saturate the voters with hypocrisy. We told the voters, the people of Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir what our decision was. The Member bought ads and told them what their position was. And, Mr. Speaker, he refused to deliver, he turned his backs on

his constituents and now, Mr. Speaker -

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, and I would walk out of the House too if I was the Member. Let the record show that he walked out of the House when his District and his constituents were being debated.

What about the resettlement program of the 1960s that has re-surfaced, Mr. Speaker. Through another name, through another venue, through another devious method of this Government, they call it amalgamation. Let any town in this Province, Mr. Speaker, or any communities in this Province or towns that want to amalgamate, no problem. But if you saw the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage) on television last night saying that Mount Pearl may be forced into an election in six months. Now, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier says that is right. That is true.

MR. WINDSOR:
Some chance, baby!

MR. TOBIN:

Some chance! Some chance! I will submit, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier and to the Minister that it will not happen. And Harvey Hodder, Mr. Speaker, a born and bred Marystowner will not let it happen.

MR. WINDSOR:
How about that!

MR. TOBIN:

So is the Deputy Mayor, Mr. Speaker, her mother is from Marystown. And if they stick in,

Mr. Speaker, forget that happening.

Now let me say forced amalgamation is not the right course of action. And they should not let it happen, Mr. Speaker. They are committed as a Government, Mr. Speaker, to forced amalgamation. Do not ever let anyone change your mind, Mr. Speaker, the Premier said the other day, no, the Government will not force amalgamation, but the House of Assembly may. I say to the Premier that the House of Assembly will not, because this party here will never be part of forcing amalgamation. You will never have our support in forcing amalgamation. Never! Forget about it! Scuttle it! Drop it! You will never have the support of this party in forcing a town or community to amalgamate. It is not there. So your Government might as well (inaudible) as bring it to the House, Premier, because it will not happen here. It will not happen!

Now, Mr. Speaker, amalgamation is a devious way for the Premier to revert to the Government of which he was a Member in the 1960s, the resettlement program, when the lives of Newfoundlanders were ruined forever, when the culture, Mr. Speaker, and the history and the identity of the people throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, were ruined forever.

There was one island in my District - there were several places, Petit Forte, South East Bight, Monkstown and other places, but I will use this one as an example. There was one island that refused, one place - not an island - connected to the Burin Peninsula highway, that steadfastly refused to resettle. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, when

the Premier and his Government sent people down to talk to them and tell them they had to be resettled, that they were going to be moved, that they would no longer live in Petit Forte, they said, 'There is the water, and get!' And get, Mr. Speaker, they did. And Petit Forte survived.

The Minister of Fisheries is probably familiar with Petit Forte. It is probably one of the most successful communities in this Province today. The people of Petit Forte, Mr. Speaker, are some of the best fishermen that this Province has ever produced. The Minister of Fisheries (Mr. W. Carter), who has travelled the area, I am sure, over the years, and is familiar with Petit Forte, knows full well - and the Minister of Transportation who is from Placentia Bay, as well, knows Petit Forte, too - that these people are the strongest, most capable, most determined group of individuals that you could ever meet. Their determination, their desire, their wishes and their emotional need, Mr. Speaker, to live at home, defied the Government of the 1960s and, Mr. Speaker, it was with a great sense of pride, probably one of the proudest things I have done as an MHA, was to sit down with my colleagues and sign an agreement with the Federal Government that would see a road constructed to Petit Forte. I take great pride in that, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

I think that Federal Government and Provincial Government recognized that rural Newfoundland must continue. But, there was one problem. There was one snag. Tenders were called and the

Government of the Day here, Mr. Speaker, were five months from the date the tender closed until they awarded the contract. And I wonder why? I have my suspicions, Mr. Speaker. Would anyone be surprised if they were to learn that they probably looked at not putting the road there? Would you be surprised if you found out that the Federal Government was adamant that the road was going there? Would anyone be surprised that Mr. Crosbie insisted the road be built to Petit Forte? Because, Mr. Speaker, while they held it up for five months, that was Federal Government money that was building the road to Petit Forte, and they still were against putting the road to Petit Forte, Mr. Speaker. And I would suspect that Mr. Crosbie had to say, 'Listen, fellows and ladies, get that road built to Petit Forte.' I would suspect that that was what happened.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Your time is up. Talk about the Bill.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Exploits (Mr. Grimes) is now saying, 'Talk about the Bill.' Mr. Speaker, that is the mentality that exists over there an isolated community in Newfoundland, a municipality that has a local Government is not considered by them to be worth talking about. I say to the Member for Exploits, and let the record show, Mr. Speaker, that Petit Forte has just as much right to be discussed in this Assembly as the City of St. John's. And the people of Petit Forte will not take lightly the comments by the Member for Exploits. And do not think they will not know what you said. I am talking about the Community

Council of Petit Forte, Mr. Speaker, and the Member for Exploits does not want me to do it. Too bad! Too bad! I will continue to do it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) Petit Forte.

MR. TOBIN:

There is the urban mentality, Mr. Speaker. Forget about the poor, forget about anybody except those who live in the large centres. Ignore Petit Forte? Not on your life, Mr. Speaker. Not on your life! Any community that votes 72 to 1 for me, forget them? I promise you, Mr. Speaker, I will forget them all right. I will fight to the bitter end for Petit Forte. I will fight to the bitter end, Mr. Speaker, and will never let the Member from Exploits interfere with that determination, that drive I have to see the community of Petit Forte - by the way, the Minister of Municipal Affairs is not here. I wish he were, because I want to say something. Do you know what the residents of Petit Forte got last Thursday? They got running water. Yes they did! They got water to their community. We had been developing it for three years, and \$12,000 were needed to hook it up, to put it together. The reason I wish the Minister of Municipal Affairs were here is because he was very, very co-operative in assisting to put that \$12,000 in place so they could have their water system. I wanted to say that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

I must say, I met with his staff and with his officials and we put it all together, and the Minister

signed it to give the people of Petit Forte the final \$12,000. But now they have water, and I would suspect that that disappoints the Member for Exploits, but so be it. He shall live with it.

