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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Statements by Ministers

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):

Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Carbonear.

MR. REID:

Mr. Speaker, on Friday past Mr. John Goff of Carbonear, a well-known Newfoundland and Conception Bay North area figure, passed peacefully away and was buried this morning. John was a Mayor of Carbonear and he was founder of our Recreation Commission. It was through him that we, in the Conception Bay North area, succeeded in getting a new swimming pool which is being used actively right now. He was a member on a number of recreation committees and commissions throughout the Conception Bay North area and in the Province. I would like today, Mr. Speaker, through your office, ask this hon. House if they would send their condolences to the Goff family in Carbonear on behalf of us all.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, Members on this side of the House certainly want to associate ourselves with the comments made by the hon. gentleman for Carbonear. Mr. Goff was a well known institution, I guess, in Carbonear and Conception Bay North. He made a tremendous contribution to the town of Carbonear and to Newfoundland and Labrador in general. All of us are saddened by his passing and we certainly want to be associated with the remarks made by the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today, to present to the House the 1989 Annual Cost of Fuel and Utilities Report. The report, based on the survey of fuel and utility consumer prices, was conducted during the period of May 29 - June 2, 1989. It outlines the retail prices paid for furnace and stove oil, regular and unleaded gasoline, automotive diesel fuel and electricity. This survey was carried out in various communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador by staff by the Departments of Social Services, Finance, Justice, and Mines and Energy.

The results of this year's survey indicate that average prices of most petroleum products increased over the period May 1988 to May 1989. Furnace oil, stove oil, regular leaded and regular unleaded gasoline prices increased by 0.6, 2.0, 4.0, and 2.1 per cent respectively over this period. The price of automotive diesel fuel, however, decreased by 3.6 per cent over this same period.

The increase in prices was due to increased in the Federal excise tax on gasoline as well as increases in crude oil prices.

In May of this year the Federal Government increased the excise tax on regular leaded gasoline by two cents a litre while the excise tax on regular unleaded gasoline increased by one cent a litre. From May 1988 to May 1989 crude oil cost to refineries increased

nine tenths of one per cent. Automotive diesel fuel was not affected by the Federal Budget. Although crude cost increased we experienced a decrease in automotive diesel fuel prices. It appears that refiners and marketers decreased their margins on diesel fuel over the last year. As a result of this price decrease both Federal and Provincial sales taxes decreased slightly. The end result is a lower price at the pump for consumers. I am concerned over the price disparities which exist in some communities of the Province. Petroleum product prices in some communities, particularly along the coast of Labrador, are quite high. The higher prices are a result of geographic location which increases transportation and distribution costs, high dealer margins resulting from low volume of sales and an absence of competition which also tends to inflate prices. I should point out that, historically, prices in Labrador have been considerably higher than those in other communities in the Province for reasons just given. In 1989 this is still the case, but the changes from last year have not been atypical. In fact, price changes for most of these communities have been in line with or below those experienced in most other communities in the Province. I should also point out that my officials have been closely monitoring petroleum product prices, particularly over the past few years when consumer prices in this Province did not seem to be falling as quickly as crude oil prices. It appears that this increased emphasis on petroleum prices benefitted consumers in this Province by bringing prices more in line with those in the

rest of Atlantic Canada.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank the Minister for his usual courtesy of an advance copy of his statement. Insofar as monitoring oil prices having a dampening effect on their tendency to rise, I think the Minister and this program are to be complimented. I should also point out that this program was first brought about when the PC Government was in power. The largest jump in oil prices related to leaded gasoline, and the Minister points out that Federal taxes are at work here, but I do believe, if my memory with regard to the last Provincial Budget is correct, Provincial taxes are involved here too. Finally Mr. Speaker there is one thing I would like to make, I suppose by way of a general comment, when the Liberal Party now in Government were in opposition, they generally asked the PC Government of the day for a more interventionist role, more policing with regard to oil prices and other aspects of our economy. As we have seen lately, especially with regard to the looming crises as regards to jobs and plant closures in the Fishery, the Liberals in power are much more non-interventionist. Mr. Speaker as I have said a number of times in this House, and I will say again, where have all the small 'l' Liberals gone? Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform this Honourable House that the Audited Financial Statements of the Province of Newfoundland Pooled Pension Fund for the year ended December 31, 1988, are now ready for tabling and release to the public.

Some points worthy of note include:

The Pension Fund has grown by 12.2 per cent during the year, that is the year ended December 31, 1988 and it has investments now totalling \$401.7 million.

Also there are 6,300 pensioners on the pensioners' payroll drawing pensions totalling \$58.93 million annually.

The two largest plans, the Public Service Pension Plan and the Teachers Pension Plan have pension fund balances totalling \$328 million and \$91 million respectively. The other two plans, the Uniformed Services and the M.H.A.'s plans have no fund balances as they are in deficit positions requiring additional payments from the Province to cover the annual pension costs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I am going to table also the report of the Pooled Pension Plan, and in doing so I would like to call Members' attention to several points in the book. One is while the cost of investments are about \$402 million, the investments at market value at the end of last year were considerably in excess of that, being up to about \$436 million.

I would also like to indicate where our money is invested. The money is invested largely in equities, 60 per cent of all our pension fund is in equities - 44

per cent being Canadian equities - and the rest in other equities, and the 40 per cent, most of which is in fixed income and short term notes.

Another point I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, is in connection with the administrative cost of the plan. It costs a fair amount of money to administer this plan, a total of \$1.744 million broken up in two parts. One in the Public Service, Uniformed Service, and Members of the House of Assembly pension plans, which are looked after by the Department of Finance. The cost of administering these plans come to about \$1.4 million. And then the Teachers' Pension Plan, the administrative cost of which are bore by the Department of Education, at least the work is done in the Department of Education, coming up to about \$400,000 for a total of \$1.75 million to administer the plan.

Now, to administer the funds - the costs come out of the fund by the way - the administrative costs come out of the fund rather than being charged against consolidated revenues. The cost of administering the fund, the buying and the selling of the securities and so on, comes to \$1.8 million per year, or at least \$1.8 million last year, which again is a fairly hefty amount, so that the administration of the plan and looking after the fund comes to about \$3.5 million per year.

The portfolio is managed by, or it was in 1988, by six groups: Gryphon Investment Counsel Inc., Jarislowsky, Fraser, M.K. Wong & Associates, Reed, Monahan, Nicholishen, Connor, Clark & Lunn, and The Royal Trust Corporation of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the hon. Minister for providing me with a copy of his statement. I would point out to him that really, this is not a Ministerial Statement, it should have been really done under Reports by Standing and Special Committees. But nevertheless I thank him because it gives me an opportunity to respond. I thank him as well for his compliments because this report takes us up to December of 1988, so we are talking about a previous Administration. When he talks about the efficiency of Administration, particularly the way in which the funds were invested - and I share with him in that - the funds have been well invested, the pension investment committee had been doing a tremendous job, and if the Minister would check with other Provinces he will find that our success in relation to other Provinces is, in fact, quite good. The committee has indeed done a good job of investing our pensions, over the years.

Notwithstanding all that Mr. Speaker, it is important that we do recognize that the main figures that have been tabled here today, and the fact that many of these pension funds, of course, are in a deposit position, and that has to be dealt with. We have made an attempt over the past number of years to deal with it. In fact, prior to 1979 there was no pool pension fund. The previous Administration had introduced it, and recognized the fact that if we do not start funding our pensions,

future generations and future Governments will be saddled with really an unbearable financial burden, and the financial capacity of the province at that time would be sorely threatened as a result of it.