Mr. Speaker, there is no sense in the Member for Exploits coming in here and getting upset with us because the Premier took his car.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

And he told all Newfoundland.

MR. TOBIN:

That is right. And he told all Newfoundland, 'I took the Member's car.' Now the Member has his back up against us. Mr. Speaker, when I was Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier, he would not dare take my car.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

I will tell you that. I treasured that car, Mr. Speaker. I treasured that car. It was the only car I ever had that I really treasured. All the Ministers were driving around in their old cars rolling down their windows, and I could drive up and press the power button, and blow at them.

AN HON. MEMBER:

And it was air conditioned.

MR. TOBIN:

Air conditioning, yes. Mr. Speaker, he took the car from the Member; an old 1982 Chev he took from the Member from Exploits. Shame on the Premier! Shame on the Premier for denying the Member for Exploits an old car worth -

MR. DOYLE:

She burns seventy gallons an hour.

MR. TOBIN:

She was worth, Mr. Speaker, about a thousand bucks. And he goes out and pays \$25,000 for a new car and lets the other one, another big Impala, lie up. Because the wheel base was too long, Mr. Speaker, he bought a new one and took the old thousand dollar wreck from the Member for Exploits. If I were the Member from Exploits, that car that the Premier tied up, as we say in boat terms, that big Caprice, get the keys. Get the keys. You have had it for five months now and he did not know anything about it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

We will not tell him!

MR. TOBIN:

If the Member from Exploits works it right, he can have a car for a year. I say that in jest, Mr. Speaker, but for the Premier to take that old wreck -

AN HON. MEMBER:

There is 160,000 kilometers on her.

MR. TOBIN:

That is right.

MR. HEWLETT:

Do you have a set of keys?

MR. TOBIN:

I do not know but I have a set of keys. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you something: He got five months without the Premier knowing it, if he can find another set of keys and get another five months, by that time he will be in Cabinet and you got a car. It is my wish that it happens.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What?

MR. TOBIN:

Yes. I established that car, and I am proud of it, too.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) in Cabinet.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I do wish he goes in the Cabinet. And there are a few more incompetent backbenchers over there I wish would go in the Cabinet as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have 15 minutes left. Now, I want to get back to the serious part of the bill. I am sorry I got distracted there. My apologies to the House for getting distracted. When the Member for Exploits got sort of irritated because he lost his car, then I got a little bit carried away, and I apologize.

I want to talk about things facing this Province as they relate to towns. We know the resolution regarding an all-plants-open policy, including St. John's, has been voted against. We know that.

MR. GILBERT:

Oh, my!

MR. TOBIN:

We also know that the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation stood in this House yesterday and said the Outer Ring Road will take eight years. We know that too, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

No, no. The Hansard will show it. Will the hon. the Member for St. John's South believe Hansard?

Will he believe Hansard?

MR. MURPHY:

(Inaudible) Outer Ring Road.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, we intend to deal with the issues of this Province. We intend to show the citizens of St. John's that the Government has sloughed off the Outer Ring Road, that the Minister said yesterday, eight years!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The Chair hates to interrupt the Member while he is on a roll, but, at the same time, it being 4:00 o'clock and Thursday, I would like to advise the House of the questions that have been presented for the Late Show.

One question represents the fact that I am not satisfied with the answer given to me by the Minister of Health in today's Question Period re the Grenfell Health Services.

The second question is: I am dissatisfied with the answer given me by the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation with regard to the Outer Ring Road.

And the third question: As per the Standing Orders I wish to advise that I am dissatisfied with the answer to my question concerning recreation grants asked of the Premier today.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I guess I have a couple of minutes left to sum up.

MR. WARREN:

Only a half hour.

MR. TOBIN:

Let me say that we have a Government that has refused to move on the Outer Ring Road; they said it would take eight years. We have a Government, and all of them refuse to support a policy of all-plants-open. We have a Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs who said, raise taxes! We have a Minister who said there will be forced amalgamation. We have a Minister who says - what did he say yesterday? He said the towns will now have to pay for their own recreation facilities - another discovery! We have a Department of Fisheries that has washed its hands, as if it did not exist, and turned their backs on the fish plant workers and fishermen and fisherwomen of Newfoundland. We have a Minister of Development (Mr. Furey), Mr. Speaker, a good man, a very capable fellow, but the Premier has taken his powers and given them to Doug House, which is wrong. We have a Minister of Forestry and Agriculture who is only going to support the Linerboard Mill. We have a Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs who is overworked. Now, this is where he will not give up. The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is overworked; it is not possible for one human being to handle the burden that has been placed on that man's shoulders.

I would say to the Premier, and I would submit to you, Your Honour, that the Premier should look around his caucus. The Member for

Placentia and the Member for Carbonear are itching to get into Municipal Affairs. They are basically competing with one another to become Ministers in Cabinet. The Member for St. John's South: I will tell you something. He would walk over ten miles of broken glass to get in the Cabinet, but he never will get there.

But the Premier should look. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine making the Member for St. John's South Minister of Fisheries when he will not even support opening his own plant? The Member, Mr. Speaker, for Placentia has a wealth of knowledge in municipal services.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Who?

MR. TOBIN:
The hon. the Member for Placentia.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Has a wealth of knowledge, does he?

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, he has. He has a lot of knowledge, Mr. Speaker, but he has difficulty expressing it. He does know a lot about councils. As a matter of fact, how could he not have knowledge of councils when he sat on the council for the last term, Mr. Speaker? He sat on the council with my cousin, who is now Deputy Mayor of Dunville. How could he not acknowledge after working with those people?

But let me say that the Member for Carbonear and the Member for Placentia, the Minister of Municipal Affairs should consult with these people before he starts making desperate statements about amalgamation. He should consult with these people because they do know something about councils.

They have been around. As a matter of fact, both of them have served as President of the Federation. If my memory serves me correctly, both of them have served. Mr. Speaker, this is important. There is a Minister in this Cabinet who is burdened with responsibility, and let no one kid himself. It is not possible for one man to be solely responsible for that Department. It is not possible. There are in that caucus some people who have knowledge of Municipal Affairs and other things, and it is only right that the Minister be allowed to consult with these people. The Premier should say yes, go ahead and talk to these people. I believe the Premier has no confidence in these two men, the Member for Carbonear and the Member for Placentia. If he had confidence in them, they would be in Cabinet. If he has no confidence in them, they should be allowed to advise the Minister, who should consult with them.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has expired.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
By leave!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
No leave! No leave!

AN HON. MEMBER:
Oh, go on. He is making a fine speech.

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

MR. GRIMES:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have recognized that one of the most difficult acts to follow in

the next little while in this House is going to be the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West. There is no doubt in my mind that I am very impressed by his energy and eloquence. In discussions outside, some other Members have been suggesting to me that there might be some question as to the total sense and substance of his remarks, but I do not concur with that; I find everything he says keeps me in my seat. I will sit in my seat for that hon. Member speaking on any issue in this House at any time, no question whatsoever. I am absolutely amazed by the hon. Member's ability to somehow put together a wide variety of issues and then find a meaningful way to tie them all into the subject being debated, in this case Bill 29. With his experience and his abilities, he is a man I admire. I am sure there are people opposite who admire him, and I have heard rumours that there are fund raisers on the go now to raise money for a leadership bid for the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West. I will probably even participate in that in some fashion, because I agree with that kind of sentiment. In no uncertain terms, I hope that in my tenure in the House I can come somewhere close to matching the eloquence and energy of the fine hon. gentleman who does a masterful job, and has done a masterful job on at least three occasions, of carrying the load, and carrying the ball for the Members opposite on several important debates. I would like to go on record as commending him for doing exactly that.

Some years ago, in relation to Bill 29, Mr. Speaker, I did hear a nasty rumour that the Member for Burin - Placentia West was

offering himself for a position of Mayor of some community. It was unfortunate that I did not know him personally at the time, because I would have jumped in and helped campaign, and maybe he would still be a Mayor and we would have been spared this session today.

With relation to the legislation, Mr. Speaker, on this fine day in the House, this legislation is important and I will spend just a few minutes - I do not intend to try and speak any more than I have to, but there are a number of points I would like to make.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GRIMES:

I think some Members were pointing out the last time I spoke, on a Private Member's Bill on Student Aid, that I was so impressive the Students in the galleries left half way through my speech and had I not spoken at that time, maybe they might have stayed around and been here for the conclusion by the hon. the member for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Langdon).

With relation to the Bill, I think we finally see the legitimate combination of all things related to municipalities placed back to where they should be. It is a real pleasure to stand and speak in support of this Bill. I have been one of the members who has led numerous delegations of my councillors from my district in Exploits into the offices of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and some other offices where they had to conduct business, and they find it tremendously useful. They find it, in fact, parallels what they do as a council themselves, in that when they get elected to

councils, which they did just a couple of short days ago, and the House of Assembly has gone on record as commending those people for offering themselves for office, and those who were successful in being elected, they deal with all these issues on behalf of the municipalities, the councils and the communities.

MS VERGE:

Why have they not (inaudible) in there, too?

MR. GRIMES:

Mr. Speaker, in my experience in sitting in the galleries some years ago, it was kind of difficult to get the hon. the member for Humber East, who was then a Minister in various portfolios, to say very much. I am pleased to see she is now engaging in debate in a much more lively fashion, and I look forward to seeing lots of that in the years to come, as well.

In fact, the councils that have been in here representing their communities, when they go to work on behalf of the residents in their communities, they do make decisions on a regular basis with this whole range of services. Now we have Municipal and Provincial Affairs together, where it rightfully should be, because there are many communities in Newfoundland and Labrador which have provincial services that are provided within their boundaries, and that they have all kinds of concern for and dealings with. They have repeatedly said to me that they think it is tremendously sensible and appropriate for them to be able to come into St. John's on one of their delegations and go and get almost all of their concerns addressed in one meeting with one Minister. Sometimes

members Opposite, Mr. Speaker, might find that in fact they still are labouring under the notion that every separate Department or Division must have a Minister. Our Ministers spend their time listening to the people and developing policy, and they use their staff to do the functioning of the Departments.

The councils that visit from my district, and I am sure it is not very different from the rest of the districts around Newfoundland and Labrador, find it to be an improvement, the fact that they can get all of the issues that they deal with on a regular basis dealt with in a one-stop meeting with the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

There have been some unfair comments, as well, regarding the legislation. I understand people talking about the idea that we just have a little bit of housekeeping legislation and so on, and that happens. But there are a couple of things about this kind of so-called housekeeping legislation that are very significant. Hon. members opposite would have been delighted in this Session of the House of Assembly to be standing presenting such pieces of legislation.

When the current Leader of the Opposition was Premier, one of the first things he did with his great transition team was to recognize the error of their ways in times past, when they had expanded Cabinet to some twenty-two or twenty-three, and they had already started the downsizing of Cabinet to, I think, eighteen or nineteen. But I think they probably might have spent a little bit too much time in planning the downsizing and going through that

transition team process, and never really got a chance, then, to put it in action and in effect. Because, unfortunately, they did not win enough seats in the last election, or fortunately now, as many Newfoundlanders are saying, and they never ever got an opportunity to bring in their housekeeping legislation, which would have explained why they felt only eighteen or nineteen Ministries could have served the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. What we have, in fact, is legislation that is much like the debate that is going on in the country about Meech Lake. In fact, you have the underpinnings of the structure of Government being displayed in these bills; you have a foundation and a base that will outline exactly how this Administration, run by Premier Wells and his Cabinet, will operate over the next few years.