The problems would be a great deal worse if we had not taken action in 1979, and had not started building up our funds. Again I say, the problems are still there, the teachers pension fund, particularly, has to be looked at. Negotiations were entered into two years ago with the Newfoundland Teachers Association. Hon. the Madam from Conception Bay South, and I, have met and began those first negotiations on dealing with the problems there. I think that is the way it has to be dealt with.

MR. SPEAKER:

Before getting into Oral Questions, I would like to welcome some visitors to the House.

First, I would like to welcome two visitors from Labrador City: Randy Collins, President of the Labrador West Regional Development Association; he is also President of the Local Union 5795 United Steel Workers of America, Eastern Canada's largest local union, and Mr. Collins is accompanied by the Regional Development Co-ordinator of that area, Mr. Al Thoms.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Also, I would like to welcome to the galleries a delegation from Corner Brook representing the Community Future's Committee, which includes Mr. Ray Pollett, who is the Mayor of Corner Brook, and Gerry Murden, a former Member

of the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Oral Questions

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question will be to the Premier.

In view of the fact that a Mr. Glen Penney of St. Anthony has acknowledged publicly that the Minister of Health confirmed to him on October 28 that the Fisheries Loan Board had made a decision to freeze all loan activity relating to Eastern Ship Builders Limited, and in view of the fact that the Premier told the House on previous occasions that he did some internal investigating after receiving complaints from the owner of that particular business about alleged activity of the Minister of Social Services before making the decision to relieve the Minister of his responsibilities, could the Premier tell the House whether or not his internal investigations suggested whether or not the Minister of Social Services might have played some role in persuading the Fisheries Loan Board to arrive at this particular decision?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

No, Mr. Speaker, there is no indication whatsoever that the Minister of Social Services had anything whatsoever to do with that decision. I suspect it really reflects the kind of criticism that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition made himself of that gentleman when he wrote to him as Minister of Fisheries. I have no indication whatsoever that the Minister of Social Services had anything to do with it.

MR. RIDEOUT:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, could the Premier tell the House whether or not he considers it appropriate and fair and just that a third party, in this case Mr. Penney, would be made aware by a Minister of the Crown that financial decisions had been made by a Crown Agency, the Fisheries Loan Board, affecting a private company in this Province, a full fourteen days before the company itself was informed of the decision by the Fisheries Loan Board.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I would say, in the ordinary course that would not be the normal route to have that information, but if it happened to be a constituent of the Minister, and that constituent called the Minister, and the Minister, either directly or through his executive assistant, said, 'Sure, I will do my duty as Member for your district and call and find out

about your loan,' and called and found out and told him, I could understand it happening in that circumstance. I do not see anything wrong with that, but I would not expect it to be the normal course of information, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the Premier.

A further question to the Premier. In view of the fact that Eastern Ship Builders have completed three vessels using the laminated wood method of construction and, in view of the fact that two of those three vessels are currently being operated, and according to affidavits from the owners performing well, I wonder if the Premier could tell the House on what basis the Fisheries Loan Board would initiate a freeze on all loan activity involving this particular company?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I cannot tell the House now, Mr. Speaker, because I have no idea, but I will undertake to find out and let the House know.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

My question is to the Premier, as well, Mr. Speaker.

In view of the fact that all

indications point to cuts in the total allowable catch for 1990, thus anticipated plant closures and loss of jobs, and one of the plants continuously mentioned for closing is Gaultois, a plant where Fishery Products International has invested in plant modernization and has had two new trawlers constructed to supply the plant, along with the inshore catch, can the Premier tell the House why this plant would, in light of its economic viability, be rumoured to be a target for closure?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I have no idea why anybody would start rumours. I know of no basis for the rumours, but I cannot tell the hon. gentleman why anybody would start such a rumour.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Since the community depends entirely on Fishery Products International, and because of its geographical location it will not attract new industry - I am sure the Premier is aware of that - will the Premier assure the people of Gaultois that every measure possible will be taken to ensure the community continues to function as a viable fishing community?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I can assure the Province and the people of Gaultois that every

reasonable measure will be taken to ensure that the community continues to function as a viable fishing community. I have no trouble giving that assurance. I cannot guarantee the plant will not close. I cannot guarantee that. That remains to be seen.

MR. LANGDON:

A final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

Since the Premier, then, cannot assure the people of Gaultois that their plant will not be closed, and the people there have few skills other than those associated with the fishery, what will these people have to look forward to in the future in light impending disaster?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, we have a major problem in the fishery. We are not going to cope with it the way the former Government would have coped with it, on an ad hoc basis here and some measure there and some measure somewhere else. We are dealing with this major problem in a systematic and proper way, and that involves developing programs that will achieve two things, depending upon what the need is: It will develop programs that will find some means of providing for continued involvement by communities that have a traditional reliance and involvement in the fisheries, a continued basis for a successful and meaningful involvement in the fisheries in those cases. In other cases, and in cases where

that cannot be achieved, we must find reasonable alternative economic opportunities for the people who will be displaced. Exactly what that will be in the case of any specific community, or whether there will be a plant closure or not in any specific community, I cannot at this moment say, and I really do not believe the hon. Member expects me to.

I think he probably is prepared to accept the explanation that I am giving, that the Government, working jointly with the Federal Government, and here I give credit where credit is due as well, to the Federal Government, for the excellent way in which the Federal Task Force is co-operating with the Provincial Task Force to find solutions to these very difficult problems. There is no way that I, or anybody else, can say what will be the situation or the solution in any given community at this stage.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, my question is also to the Premier. Approximately two years ago, the Government of the day and the Federal Government began land claims negotiations with the Labrador Inuit Association, and I believe since that time, up until April 20, those negotiations were progressing very favourably. Would the Premier now advise if land claims negotiations with the Federal Government and the Labrador Inuit Association are progressing at a satisfactory pace, and is there ongoing

dialogue with the LIA with respect to development within the land claim area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, there is one statement I have to correct. I do not believe it is accurate to suggest that up to April 20 land claims negotiations were progressing very favourably. I do not think that is accurate, but I will find out with precision and let the House know tomorrow what the situation is.

The Province is doing nothing whatsoever to in any manner impede or restrict the negotiations or discussions. As a matter of fact, we are doing everything that can reasonably be done to accommodate and meet with the LIA and continue discussions, but the Province cannot on its own conduct these land claims, there is a major federal involvement.

As a matter of fact, just this morning I was speaking to a Federal Minister involved in these claims and we will be meeting sometime in the first week of December to discuss the whole question of native land claims and the manner of proceeding with respect to native land claims, and I have no doubt the LIA claims will be part of that. But, in the meantime, in recent weeks we have had extensive meetings with representatives of the LIA, here and in Nain, with respect to these discussions.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is to the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy. In view of the fact that what the Premier just said is correct, then why did the Minister of Mines and Energy, on October 4 of this year, 1989, enter into a twenty-five year lease with the Iron Ore Company of Canada for development of the minerals in Strange Lake, which is in the lands claim area?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question under advisement and give my answer later.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

A final supplementary to the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Speaker.

In this lease, of which I will table a copy, it says that the Iron Ore Company signed a lease on Oct 4, under the Minister's signature, for twenty-five years for all minerals in and on this parcel of 769 hectares of land within the claim area. I ask the Minister if there was any dialogue with the Labrador Inuit Association before the Minister signed this particular document with the Iron Ore Company of Canada?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, no, but I will have to

check on that and find out for sure.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have questions for the Premier about the Hughes Commission. The actions of this Government and the words of the Premier indicate ambivalence on the part of the Government, and him in particular, about the Hughes Commission. I would remind Members that in June, when the Government endorsed the Hughes Commission, it deleted from its mandate the power to make recommendations about compensation for victims. The last day I asked the Premier a question about the Hughes Commission in this House, October 30, in replying the Premier likened the TV coverage of the Hughes Commission hearings to a soap opera. Late last week it was revealed to all of us through the news media that the Deputy Minister of Justice, presumably on instructions from the Premier and the Minister, had written the Commission Counsel a most unusual letter instead of having the Minister's views advanced in the correct way, through the Minister's counsel in open hearings, and finally, we understand that the Government has not yet answered the Commission's request for a time extension.