The rearrangement here in Municipal and Provincial Affairs is only one example of it. The combination is outlined in the explanatory note attached to the bill. It is short in words but very significant in impact, and several of the others are the same. So we can see that one of the things that happened, of course, is a move towards a real change in creating only Departments that are necessary and functional, and that this bill is one of the necessary bills brought in to accomplish exactly that.

I would like for a minute, Mr. Speaker, if I could, to avail of the opportunity, while addressing Bill 29, to speak briefly about the issue of amalgamation, which has been seriously misrepresented by the previous speaker, the hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West, and also by several other

Members of the House opposite.

Amalgamation is, as everybody recognizes in this House, a wonderful concept, and most people find merit with the concept. A process is being put in place now through our Minister which is going to ensure that those people who agree with the concept, and many, many do agree with the basic concept, most people do, will go through a process of full discussion and input, consultation, and we will not have to put up with the skillful twisting of the words by the previous speaker, the hon. Member for Burin - Placentia West. He talks about forced amalgamation, when in fact, the mayors who used the word forced talked about being forced to have another election if they agree to amalgamate. So the word forced was used, but not at all in the context that the House has been led to believe by the previous speaker.

Of course, there is some opposition to the idea of amalgamation, but it is not opposition to the concept. When those people voicing opposition have used the word, they have said they are opposed to some of the suggested groupings but that they would like to go into the consultative process, get involved in the hearings, and maybe propose other groupings that they might be able to agree with. So we have some skillful twisting of the words, but it certainly should be remembered that the record in the House should be clear that those people who supposedly used words like 'forced' and 'opposed' did not at all use them in the context that the previous speaker would lead us to believe.

Some municipalities did choose not

to have elections a couple of days ago because they felt it was in their best interest not to go through another election. It only shows their concern and their interest in the whole notion of amalgamation, that they are willing to actively and seriously consider it now, within the next few months, and that they would spare the taxpayers the expense of an additional election and go ahead with the hearings and hopefully get on with the process.

Amalgamation, Mr. Speaker, is just one of the areas where, if in fact there are successful transitions made to larger amalgamated centers than what we now have, it will be another example of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians being a little better off than we are presently. We are getting a little better off all the time; we are still not perfect. And I would like to point out that I think most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are certainly still very proud to be Newfoundland Canadians, and are not at all in a position to share the sentiment expressed by the Leader of the Opposition less than a week ago, when in this House he suggested that maybe we would all be better off if we were never part of Confederation, a statement which shocked residents in Exploits District when they heard it; the fact that in the House of Assembly the Leader of the Opposition, who only a few short months ago was the Premier, stated out loud on the record, in Hansard, that in his opinion we may indeed be better off if we were not part of Canada. You will find very few Newfoundlanders today who would ever, ever utter those words or come anywhere close to agreeing with that kind of sentiment.

And with it you will find that here in Bill 29, we just have another opportunity of making sure that we advance the cause for residents of communities throughout the Province, both the Island part and the Labrador part, to make sure that we are a little better off than we had been before, because we have been making continual progress since Confederation, in 1949.

I just wanted to make those few comments, Mr. Speaker. I have no intention of going on for the sake of speaking and filling up the rest of the allowable time, but I did want to speak to this bill, and just be there long enough to say that I, as a Member on this side, certainly am very proud to be able to stand and speak to this major piece of reorganizational legislation being introduced into this Chamber by the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I guess I only have nine minutes to speak to this bill before we get to the Late Show. I do want to address the bill for a few moments, and I do want to address the bill, to the surprise of some people, even though there is not much you can argue about the bill as it relates to the legislation. It really does not change a great deal; it amalgamates, as the Minister of Amalgamations is amalgamating a bunch of departments. That is about all it

does, and that is enough, Mr. Speaker.

Previous speakers have made mention of the incredible workload the Minister has under his responsibilities, and the Minister will confirm that when he was appointed I congratulated him and gave him my sympathies. I said to him at that time that it is physically impossible to do a good job; you will do a job, but you cannot do a good job with such a broad range of responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I think we should think for a moment about just what the responsibilities are that the Minister has. Municipal Affairs itself has always been and always will be one of the busiest portfolios of Government. Municipal Affairs itself is enough responsibility, caring for the requirements of 310 municipalities and local service district and so forth. Now, maybe all that is included in 310, but there are a tremendous number of people out there who want to see the Minister on a regular basis. All 310 of them will sometime want to come in, and he will find, if he has not found it up until now, that over the next month he is going to be very busy. The councils will be coming in to do their Christmas shopping, and they will be wanting to see the Minister at the same time. So he is going to have a lineup outside his door every day from now until Christmas, I can assure you. It happens every year. It is always a good time to go to St. John's to see the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, Municipal Affairs is a very important portfolio. There are a lot of problems, and I appreciate that the Minister is trying to deal with some of the

problems that are being experienced by municipalities today. I will talk about amalgamation perhaps a little later, but probably I will not have time. In a few days time, I assume we will get to Bill No. 12. We do not have a copy of that Bill yet, but I assume that will be the one that gives the Minister some more powers to do certain things and deal specifically with amalgamation, I do not know. This one does not give him any additional power.

But there is a whole range of responsibilities that he has to deal with in that portfolio, and I think that really is a full-time job. Now, when you add to that Housing, which itself in the past has been a full-time portfolio, and I am very familiar with both Municipal Affairs and Housing, I held them both - I had Housing for seven years, and I had Municipal Affairs, I think, for about three altogether. Maybe not quite that long, maybe two years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, housing is another very important problem in this Province today. I am sure the Minister is inundated with calls for public housing units. There are so many people in this Province today who require assistance in order to keep themselves and their families in reasonable and affordable accommodation. Those who cannot afford it, need that kind of assistance to pay the rent. And it is an increasing problem, Mr. Speaker. As the economy tightens up, people are finding it ever more difficult to be able to find affordable accommodation.