My questions for the Premier are number one: Will the Government grant the Commission's request for a time extension? Number two: Will the Premier make it clear that the Commission will be able to complete its work independently without any interference from Government, and in its own time?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me correct some of the misstatements in the introductory part of the question, Mr. Speaker.

The Provincial Government, when we established the Commission that had been in progress by the former Government, found it necessary to make some changes because what was proposed in the former Order in Council establishing the Commission was inadequate to get at the real problem: It did not provide for a proper examination of the failure of the criminal justice system to respond to this whole question, so we adjusted the Terms of Reference to ensure that that was done. We also removed from it the provision requiring the Commission to make recommendations, or make decisions with respect to the appropriate levels of compensations for alleged victims, because that would be assigning to the Commission the responsibility of another body under the laws of this Province, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. So we took that out of the Commission's mandate and left it where it belongs, with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

The third matter the hon. Member referenced was a letter dated October 27, 1989. It was not in any manner improper, not in any manner sent in an improper way. It was a letter by the Deputy Minister of Justice, carrying out his responsibility as Deputy Minister, to alert counsel who were responsible for the conduct of the investigation and the leading of evidence before the Enquiry to a concern of the Deputy

Minister in his responsibility to supervise the Director of Public Prosecutions in this Province and see that those persons accused of crimes are successfully prosecuted if they are in fact guilty, and that the ability to prosecute them successfully is not prejudiced by any improper action on anybody's part.

Now, the Deputy Minister in the discharge of that responsibility, acting, I should say, with the full knowledge and approval of the Government - I do not want to shift any responsibility to the Deputy Minister. The Deputy Minister acted with the full knowledge and approval of the Government in writing such a letter, and I commend the Deputy Minister for his alertness in identifying this potential problem and in drawing it properly, in a quite proper way, to the attention of the Commission.

So, just correcting those few underlying statements leading up to the question, the first question was, will the government -

MS VERGE:

Grant the request for a time extension?

PREMIER WELLS:

Yes, the Government will grant a request for a time extension that is appropriate.

My recollection of it is that the Commission, itself, was to have provided some further information in order to determine the correct amount of time involved, and up until last week, I believe, that had not been provided. I think we have most of it now, but up until last week, at least, we did not have it. Will we grant a request for an extension? Yes, a request

for an extension is in order.

And the second question?

MS VERGE:

Will he make it clear that Government will allow the Commission to finish its work independently and in its own time?

PREMIER WELLS:

We will make it clear that the Commission will finish its work independently. That is clearly set out in the letter that the Deputy Minister wrote to the Counsel. That is clearly set out, that that has to be done.

In its own time? Do we give it endless time? No. We expect it to be an appropriate amount of time, and it is not going to be just open-ended forever. No, we will expect them to perform within a proper time frame.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, the Premier is good at sophistry. He projects a conviction in what he says, although on reflection what he says does not always make sense. There is no excuse for removing from the Commission's mandate the power to deal with compensation for victims. The Crimes Compensation Board was never set up for this kind of matter. And, number two, if the Department of Justice or the Government had anything to say to the Commission, the proper way to have communicated that would be through the Department's lawyer, the Department's Counsel, who is sitting at the Hughes Inquiry as I speak. The proper course would have been to have the Department's

lawyer make representations on behalf of the Government and the Department in an open way.

My question for the Premier is what does the Premier think the Commission is contributing to our society and to our institutions? Does the Premier personally value the work of the Commission?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

There is such a lead-up that I have to correct that I lose track of the questions. Again, let me correct the lead-ups first. The proper way for the Government to make representation is through the Government's Counsel. I disagree. There is nothing at all improper. That is a method that might be employed, but it is method that would engender adversarial argument before the Commission which I do not see promotes or benefits anything. There is nothing at all improper with the Deputy Minister of Justice, in the discharge of his responsibility, seeing that nothing - nothing - the conduct of commissions or anything else, impairs the proper administration of the criminal law in the Province.

He wrote the two Counsel involved and expressed his concerns, assuring them of the desire to have a full and open public inquiry, but asking the counsel to balance that interest with the interest of ensuring that there would be nothing that would interfere with the proper prosecution of persons alleged to have committed crimes. So there is nothing at all improper. The Member may have an opinion, but that is an opinion that can be

equally as wrong as mine may be. Her opinion does not make it right.

The second point was that there was something wrong with the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board determining compensation in this instance. Well, I remind the hon. Member, who I believe should really know, that whatever was done to those young people who have been giving evidence was a crime, a clear crime, no question about it! It was a criminal offence to treat those people in that way. We have set up a Criminal Injuries Compensation Board to compensate people who suffer the consequences of others perpetrating crimes. That is clearly the proper jurisdiction for them. So, again, the Member can have her opinion if she wishes, but I have no doubt in my own mind that I disagree strongly with the Member's opinion.

Now the question was?

MS VERGE:

Do you value the work of the Commission? What do you think the Commission is contributing to our society and to our institutions?

PREMIER WELLS:

I am hopeful that the Commission will expose the failure of the criminal justice system as it operated under the direction of the former Government; I would hope that they will point out to all of us the failures of the system and the essential nature of maintaining the rule of law in this Province. Because when the rule of law breaks down, as it appears to have broken down under the former Administration, everybody suffers and our system breaks down fully.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Shame! Shame!

PREMIER WELLS:

I am hopeful that Commission will expose that breakdown and will allow the investigators who will provide a basis for the investigators conducting such further investigation as may be necessary, based on the information provided to the Commission, to allow prosecution of those responsible for the failure and the breakdown of criminal justice system. I would hope that they will do that.

I would also hope that they would draw public attention to the horrendous crime of sexual abuse, particularly of younger children, to the absolutely horrendous crime that that is, and ensure that we can provide a means of conducting such further investigation as is necessary to also permit the prosecution of those responsible for the conduct of such crimes.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

Before permitting the hon. Member to carry on with the question, the Chair would like to point out the difficulty we get into if we get into long preambles. Up to this point in time, Question Period was moving very, very fastly, it was very easy for the Chair to identify when the answers had been made. In the last couple of questions I realize the Member is dealing with a complicated issue and wants to make it as clear as possible, but on a couple of occasions, I think even the Premier forgot what the questions were. This does not make for a good Question Period. So would

the Member please try and get to the question quickly?

The hon. the member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you Mr. Speaker. A final Supplementary. Why, then, did the Premier refer to the TV coverage of the Hughes Commission hearings as a Soap Opera?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Because, Mr. Speaker, it seemed that the primary interest, or the primary information was being portrayed on public television. I think it may have been a mistake to have it on public television, the commentary on the detailed evidence of a very sordid activity that affects the individuals who are involved greatly. It creates, unfortunately, a prurient interest in the evidence itself, and it appears as though the constant, full-time display of this on public television has diverted attention away from the primary purpose of the Commission to the display of this kinds of evidence. Such a Commission must be a full, open, public inquiry with the news media present. I am not sure that full-time television is really serving the ends of justice, or serving the people well in these circumstances.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

This question, as well, is for the Premier, Mr. Speaker. The first

promise made by the Premier in the last election campaign was a road from Cape St. George to Mainland - Cap St. George to La Grand Terre. The promise was publicly made and publicly covered. In light of the fact that the road will unite the Francophone culture of the Port au Port Peninsula, will give the area a major boost in tourism, and will rationalize community services and will open the Peninsula for limestone development, is it the intention of the Government to build this road?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Let me correct the underlying misstatements again. The first promise made. We made no such district specific promises at any time during the election campaign.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, no? What about Lab West?

PREMIER WELLS:

The hon. Members do not like it, but they have to live with it. We did not go around to try and buy votes as the former Government did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

We earned the confidence of the people of this Province on the basis of our commitment to fairness and balance and proper management.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having corrected that underlying misstatement, let me also say that Government places a high priority on that road for two reasons, and that priority was given long before the hon. Member rose. As a matter of fact, I explained the priority this

morning to three representatives of the Francophone Association of Newfoundland and Labrador who were in to see me, including Robert Cormier, who lives in Port au Port - I believe he lives in Cap St. George - and I explained to him what the priority was.

Government places a high priority on that road. Government feels it is a road that ought to be done at the earliest possible opportunity for two reasons: It will contribute nothing to the limestone, incidentally, absolutely nothing, not even possible limestone; it will be of no benefit to limestone development on the Port au Port Peninsula whatsoever. What it will do is it will, as the hon. Member said, provide a direct connection between the two substantial French speaking communities on the Port au Port Peninsula, La Grand Terre, or Mainland as it is more commonly called, and Cap St. George. The other benefit it will have is it will enhance the ability to develop tourism on the Port au Port Peninsula by enabling the completion of a circuitous route. It will do nothing for limestone development. So Government places a fairly high priority on it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HODDER:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

The Premier said he made no specific district promises, but CBC were there, the local media were there, and they all reported him as saying he would build a road from Cape St. George to

Mainland. I am glad he seems to be following up.

I will ask just a quick question of the Premier. Would the Premier tell me whether the road will be built through the Trunk Roads program? Is it on the list of the \$235 million Roads for Railway Agreement? Will it be built through that agreement?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

That is being considered, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the new French school which was opened by the Minister of Education last week at Le Grand Terre has from Grades I to V presently, and in view of the fact that the school is supposed to go to Grade IX, which these students will reach in four years time, and after that period they will have to go to school at Cape St. George, which means that within four years the Government will either have to build a new school or have a road built, can the Premier give us some sort of a time frame? It is of some importance, because either we are going to have to put a new school there, or we will have to have the road there in four years time, because that is when the school is finished.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I remind the hon. Member that this is a Liberal Government, not a Tory one. Of course, it is going to be done! Of course, we are not going to take forever to do it!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the hon. the Minister of Health.

I am going back to 1987, when the Federal Government enacted a piece of legislation known as Bill C-22, which, in effect, protected the patent rights of pharmaceutical companies. As a positive consequence of this legislation, a pool of money was set aside for research for medical and related issues. Now, under the formula, the Government of Newfoundland has received a share of this funding, which will total about \$2.5 million in four years. It has already received \$1,200,000. To date, not one cent of this money has been disbursed for the intended purpose and my question is, could the Minister of Health indicate what has been done with the money and what is Government's intention with regard to the allocation of these funds?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for her question. Being such a progressive Member, I do

not see how she can sit with those dinosaurs over there. But I do appreciate her question.

She is absolutely right, Mr. Speaker. The money has been coming into the Province. She will be pleased to know that the money is held in trust - as a matter of fact, it is even collecting a little bit of interest - and it will be used for the purpose for which it is intended, to do reasearch.

AN HON. MEMBER:
What year?

MR. DECKER:
It will be used as soon as we can bring it around. Not a cent of the money is being wasted. It is collecting interest, and it will be used for its purpose.

MS DUFF:
A supplementary.

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

MS DUFF:
In view of the fact that there are all kinds of compentent, even world-class researchers in this Province, at the Medical School, at the Pharmacy School and the School of Nursing, and they are desperately in need of funding to address extremely important health issues in this Province, and in view of the fact that the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology recommended to Government ten months ago the establishment of a foundation to establish criteria and allocating this funding, what has taken so long? I mean, it is lovely to have interest being collected, but, in the meantime, people may be dying for lack of appropriate research. So, when is the

Government intending to get on with it, and take that money and spend it for the purpose it was intended?

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

MR. DECKER:
Mr. Speaker, the hon. Member is right. There are lots of groups in this Province who could use that money. I only wish we had ten times that amount to give out to those people for research. I tell the Member that we are seriously considering the whole thing. We are not going to rush in with a crisis management thing, we are going to do a well-reasoned, thought-out, balanced approach. And when we make the decision, with the little bit of money we have, we are hoping to put it where the need is greatest, where it can give the best return to our people. I am sure the hon. Member, in her usual understanding way - she should be a Liberal; she should be over here - will understand that that is the proper approach to take with this, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:
A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
A half a minute. The hon. the Member for St. John's East.

MS DUFF:
That does not tell us when. Government is already in possession of recommendations from an Advisory Committee. Has the Research Foundation, as recommended ten months ago, in fact, been established?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Health.

Notices of Motion

MR. DECKER:

Mr. Speaker, it is not fair for me to say it will be done tomorrow or the next day, but it will be done within a reasonable time. When the decision is made, I am sure the hon. Member will be praising us and commending us for the sensible, rational way we did it. But I can tell her that it will not be unduly delayed. The money will be put in place. There might be some delay, but when the decision is made it will be a good one, and I am sure the hon. Member will be one of the happiest people in this Province, to see that it is well spent.

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

I think it appropriate to comment on a couple of matters that arose so that hon. Members will know how to deal with these things more effectively in the future. Our Standing Orders state, "In putting any oral questions, no argument or opinion is to be offered nor any facts stated except so far as may be necessary to explain the same; and in answering any such question, the Minister is not to debate the matter to which it refers."

I just again remind hon. Members that a question ought to be a question, precisely that. When hon. Members embellish their questions with opinion and argument, in other words, when they kick some sand in somebody's face, then, I suppose, it is almost appropriate for the Minister to try and do likewise. But we hope that it does not happen on either side.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Education (Teacher Pensions) Act."

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Local Roads Boards Act."

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Development.

MR. FUREY:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Freedom Of Information Act."

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act to Amend the Education (Teacher Training) Act."

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Mines and

Energy.

DR. GIBBONS:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Mineral Act, 1976."

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend The Mining Grant (Number 11) Conveyance of Minerals Act, 1966."

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Pleasantville.

MR. NOEL:

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Meech Lake Accord is unacceptable in its present form and it is in the best interest of the Province that changes be made; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada as presently constituted has failed to devise means of significantly reducing levels of economic disparity between provinces; and

WHEREAS Senate reform is essential if the economic disparity under which Newfoundland and Labrador has been suffering is ever to be corrected; and

WHEREAS at the recent First Ministers' Conference the hon. the Premier expressed this Province's position on these matters but in order to facilitate future discussion undertook not to seek rescission of this House's approval of the Meech Lake Accord at this time provided no steps are taken to implement the Accord in the

meantime;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House affirm its support for the positions enunciated by the hon. the Premier at the recent First Ministers' Conference.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Petitions

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

MR. HEWLETT:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition from approximately 105 citizens of the community of Little Bay in Green Bay.

We the undersigned residents of the community of Little Bay, Green Bay District, feel that the Department of Municipal Affairs should have allocated to the community council funding for our water and sewer system. Our system is already started and we see no reason why funding could not have been approved in order to complete it. We, although only a small community, are only expecting equal treatment like our next door community. I might indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the community next door is Deep Side which is the one community in Green Bay that got some water and sewer money this year.