The big problem, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister should look at if he has

not, is housing for single families, single parents. That is becoming a very, very serious problem today. If the Minister will look at statistics from the Department of Housing, he will see that the number of single parent families seeking public housing units has increased dramatically over the past ten years, particularly; particularly single mothers, who are finding it very difficult to support themselves and a number of children, and really do need public housing units. We are finding that we need to construct more units that are designed for these people, because they have particular needs.

There is a big need there for the handicapped, for whom we started a program a number of years ago, building units to deal with persons with disabilities. The units were designed for accessibility under The Accessibility Act.

There are many, many problems in the public housing area, in developing residential subdivisions and industrial parks. I do not know how the Minister now fits in with the Department of Development and with the new Economic Recovery Team, as to responsibility for developing industrial parks. The Department of Housing is always the owner of these industrial parks.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The Speaker is breaking up the place.

MR. WINDSOR:

Breaking up the place. The Speaker is under control.

So, it remains to be seen how the Economic Recovery Team will interact with the Department of

Housing. Who will set the priorities and the policy as to where the industrial parks will be developed and on what basis? These are important questions that deserve the Minister's attention.

Then there is the whole range of recreation and culture, and youth. It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that the emphasis on youth is much less here in this administration than in previous administrations. The former Premier put a tremendous amount of emphasis on youth, and we made great strides in trying to develop special programs for youth, job strategy programs for youth. How can the Minister possibly deal with these types of questions and, at the same time, deal with all these other issues that he has to deal with?

Communications and Registrar General are now all included under one Minister. The Registrar General may not take a great amount of time. I imagine that is signing a few official documents. I do not say that is an overly onerous task. Communications has been of increasing importance in this Province, and will be in the future. But, certainly, on culture, recreation and youth, we are getting complaints from all over the Province, Mr. Speaker, from municipalities, from recreation commissions and other groups who are saying, 'We cannot get to see the Minister. He is too busy.' And he is busy. I say this with great respect for the Minister. No doubt, he is extremely busy. And that is the point we are making, he is too busy to be available to these people who need to speak to the Minister. He is too busy to do his job effectively. He may get on from day to day, but he is not

doing the job that needs to be done. He does not have time to sit back and set policy. And I think the evidence is here. All you have to do is look at the Order Paper. There is nothing new or earth-shattering on that Order Paper, Mr. Speaker. It is what we call the old 'cut and paste', you are taking existing things and pasting them together, nothing more to it than that. There is nothing new or original on that Order Paper. I cannot wait to see Bill 12. That might be something original. The amendment to The St. John's Municipal Elections Act was a one-liner that they could not even get in over a two-week period or a six-month period - six months and they could not get that one-liner in here, they had to wait until last Thursday or Friday so we could debate that. We could be here now debating that. The Minister broke the law and he knows it. He broke the law in deferring those elections without authority. He presumed that the House would take certain action, which we did. We let him out. We let him away with it last week.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How about if the House could not open?

MR. WINDSOR:

That is right. There could have been a snowstorm. We have had snowstorms this time of year. They are having one in Toronto today I am told, a foot and a half of snow. I wish we had that here.

Mr. Speaker, it being 4:30, I will sit down. Since I am not going to be here tomorrow, somebody else will carry on.

Debate on the Adjournment
[Late Show]

MR. SPEAKER:

I am assuming that the questions are in order here. The first one that I have is for the Member for Torngat debating an answer which he sought from the Minister of Health re: Grenfell Health Services, for which he was not satisfied.

The Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Thank you very much Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in question period I asked a very serious question of the Minister of Health, it was a very serious question because it was a constituent of mine who brought it to my attention, and she wanted answers from the Minister of Health as to why this lady was not looked after. And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister began to play politics with her. I think it was very disgusting that the Minister would stoop so low as to play politics with the medical condition of an individual in this Province. And that is what the Minister was doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister said yesterday that he had his officials checking into the matter, and he will have his report soon. I should say to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, that I have a copy of the report here signed by the administrator of The Lake Melville Hospital who admits, who admits, Mr. Speaker, that they made a gross error. Now, Mr. Speaker, and this is why I say to the Minister of Health, knowing that the administrator of the Hospital has admitted error, that there were errors made, that this patient was not looked after properly. And furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Minister to come clean with the people of the Province, and in

particular from Roddickton up to Nain where the Grenfell Regional Health Services is supplying the medical services to those people. The Minister has said when he was sitting over here, that he was concerned about the health care. The Minister has also said that the headquarters of the Grenfell Regional Health Services should not be in St. Anthony. And furthermore, all the Minister has to do, Mr. Speaker, is go back to his officials, and he will find, Mr. Speaker, in the documents in his office and in the legislative office documents. And just referring to some items in those documents that says that the Grenfell Regional plane, the commander, has to be used for medical purposes, not for personal purposes. And I say to the Minister that he knows, in fact, he has been associated with that aircraft being used other than for medical reasons. And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows this, the Minister knows about people coming to St. John's on shopping trips. On shopping trips, on an aircraft, without paying any compensation back to the Grenfell Health Services Board.

And I say to the Minister, now is the time for him to put his money where his mouth is and come forward, and show the people of Newfoundland and Labrador how much money has been wasted by the Grenfell Regional Health Services by having the commander aircraft stationed in St. Anthony that cannot land on 21 strips along the Labrador coast, because the aircraft is not equipped properly to land on gravel airstrips. And so therefore, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the Minister that he would take the bull by the horns and immediately get rid or take the action to ask the Grenfell

Regional Health Services to get rid of the commander aircraft.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to go back to the report from Mr. Rowe on the Grenfell Regional Health Services in Goose Bay. Mr. Rowe has said something in this report, and just in case the Minister does come up and say something about it, he says here 'when the patient left Nain an experienced nursing assistant who was also travelling on the aircraft was asked to escort the patient.' Mr. Speaker, that is true.