Little Bay is a small community but it has been an active community way back in the eighteen hundreds as a copper mining community in Green Bay. There is a water system in the ground in Little Bay but unfortunately it is decades and decades old, made of cast iron pipe and the thing is

disintegrating. The council recently spent approximately \$6000 just to repair leaks in the existing system. Unlike the community of Port Anson in Green Bay which needs technical assistance to find out exactly what is wrong with their water system, the people from Little Bay know that there is a problem with a deteriorating system and a new system has been started. Nearby Beachside got funding and, I suppose, it is very frustrating for a community next door not to get appropriate funding as well.

When I first sought office in Green Bay, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I indicated I would probably have to overcome, even if I were on the Government side after the election, was a notion that because Brian Peckford was the Member that everything in Green Bay has been done. Unfortunately, prior to Mr. Peckford there were twenty-three years of Liberal Government Members in Green Bay where minimal progress was made. I think former Premier Smallwood paved the piece of road into Springdale and that was about the extent of major capital works in Green Bay for some twenty-odd years. As a matter of interest Beachside has a water system under construction, Little Bay has one under construction, Rattling Brook has one under construction, Port Anson has one under construction, Long Island has one under construction, Little Bay Islands has one under construction and Brighton has one under construction.

The people of Little Bay are not alone in Green Bay in their need for water and sewer facilities, Mr. Speaker, so I ask that this petition be put on the table of the House and referred to the

Minister and the Department to which it pertains.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, indeed I am aware of the needs in the Member's community. I have met with him on many occasions with councils present from his District. No doubt this is a very serious concern on the part of Little Bay and this petition reflects that. The Member will know, of course, that we are in the process of examining our capital works, water and sewer, and roads, for 1990 work, and that will be announced shortly. The priorities will be established as soon as we hear from the regional offices. I have been encouraging councils, as the Members will know, to have dialogue with the regional offices to see that the people situated there are well aware of the problems throughout the Island and all the communities affected in any given District. I would assume that that has been done in this case and that the regional people are aware of these problems.

The priorities will be established, eventually, initially, of course, by the regional offices and then eventually by the Department itself and consideration given to environment and health as the two major areas of concern. In fact, whether or not the projects have been started, as you have identified in some of the communities involved, the fact that a project is started means something as far as the rankings are concerned.

I appreciate the Members bringing this petition forward and I can assure him that it will be seriously considered in the capital works this year.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to take a minute or so to speak in support of this petition, so ably presented by my colleague for Green Bay (Mr. Hewlett) on behalf of 105 residents of Little Bay, seeking the completion of their water and sewer system in that particular community. I think the tabling of the petition itself is timely. In view of the Minister's comments here in this House and on previous occasions that the Government will be moving early this year - a move, by the way, for which I commend the Government - to make final decisions on water and sewer work for next year, so that approvals can be given this fall and hopefully tenders called, so that work can get underway without any unnecessary time lag in the spring.

The Member pointed out, Mr. Speaker, in presenting his petition, that this a community that has had a long industrial history which is rather unique in rural Newfoundland and Labrador, but a long industrial history relating to mining activity going back several decades. And this community did, in fact, have those services, not provided by Government, any Government, but provided by the mining company of the day. And that the residents of that community now find themselves in a rather unique situation, not a situation where they are looking for those

services for the first time or where they have had to use their own initiative over the last several years to find ways to provide those services themselves, but a community similar to Tilt Cove in my District that for decades and decades had those services and now find that because the community is small, the industry is disappeared, the service is beginning to break down, yet the community is there as a viable community, and the service needs to be upgraded and, I suppose, in this case perhaps a new service provided.

So I comment the case of this particular community to the Minister and hope that as he is making final decisions over the next two, three or four weeks, whatever it is that the people of Little Bay will find themselves on the Minister's priority list.

Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Order 14, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 14.

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

I believe the Member for Kilbride had temporarily yielded to the Premier, and the Premier has said on Friday that he would like to make a couple of more remarks to the debate - I believe that is what he said. But I want to understand that the Member for Kilbride had just temporarily yielded to the Premier without impunity.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

I agree, Mr. Speaker, and I think I have said everything I need to say and I will sit down now.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to have a couple of remarks on this Bill. As I said Friday, when I was just about to start, I did spend some time in the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing at the time. I have spent some time in Cabinet watching other Ministers of that Department and how they met the demands on their time, mostly by councils, in particular, wanting to see the Minister. They could obviously arrange meetings with people in their areas, their local district public servant staff, they could arrange them any time and the staff were very co-operative. They could even arrange, fairly regularly, meetings with the assistant deputy ministers and the deputy ministers. But the people in the communities, as I served there and the Ministers before me, do not feel completely satisfied that their concerns are being heard by Government until they get to the Minister. Until they have their few minutes with the Minister.

Now with the size of the Department that we have now, Municipal and Provincial Affairs, it is definitely impossible for the Minister to see the council members who would wish to get to see him. He cannot see the community recreation groups, who also have the same fear, that if they do not get to the Minister,

and if there Member cannot arrange a meeting with the Minister, their concerns will not be heard by Government and it will not get to the Cabinet table. He cannot possibly meet with all of these people because there is not enough time. The Department is too big to be handled in the way that the people in this Province are accustomed to have access to their Ministers. It is not fair to these people who, especially the people who are elected to councils, who have a tough enough job as it is. The people who are elected to recreation associations throughout the Province, and they have a tough job too because there is never enough money to go around for any of these councils and groups.

I just want to say my concern is that the Department is completely unmanageable for one Minister to look after because it is way too big. It would be better, if the Premier did not want to expand his Cabinet, to take some of the functions away from that Department and give it to other Departments. The Department of Labour maybe could handle some more. It is not a huge Department. It has a fairly competent Minister. I am sure could handle some of the duties of Municipal Affairs. Even the Department of Mines and Energy is not an overly onerous Department, and we have an expert in that Department a man who was aware of what goes on in the Department because he worked there. But I still say that the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs is much too big for a Minister to handle. Again I say it is not fair to elected councilors around this Province and the people around this Province who have to deal with him. He cannot get to

see all the cultural groups, all the recreation groups, all the municipal councils in his mandate, seeing that they are only going to be here for three years anyway, and then they will be gone. So he will have not a chance to see very many of the people who he will have to deal with.

Especially the Minister of Finance, he is not going to be here very long, especially when the people over in National Sea see the way he voted on the Motion last week. He is going to be in bigger trouble because he does not realize how many people living in his District do work with National Sea, and it is a very important industry to this Province. They will know which way we voted, and all Members of this House will see what the union will be distributing around their plants within the next couple of days.

Mr. Speaker, the election delays. We spoke on that before. I am not going to mention it too much, but the concern that I have on election delays is the silence of the Members across the floor, from St. John's. Not a city Member from across that floor has gotten up and spoken on the election delays, whether they are for for against it, or on amalgamation. They are not allowed to say a word on it. They are muzzled. They are not allowed to say a word about it until the Premier tells them it is okay.

The Member for Pleasantville especially, I am very surprised that he has not had something to say, because he does not agree with four year terms in council. I do not know how he agrees with a five year term, but he too has been muzzled and he cannot say what is on his mind, so I guess he

will have to answer to his electorate the next time.

One comment that the Premier made Friday, which frightens me, it is certainly the most undemocratic comment that I have ever heard in this House of Assembly. He says whether the people of Grand Falls and Windsor like it or not, if they do not amalgamate, if they do not do what he and his Minister wants, he is going to take the commercial and industrial base money from the community that has developed it, and spread it over an area between Grand Falls and Windsor. If that is in his mind, what is wrong with Botwood, Badger, Bishop's Falls, do they not also deserve some of this money, if it is going to be? What is wrong with taking all of the industrial and commercial monies in this Province, if he is going to do that, and spread it around the whole Province? Maybe every council should lose their industrial and commercial tax base. If he wants to put his theory on Grand Falls - Windsor into practice, he should do it provincially, and take all the industrial and commercial taxes from all the communities and put it in one kitty and distribute it completely around the Province.