But, Mr. Speaker, what has not been said here and what the Minister has to know is, that this nursing assistant said to the medical profession in Nain that "I am not qualified to look after oxygen that is placed on an individual, and therefore I will not take responsibility for that patient." Now, Mr. Speaker, that is what this nursing assistant said, and she would not take responsibility for that patient.

Is that enough for the Minister to call a public enquiry into health care?

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Rowe is also saying on page 2, "It is not uncommon for patients to wait for two or three hours." When patients coming on an aircraft along the Labrador Coast after being on an aircraft for two hours then have to go into a waiting room in the Lake Melville Hospital and wait another three or four hours before they can see a doctor, there is something wrong with health care.

Mr. Speaker, I say to the Minister, let us forget about the past. Do something that he said he was going to do when he was

over here, now it is time for a change. The people in this Province voted for a real change, but is a real change reducing nursing positions in Nain from seven to three? Is that the kind of change? The Minister says that he has money in the budget to get more nurses. He cannot get more nurses. He also said yesterday that he would take my suggestion. My suggestion to the Minister is, put a compensation package in place.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

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

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, I wonder would the hon. gentleman be kind enough to repeat that question?

Mr. Speaker, I do have a copy of the report, obviously the hon. Member has one as well, so it would be pointless.

The hon. Member neglected to point out that when this lady was taken to the Nain Hospital, she was supposed to be transported to Goose Bay. Now, there was no nurse available to accompany this woman to Goose Bay. So here were the options: the nursing assistant could be asked to go as an escort; or the plane could have flown back to Goose Bay picked up a nurse and went back to Nain and took the sick person into Goose Bay. A judgement call was made. The physician ordered, in the interest of the patient, it would be better for that patient to travel with the nursing assistant acting as an escort into Goose Bay. That was done.

MR. WARREN:

That is not true.

MR. DECKER:
Well, this is the report. The hon. Member has the report.

The plane took the nursing assistant and the sick woman and flew to Goose Bay. Had this not been done, Mr. Speaker, darkness would have fallen and it would be impossible to get the plane back that night. So the sick person then would have had to spend another night in Nain.

MR. WARREN:
That is not true.

MR. DECKER:
Well, I am only repeating the report.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I would ask the hon. gentleman from Torngat to please refrain from bantering back and forth. He had his opportunity for five minutes during which I understand there were no interruptions here. The hon. Member can debate it under a different forum, but please allow the Minister to give an answer.

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, I thank you because there seems to be some misunderstanding on the part of the Member.

Short of going down to Nain and conducting an investigation myself which I am not qualified to do, I have to take the advice and answer which is given me by the Administrator of the Hospital. The Administrator of the Hospital gave the facts as I just outlined

them and I have to accept that.

Now what does come through in the report, Mr. Speaker, is that there was, would you call it human error, would you call it carelessness. There was something not quite right in this person having to stay three hours in the aisle in the Melville Hospital. That is a fact. I admit that. The Administrator admits that. Since I have received this report I have sent back and asked that the people responsible be chastised for it because some one is not doing their job and it is a problem. Now we are attempting to correct that Mr. Speaker, who knows, at the end of the day someone might be fired, that could be a problem, that could be a solution, but this will be addressed, there was some one who did not do his job or forgot, but it is not good enough as the Administrator pointed out. The hon. Member also referred to a report, talking about the Grenfell thing in the second part of his question, and this keeps reoccurring, in the question period today he referred to the accusations that Grenfell was wasting money or something to that effect. This may or may not be the case, but the report to which the hon. gentleman was referring, if it is the report that I know, I do not know any other report, does not say that the International Grenfell is wasting money, that is not in the report. I am not altogether surprised because the Grenfell itself commissioned the consultant's report, so I hardly think that they would have released it, had it been accusing them of wasting money, but the report did make a lot of suggestions. One of the suggestions was that Grenfell would act as an overriding Board,

and that there would be a Board in Flowers Cove, there would be a Board in Roddickton, there would be a Board over on the Labrador Coast, there would be a Board in Goose Bay, I met with the Board and we discussed that Mr. Speaker. The Grenfell have not accepted the recommendations in that report, what they have done, they have published it and they are asking the people in Labrador, and the people in the Great Northern Peninsula, to give some feedback, to give their comments, so that is still an ongoing thing. Personally, I am not certain that it is necessary to have this overriding Board, I think we have to be concerned with the best way that we can deliver health care to residents of Labrador and the Great Northern Peninsular, and I grew up, unlike the hon. Member, under the Grenfell Board. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern debating an issue related to an answer given by The Minister of Works, Services and Transportation related to the Outer Ring Road.

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked three questions pertaining to the Outer Ring Road and I said at that time and I feel no differently right now that the Minister was arrogant in his reply. The Minister in his reply yesterday Mr. Speaker stated that there was a thirteen year period, and he sort of laughed at the situation. He said you know, well, so what, he did not see it as of great importance, not really a great crying need in his words. But, Mr. Speaker, I am going to read from a letter that the Minister wrote. Number one, he

states in his letter 'that the planning for the Outer Ring Road was started in the sixties and there have been numerous planning and transportation studies which have addressed the justification for the need for the Outer Ring Road. The Department has almost spent six years preparing environmental studies related to the St. John's Outer Ring Road' and Mr. Speaker this was his conclusion. 'I trust you will understand the St. John's Outer Ring Road is an essential element in the future for the St. John's Metropolitan area', and may I insert here, one third of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador reside right in this area. The road transportation system, and the required steps have been taken to ensure the road will be constructed and operated in an environmentally sound manner. Mr. Speaker, I have to address this alarming situation to my colleagues on the other side. I wrote, Mr. Speaker, all my colleagues from the St. John's area on both sides of the House addressing the situation, I addressed it to the Minister with copies to all the people, all the hon. Members, each one of them knew what was going ahead, I received one reply Mr. Speaker and that was from the Minister telling me nothing, nothing, only that yes, the need was there it will, you know, it was on going. Mr. Speaker let me say this to you, although the Premier does not represent a St. John's Riding, I am sure the Premier who represents another area outside St. John's can see the dire need for this thoroughfare. Mr. Speaker, look, let me say to you, St. John's West, St. John's Centre, Conception Bay South, Mount Scio - Bell Island, Pleasantville, St. John's North, and Waterford

Kenmount, Mr. Speaker, those people were elected to represent the St. John's area, and it is entrusted to them when they receive the people's votes to do something beneficial for the people. We have accidents down there. We have congestion so grave now that it is existing nowhere else - well, maybe in Toronto, but we are not in Toronto, we are here in St. John's. And when I come out of my own home in Flat Rock now the traffic is bumper to bumper at certain hours of the day. How long is it going to take? The Minister says (inaudible) are you people. I am asking the Ministers and the backbenchers over there, from the St. John's area, are you prepared to sit idly by and let the Minister deprive the people of St. John's of their rights? That is what I am asking. I am asking for your assistance to bring some sense to the Minister.

The rest of the Province have needs, as well, but this need here has been addressed. Since the Member for Placentia brought it up, let me tell you something: When the railway was closed out, and the Minister said yesterday, sold out - I say it was closed out, and rightfully so, and everyone else in Newfoundland. The only reason why you were against it at that particular time was because you were in Opposition. It was the only sensible thing to do with the railway. But in allotting the moneys that came from the Federal Government, there was provision for that road. I told you yesterday, there were a million people going to pass through, going to and from Torbay airport; there are industrial parks on that end; there are two on the Torbay side. In his letter, he said

'environmental issues'. What environmental issues? A couple of people up there saying -

MS VERGE:

(Inaudible) to stop studying it.

MR. PARSONS:

- stop studying it. It has been studied to death. It is costing us more money for studies than the actual road is going to cost.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I think I will start where the Member ended. He talked about the railway agreement. Maybe that is a good place to start before we get into the Government's position on the Outer Ring Road.

For your information, Mr. Speaker, in the previous fifteen years from 1973 to 1988, the Federal Government put \$368.1 million into the highway system in Newfoundland. Now, the Member wonders why I call it the railway robbery. Over the next thirteen years, or fifteen years from the time of the summit, the money that is going to be spent starting next year and go on for thirteen years thereafter is \$405 million on the Trans-Canada Highway in Newfoundland. Included in that is the money for the Outer Ring Road. So if you just very quickly, if you subtracted what went in the previous fifteen years, the \$368 million from the \$405 million you will find that \$37 million is the actual benefit

that we received for selling our railway.

PREMIER WELLS:

What about inflation?

MR. GILBERT:

Now I am going to get to that. The Premier is jumping ahead of me. Now this \$37 million is the actual figure we got. So you talk about selling your birthright for a mess of potage. Now if you wanted to take inflation at 5 per cent a year, that would come to about \$634 million, just to keep even. So in other words, we have \$37 million for something that is going to keep us even for the next thirteen years if we take this in, there is going to be a loss of \$600 million by the agreement that was signed for the railway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame!

MR. GILBERT:

Now that brings me to the point we are talking about, Mr. Speaker. And what it is that when we came here and we looked at the situation that we were faced with, in other words we were in a \$600 million deficit position as far as trying to provide a highway initiative for the Province. So we had to look at it, and what the Government's position is on the Outer Ring Road, I will just read it into the record now so that everybody is aware of what we are doing. 'The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will be reviewing the priority of constructing the St. John's Outer Ring Road in the context of the many demands it is facing with respect to all highway construction projects in the Province. Such a review -'

AN HON. MEMBER:

The trans-Labrador Highway.

MR. GILBERT:

'- will determine the timing for the construction of the Outer Ring Road. Decisions on other aspects affecting the construction has been deferred until the review has been completed.'

Now that is simply what has happened. The other thing about it is there is no great need to make a decision right now. There is no money going to be spent on this agreement until 1991. So I tell the hon. Member it is there, we realize it is a priority, but we realize that in Newfoundland there are many priorities. And we realize that, because of the deception that was pulled on us by the previous Administration, we are in a shortfall as far as having the money to carry out the transportation initiative to give the people of Newfoundland a decent transportation system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I want to raise a matter that was dealt with yesterday in Question Period.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:

I want to raise it in such a way as to maybe allow or permit the Premier an opportunity to give an honest, straightforward answer as opposed to the answer he gave

yesterday during Question Period. I think I have every legitimate right in raising this under the Late Show as being dissatisfied, because the Premier did not answer the question I asked him at all; throughout he used rhetoric and talked about we are going to provide fairness and balance in this Province, that same old speech. So I am going to approach it in a reasonable and rational way. I asked him specifically to tell me how come the inconsistency. His Minister of Municipal Affairs, responsible for recreation, is quoted as saying - now, if the Premier tells me he was quoted incorrectly, or if the Minister says so, then that is fine, finally we will get an answer - that the recreation grant allocation that was made back in September was made based on - in other words, the bureaucrats recommended the lopsided grant allocation. Now, that is what his Minister is quoted as saying, that the grants that were allocated were simply - that is what was implied - recommendations from the bureaucrats. That is what the Minister is alleged to have said, was quoted as saying.

I will give the Premier an opportunity to question his Minister to try to get their act together. That is what the Minister is alleged to have said, is quoted as saying, and I have not seen any contradiction by the Minister anywhere, publicly or otherwise, to say that that is not what he meant. So, if we assume that what the Minister said was truthful and correct, then this list simply came from the bureaucrats, the Cabinet did not interfere in the allocation of funding. Now, that is what he Minister is alleged to have said, and certainly what has been

implied, and he has not corrected that impression if there is a mistake. If there is, I would like to hear about it. If that is the case, then I would like the Premier to tell us, with respect to his response yesterday to my question - this is all I want to ask today; I want to get clarification of it. Yesterday, the Premier said in response to my question, on page L4 of Hansard, 'I remember when the list came up there were some pretty obvious imbalances and unfairnesses in it that had to be corrected.'