PREMIER WELLS:

It is not necessary in Corner Brook.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Is it necessary for the Bay of Islands, the District that you represent, do they have problems out there in raising money for their tax base? Cox's Cove, has very desperate time in raising money, they have a very poor tax base. Irishtown has a very bad tax base, they do not have enough money to provide the services for

their needs.

It does not matter with your theory if you are going to do it for Grand Falls - Windsor, if you take that thesis further on you should do it for the whole Province. And what is wrong with Bishop's Falls in just the central area?

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is only ten miles away. Should they not have some of the -

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The Premier does not want to consider. He got himself in a bind out there a couple of years ago, when he was in a by-election, and he has to somehow get out of that bind. He promised them that he would amalgamate them and -

MS VERGE:

I did not think he made any promises.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

He made a promise when I was out there campaigning, and unfortunately he made enough promises because he got elected out there. I could not defeat him at that time. It was only the Member for Humber East (Ms Verge) who could defeat him in a Provincial election.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That was a by-election.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Yes, that is another election, is right.

One other thing that the Premier did say Friday and it is ironic, I suppose. It is an indication of the way the Premier thinks. He was talking about reducing the size of the Provincial Cabinet. And I do not disagree that he did

a right thing by reducing it from what it was two years ago.

MR. WINDSOR:

He could reduce it a couple of more, too.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

I think it was probably more correct the way the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout) had it, about nineteen people. It probably would be more manageable with nineteen Cabinet ministers. But he did suggest that he compared the running of the Government of Newfoundland to the running of the United States, in his saying that the United States is governed by seventeen Cabinet Ministers. And that is not as far-fetched a comparison as one might think, because each of those Cabinet Ministers in the United States are appointed by the President. They are not an elected people. And in this Province we are now moving towards that type of philosophy where we have five, non-elected Cabinet Ministers running the economics of this Province.

MR. MATTHEWS:

The hon. Douglas House is running the Province.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Number two in the Province, the Premier-elect, Doug House.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Number one.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Well no the Premier will never admit that he is number one, but he has number one power, I guess.

But I just found this a bit strange that the hon. the Premier would compare our Province to the United States and have a

non-elected Cabinet, which we seem to be moving towards in this Province with our Economic Recovery Commission. They have as much power as any of the Ministers in this Province. They have a free hand to do what they like, it seems to me.

Now when we get the Bill in front of us maybe this will be all cleared up, but we do not know much about it yet. We are assuming that Doug House is given the powers that the media seems to think he has, and the Rural Development Association thought he had, until they spoke to him this weekend. He did not make a great impression at the Rural Development meetings this weekend. He spoke his thesis of his -

MR. MATTHEWS:

He speaks down at people.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

The thesis of his whole speech this year was tourism and his main point was that he and his wife made a trip up the Northern Peninsula and saw a sign there, for one of the communities is the fishing capital of the world, and he could not get any fish and the washrooms he used were not fit to go into and this type of comment, which was not what was necessary at a Rural Development meeting. If the services in this Province need to be improved, and they can be improved more, that is not the place to tell them. These people were looking for some direction of how they should operate in the next few years, and how Dr. House is going to provide them with the resources and the material that they need, and they were sadly disappointed to hear his speech this weekend.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Give it to them, boy.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

I think this Bill is pretty well - there is not much to the Bill anyway. I just wanted to make a couple of points on the size of the Department. The legislation that has been given to us to date has been fairly minor. It is mostly name changes. And I only wanted to comment on this Municipal Affairs because I did have some experience in the Department, and I was worried that I could do an adequate job and I never shied away from work and I never minded how many hours I worked in a day. But I was very nervous that I could do an adequate job when I had Municipal Affairs and Housing, because I knew the task that was in front of me from other Ministers. I wish the Minister well and I hope he can do the job, because it is probably the most important Department that we have in this Province. We are not going to develop until we get municipal infrastructure in good shape in this Province, and municipal infrastructure is probably one of the most important development tools that we are going to use in the next five or six years in this Province.

So with all the rest of the responsibilities, I am afraid that the Minister is going to have a pretty big job in trying to solve the problems that we have, all of the places, not only the smaller rural areas. Most people do not realize that there are areas within the City of St. John's that do not have water and sewer. There are areas that cannot develop because they do not have the proper water pressure. The most valuable piece of property in

the City of St. John's now is the Kenmount Road, and it is hamstrung, it cannot develop. It needs a mass infusion of funds right now to get the services in place so that that area can develop properly. It is probably one of the most important industrial areas to be developed around the Province, or certainly in this part of the Province. Areas in my own district of Kilbride do not have water and sewer services. In this day and age, the 20th Century, 1989 going into 1990, there is water being delivered in trucks to homes in Mackinsons and in the City of St. John's. It happens in St. John's South, in Kilbride, and in Mount Scio District, and most people do not realize that. It is not only the rural areas of this Province that need money for infrastructure. The water being delivered is one problem that is embarrassing to the people who have to take the service, but there is a bigger problem in some parts of the city with what is taken back from those houses. It is embarrassing to the people to have to have their 'honey buckets', as they are referred to, taken away from their doors every day, and that happens within the City of St. John's also.

I know the Minister will work hard in his Department, but I think he has an impossible task to try to solve all the needs of that Department. Culture is going to have to suffer, or Municipal Affairs, or Housing is going to have to suffer. One of these very important areas in his Department will not receive the attention it deserves. And I think as they move along in the next year or so, as the Premier sees how things are working, he will probably revise that Department, and, if not

expand his Cabinet, take some of the duties and put them into smaller Departments. In the Department of Finance, the Minister has very little to do, it is all done by public servants, so you could put a lot into his Department.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do have a concern about the size of the Department and I just want to make that known to the Minister and to the Premier. Thank you.

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, this Bill, relating to the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, did come before the Legislative Review Committee, of which I am a member. On the surface, it is certainly a housekeeping Bill, which is required to, I suppose, make legal the amalgamation of responsibilities that took place under the Government restructuring plan. As such, it should not have required the two and one-half days of debate it has received. However, I think a lot of the discussion in terms of debate has been centered around, not the words of the Bill, but the fact of the restructuring, and there is some very real concern, which I share, about the effect of the Government's restructuring plan on this particular Department.

It seems that it was done in an effort to keep the election promise to have the fourteen plus one Cabinet - I do not know why fourteen is a magic number here - and when they got to the end of

deciding who would go with what, there were certain things left over and they were all lumped into this catch-all Department that was going to be called the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

I fail to see the logic, or in what way it can actually benefit the divisions that have been lumped together, in some respects, or benefit the people who depend very heavily on those divisions to service their very legitimate needs and concerns.

I think it has been said in this House a couple of times, that many times the solutions we seem to see to policy issues are 1960s solutions. That one is particularly evident in this Bill. I remember well, in the 1960s, there was a Department which, at that point, was called the Department of Provincial Affairs. The only thing missing is that at that point, it did not have direct responsibility for The Municipalities Act. But you did have a lot of these issues, culture, heritage, communications, and certain other things there.

The difference, when you are looking at applying a 1960s solution to a 1990s reality, is that the situation has changed greatly. At the present time, you have, first of all, many, many more municipalities than there were at that time, and they are much more demanding than they were. But, in the recreation area alone, you now have recreation committees across the Province, who are used to having their needs addressed, who have a tremendous number of expectations, who want to see their Minister and feel that they need an ear. Whole areas related to recreation that

have nothing to do with the recreational committees that are community based, but have to do with such things as policy on the training and development of elite athletes, or recreation as non-competitive uses that are very needed in terms of the general health and welfare of the population, so that area has expanded greatly since the sixties. You could make, stretching the imagination, some logic to having recreation, perhaps, linked in with a Municipal Department, provided you had sufficient staffing and funding to deal with it. Housing is another area where the needs have expanded, expectations have expanded, and the need for a Minister's time, attention, and knowledge, is getting more and more important.

I will deal a little more with housing later on in my remarks. It is interesting to see how the Minister himself has done an after the fact rationalization of this particular restructuring which, in my mind, is nothing more than an attempt by Government to put all the things it did not place a very high priority on, together in this grab bag Department. The Minister in his remarks, when he first introduced the Bill, says it is obvious that the Government's intent with my ministry was to incorporate all Departments that had dealings with the communities throughout the Province. In fact, I can say that the ministry is functioning very well.

Now, the Minister seems to have a very geographic perspective on his mandate, and it was very evident when he took a map and decided that a community should annex with another community simply because it had a similar or adjacent

boundary. In this case he is looking at a community geographically, and just because something is in a community he seems to feel it should also be in his Department. It is a wonder, in fact, that on that same logic that he has placed culture and historic resources on, the basis that they take place in communities within his Department, that he has not also tried to take over the Department of Health and the Department of Education and then we could be down to a twelve Member Cabinet which would be even leaner and more efficient, because there is about as much relationship to the geography of the location of a cultural centre, or a hospital, the same logic would do for both. In fact the dealings, as the Minister well knows from his years in municipal government, municipalities do not have any clear mandate, or funding, or responsibility for things related to cultural heritage in this Province. They have an importance to this Province that goes beyond their geographic community boundaries, and therefore need the kind of attention that they will not get if all they are thought about is just one other thing that takes place in a community.

It was also interesting listening to the hon. Member for Exploits (Mr. Dumaresque) talking about how wonderful this one-stop shopping is when he comes in with delegations from his community. What he says is that, with relation to the Bill, I think we will finally see the legitimate combination of all things related to municipalities placed back where they should be. The only thing I can say to that is that the Minister has an absolutely woeful ignorance of the function

and mandate of municipalities, if he thinks that everything that is in this Department, that we are discussing today, in fact is related to a municipal mandate or that municipal councils, in fact, would need to deal with a Minister of Municipal Affairs in order to have them addressed. The co-ordination is one thing but I thought that is what Cabinet was for. Where obviously there is going to be co-ordination needed on all kinds of issues, and that Members of Cabinet do discuss areas that need co-ordination. If we drew this whole thing to its logical conclusion, I think, we would end up with only the Premier, and then everybody could go to the Premier about all their problems and he could solve them.

The point of all this is that you can have one-stop shopping, but if the manager of the shop is too busy to see you, it is not going to do you much good, and, I think, this in fact is what is happening and what is going to happen increasingly, as this Minister becomes more and burdened with trying to solve some of the problems in this very huge Department that he has been given responsibility for. He is a very fine Minister. He is a former colleague of mine and I know, this is compliment day in the House of Assembly, that he is conscientious, he was always a councilor who was willing to serve on committees, and -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Who him?

MS DUFF:

Yes, I mean him.

I do not doubt that his heart is in the right place and he is man of great energy and conviction,

but he is not superman. And I presume he has to sleep eight hours a night, or maybe not eight hours, maybe he only needs six hours. He occasionally has to eat. There will be times when his wife and children might want to see him, so he cannot spend twenty-four hours a day in his Department. The reality of the situation is, that if 310 community councils want to come in with delegations to talk to him, followed immediately by the almost 200 recreation councils, followed on their heels by all the communities that have housing concerns, and the arts groups and the heritage groups, and the fire brigades and the voluntary fire departments, there is no way that this Minister is going to be able to deal with their concerns properly.

Now I realize that he has been doing a yeoman's job in trying to see as many as he can, trying to be in as many places as he can, and trying to listen. But after listening, you have to do something about it. You have to, first of all, listen to people's concerns, then you have to begin to understand what they are talking about, and when it is an area that you are not necessarily familiar with, and in this case I think the Minister is more familiar with his municipal part of his mandate than he is with the other areas, he has to go some backgrounding. He has to do some reading. He has to do some talking with his bureaucrats, and at some point, hopefully, he is going to be able to come up with some creative, new policy initiatives, and give some direction to the areas in this Department which are in desperate need of that kind of creativity. I do not see how this can be done

when the person concerned has about six separate areas. There is just not time enough in one day to do it.

To touch specifically on some of the areas within this wonderful potpourri Department that we are discussing today. If you simply want to take the area of housing, where the Minister is responsible for a very major and very important Crown Corporation, the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. I think the Member for Exploits made a great point of talking about the people who needed housing, that is not all that Corporation does. It is the main financer and provider of Government assisted housing in the Province. It also has under its mandate, the Government's main land banking agency, and a development agency in terms of market housing and industrial parks.

On the social housing side alone, regularly as with all Government areas, there are meetings at the Federal level with Ministers responsible for a given area, whether it be finance, education, housing, or whatever. I think the Minister must be aware, or at least I certainly hope that he is aware, that at the Federal level there have been major policy shifts since 1986, which stand to impact very seriously on Newfoundland, in terms of the funding allocation that we will receive, and in terms of some of the policy objectives of the Federal Government, which are not necessarily in line with the needs of this Province. When this Minister goes to a Federal or a Provincial Ministers Conference to try and deal with these housing issues, he has to be up to speed. He has got to know the intent and

nature of those Federal policy changes. He has to have a very in-depth understanding of the history of the development of housing at the federal level, and he also has to have an in-depth understanding of what is happening in this Province. Because, if he does not, those Provinces like New Brunswick or Ontario or British Columbia, which have Ministers of Housing period, and who are totally up to speed, are going to bomb him out of the water. He is just not going to be able to represent our Province as strongly as he should. Not that he could not, but again it is a matter of time. If he has not got the time to read, has not got the time to discuss policy, has not got the time to background himself or focus on this particular area of his mandate, then there is no way he can play on the team effectively.

Another really serious concern that I have about this amalgamation of divisions, if you like, is in the area of culture and heritage, which I feel and I know from talking to many people who I have dealt with in this area, and with the cultural groups and the heritage groups, they feel that their concerns have absolutely been buried as no name divisions in a grab bag, a holding tank Department. What in fact has been happening, is that some of the long-standing concerns in this area are not being addressed. I have received complaints from a number of groups and individuals that their letters are not being returned, that they cannot get in touch with the Minister, and that is understandable, I do not even intend that to be a criticism of the Minister, because the Minister is so focussed on the Municipal Affairs aspect of his Department

and on this major, major issue that he has laid on the table of amalgamation, that, that is going to have to be the focus of his intention over the next year, possibly over two years, and if the situation is bad now, what is going to happen when the forty five feasibility studies from the amalgamation scenario come on the Minister's desk. He is going to have to start making some extremely tough decisions and start this whole process of consultation and review that he has committed to, on the municipal level, where are issues like Housing and Heritage and Culture and Recreation going to find themselves then. And that is a very serious concern, because I think historically, and I have to say this, to some extent critically of every Government in this Province since Confederation, back to the Smallwood years, the Moores years, the Peckford years, have never really given the level of priority and commitment and attention to Culture and Heritage, in particular, that these areas deserve. I think people forget that with Heritage resources in particular, you are dealing with a non renewable resource, even more fragile than Mineral resources, which at least if you leave them in the ground, are going to be there in ten or twenty years time when you try to do something about them. Where you are dealing with our Heritage resources, particularly the built environment, and you talk about historic structures, historic buildings, archaeological digs and things of that nature, they will not be there, and, in fact, every single year we are losing, in every part of this Province, we are losing priceless historic structures which will never be able to be replaced, and unless