Now, certainly, Mr. Speaker, and the Premier can correct me if I am wrong, that would imply, and my impression from that answer is, that indeed the Cabinet did interfere with the decisions. Now, if I am wrong, fine. If that is an incorrect impression, the Premier will have an opportunity to correct it. But certainly I can tell him without fear of contradiction that the impression out there is that the Minister said there was no interference, and that the Premier's response yesterday implied that you did interfere, that in fact you went through the list, you did not like where some were allocated and so on, so you corrected it. That is what you are saying here.

If that is true, and what I am looking for is an affirmation that that is correct, then I want to know what happened to the Premier's long-held philosophy of no political interference. That is the question.

PREMIER WELLS:
(Inaudible) here themselves.

MR. SIMMS:
Yes.

But I have put it as clearly and succinctly as I can in the hope that the Premier will be able to stick to that particular question. That is what I want answered. The rest of it we can debate on another day, but that is what I want answered.

MR. FUREY:
Sit down!

MR. SIMMS:
I still have a few seconds, and Members opposite should not be interrupting me, Mr. Speaker. It is not becoming, especially for the Minister of Development, the Acting House Leader on occasion.

I would like the Premier to answer that question specifically for me when he gets an opportunity. I perhaps might be pushing my luck if I were to ask him if he has had a chance to investigate whether or not on that list recommended by the bureaucrats, which was not tampered with or was tampered with, whichever, but if it was not tampered with, what happened to the recommendation from the bureaucrats in the Department of Recreation that recommended the grant to Grand Falls? That is the other question.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:
Mr. Speaker, we are committed to a policy of fairness and balance, and we are implementing that policy notwithstanding the protests from the other side. We are committed to it and we are going to apply it.

We have seen seventeen years of incredible unfairness and

imbalance at two levels, one of which was based purely on politics. Everybody knows that that, in fact, occurred. There was the periodic bit of work done in a few Districts represented by Liberal Members to make it look as though they were not ignoring them completely. Everybody knows that. The record is clear, and I do not have to go back over it and establish that.

But there was another fundamental unfairness. If you were a powerful and influential Minister, your District got everything. There are two or three still sitting on the opposite side who were powerful and influential Ministers to which Districts virtually everything they wanted was directed, and they were fundamentally unfair to all others in this. The district of Grand Falls was one such district, unfairly and unfavorably treated, even by comparison with other Conservative districts. Burin - Placentia West had exercised a bit of influence, too. We are committed to correcting those fundamental unfairnesses and that fundamental imbalance.

Mr. Speaker, that list came up and there were small communities on it which needed help desperately and, based on the approach of the former Government, they would not have gotten it. Yet, Grand Falls, which could help itself, was going to get the help.

MR. SIMMS:
Recommended by the bureaucrats.

PREMIER WELLS:
But we would not do that.

MR. SIMMS:
Recommended by the bureaucrats.

PREMIER WELLS:
Recommended by the bureaucrats, acting under the direction of the former Government.

MR. SIMMS:
No!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:
Let me tell the hon. Member, Mr. Speaker, Gander was there too. The town of Gander was included on the list recommended, and we sent the list back to the bureaucrats and we said how can you justify -

MR. SIMMS:
That is not what the Minister said.

PREMIER WELLS:
We sent the list back to the bureaucrats.

MR. SIMMS:
No, Sir!

PREMIER WELLS:
If you do not like the answers, well, you should not have asked the question.

MR. SIMMS:
You are not giving the answers.

PREMIER WELLS:
We sent the list back to the bureaucrats and said to them, how can you justify providing extra recreation grants to a town like Gander, and a town like Grand Falls when these other communities are desperately in need and cannot provide for it themselves, but Gander and Grand Falls had the capability? Now, go back and take that factor into account, and then come up with a proper list. The list was finally decided not by the Cabinet, it was decided by the bureaucrats based on principles of

fairness and balance, having eliminated political prejudices of the past.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is how it was done. We are going to continue to apply those principles of fairness and balance to all municipal grants, to all recreation grants. We are going to ensure, as well, that municipalities that get help, do so on the bases of taking their fair share of the burden. We are not going to have the taxpayers of the Province, who are otherwise carrying their own fair share of municipal tax, supporting a municipality that will only impose a tax of two and a half mils. That is fundamentally unfair. We are going to correct those inherent unfairnesses and imbalances, and we are going to treat our people fairly, wherever they live in this Province. Now, I know that is foreign to the thinking of Members opposite and it is going to take them a while to get used to the principles of fairness and balance, but sooner or later, Mr. Speaker, they will stand in this House and cheer the Government for fairness and balance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

It being Thursday, we assume the motion of adjournment has been made. If hon. Members will permit, I would make a comment on

the point of order I said I would take under advisement. Even though I basically gave the ruling, I just want to comment a little further.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Which one is that?

MR. SPEAKER:

The one about Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given. I just want to comment on that again, so that if we are into this position again Ministers will know what to do. As Members can expect, I did not have reams of literature to read on this particular point of order. As a matter of fact, I could not find one single point of order. That is not to say that there are none, but enough to say that it has been fairly well established in this House that when a question has been asked and a Minister takes it under advisement, naturally that fulfills the requirement. However, it has been done when a Minister has not taken under advisement, and he has asked leave of the House to answer the question. That probably is the best way. But there are examples in the literature where a Minister started answering a question that was not even asked. So there are all sorts of things which have happened.

I can only say to hon. Members that the best way to do it, because it is difficult to say that it is going to be answered under notice given, because the Minister might find new information that night or the next morning, in which case the Minister ought, more accurately, to ask for leave of the House and to proceed.

The other reason why I think it is

being done, is that when a member asks a question, he obviously expects an answer. So it has been allowed, and I hope these few words of wisdom will guide future development.

This House is now adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 9:00 a.m.