something is done fairly soon to focus on this, to inventory them, to fund that Department and to bring in some new creative policy initiatives, Newfoundland can stop talking about itself and advertising itself as an historic Province, because it is all going to be a big joke. Now one of the initiatives that the immediately previous Government took in its unfortunately short mandate, was to address that area, and I think it is probably the first Government in the history of Newfoundland since Confederation to recognize the very important linkage between Tourism, Culture and Heritage. What we are doing in this Province is trying to develop a Tourism industry which, in my view, is extremely important, but it has to be based on something, you cannot just market to people and tell them come over, take that extra time, take that extra cost and put up with it, perhaps with not so ideal weather conditions, unless they are coming for something, and most of the studies that I have seen, and I have seen a lot of them over the last five or six years, have pointed out more and more clearly, that Newfoundland's positioning in the Tourism market place is very dependent on its unique experience that it offers people, and that experience has a tremendous amount to do with culture and with heritage and this is going completely unrecognized. There is no recognition whatsoever of the important economic linkage between Tourism and Culture and Heritage in this mandate, and I view that as a very, very serious lost opportunity, and you know it is not something that we can rectify in ten years time because I think in some cases it is an opportunity that will not come back. I do not want to belabour this anymore but

I am speaking in this instance in this debate from an absolute conviction that this Department was an absolute victim of the Government's restructuring plan, more than almost any other of the forced marriages that took place, this Department in particular, is one that does not make sense. It will not function and I will make you a bet, if you are allowed to make bets in the House of Assembly, that within a year we will see a dis-amalgamation of this Department into something that makes better sense than what we have now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MS DUFF:

Could not take the heat, he got out of the kitchen.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WALSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity to listen over the past number of days to many comments concerning the amalgamation, I suppose, as it has been referred to of this particular Department. And somewhat objecting to the fact, I guess, after the last number of days about the fact that we who represent segments of St. John's have been reluctant to speak on behalf of this particular proposal.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that to that comment I am the one with the reputation of being the muzzler, and I have no problem of standing up here and defending

exactly what we are doing. Over the last number of days there have been comments like, you cannot operate under a one stop shop concept, you must be able to see the Minister regardless of what it is you are looking to do, or what it is you want to do or what somebody else wants to do with the Province. Mr. Speaker, when I go to a grocery store, I certainly do not need to see the manager to buy my cereal or something else. There are time that I think that the previous Government with twenty-three Members in their Cabinet, had nothing else to do but to cater to every whim and fancy of anyone in the Province. They were looking for excuses to hire more Executive Assistants, more secretaries, passing out more vehicles and more cars.

Mr. Speaker, there is no real objection to the fact that it could be possible that absolutely one Member and one Minister could manage more than seven or eight of those collectively. I make no apologies. I am proud of the fact that our Minister is able to do that, and that he can do the job of four or five of the Members in the previous Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WALSH:

There is absolutely nothing wrong with streamlining, when you are looking to streamline for the purposes of saving money, eliminating the unnecessary Ministers and staff that existed. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. It is an opportunity for us to get a better look at where Government can go, and I think as opposed to looking a year from now of this Department being broken down again, certainly not,

Mr. Speaker. I think that what you will find is that we will see in twelve months from now how positive the move was, and how important it was to consolodate some of these efforts. I have absolutely no problem with standing as a Member, who represents a portion of St. John's and the surrounding area, to say that I have absolutely, again, no problem with the consolodation that is taking place.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to belabour it or carry it any further, or take up any unnecessary time, but let me simply say that twelve months from now will show that the Minister is more than capable of handling the portfolio. We do not need, as in the past, a Minister to be responsible for the Floral Emblem Act or a Minister responsible for the Mineral Emblem Act. This Minister can handle a lot of the duties that it took four or five from the other side to handle just six months ago. Super Minister, yes, maybe if we could get a little curl in front of his head we can call him Clark Kent because he has the capabilities of handling more than one job at one time. And he is not reluctant to rely on his staff. He is not reluctant to depend on the people that are being paid good salaries to carry out functions in their own Department.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have no apologies for what we are doing in that particular context as a Government, and I am quite confident that our Minister can handle the job and handle it very well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WALSH:

I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. He ruined it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First let me say that we had been prepared to let this particular Bill pass after our colleague from St. John's East had spoken. The Minister was not in his place and the worst possible filler that could have been chosen on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

- was chosen to step into the breach and make sure that this Bill will probably not pass this day, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

And if there is any problem with the Governments legislative agenda not moving through this House, Mr. Speaker, it is the problem with the hon. gentlemen from Mount Scio - Bell Island.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to hear the hon. gentleman just talk about how proud of the fact that he was that there was only thirteen or fourteen Ministers in the Cabinet, Mr. Speaker, makes one almost want to chuckle, because if you could have heard or met or ran into that hon. gentleman in the corridors in the bowels of this building a couple of days after the Cabinet was announced, Mr. Speaker, you would have heard quite a different

story. So, I mean, I just cannot let it go unchallenged, Mr. Speaker. That hon. gentleman preferred to have all thirty-one in the Cabinet if he could have gotten in himself, Mr. Speaker, not just twelve or thirteen or fourteen. But now he has got to get in by snooping, he has got to get in by keeping his eye on other Members, Mr. Speaker, he has got to get in by reporting, by filling out the report card daily, by presenting it to the emperor on Fridays and making sure that the Leader knows at all times what is happening in the back benches.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman was on his feet long enough to ensure that there are certain other points that should be made on this particular Bill. I know that some of them have been made before, but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, and it is not the Department of Municipal Affairs or any Department of Government, Mr. Speaker, cannot be compared to a grocery store. I mean the foolishness announced by the hon. gentleman. You go into the grocery store and you look for a pack of rice crispies or a pack of corn flakes, you can make your own decision. You have the money in your pocket, Mr. Speaker, you have the money in your pocket to make the purchase. But the 300 and some odd municipalities in this Province that need to dialogue with the Minister do not always have the money in their pocket, Mr. Speaker, that is the difference. They would not be talking to them, they would not want to see him.

And actually what is taking place here with the amalgamation of the whole range of Government responsibilities under the Department of Municipal and

Provincial Affairs, means that there are hundreds and hundreds of communities, Mr. Speaker, who will never have a chance again to bend the ear of the Minister and to directly plea with the Minister about their particular needs. And the Minister, Mr. Speaker, is there to listen to not -

AN HON. MEMBER:

No reflection on him.

MR. RIDEOUT:

No reflection on the individual, none on the individual. He means well, he does well. I have a great deal of respect and confidence in the Minister. But the Minister has been saddled with so much responsibility that no one individual - to use the Premier's favorite phrase - can discharge that responsibility properly. There is just too much - the Minister is the Minister of miscellaneous - everything but the kitchen sink, Mr. Speaker, has been thrown into the Department that he is responsible for. Provincial Affairs, Municipal Affairs, Housing, Cultural Affairs, Recreation. Mr. Speaker, you just name it and it is all into that particular Department. And it impacts on the lives of thousands of people in hundreds of communities. So therefore there is no way that this particular Minister will be able to discharge in a reasonable fashion in my view, the responsibilities that has been given to him.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am all for, and have said publicly, and in fact I guess lead the way in a sense of reducing the size of the Cabinet in this Province. I inherited a Cabinet of twenty-three Ministers, and I reduced that to eighteen Ministers including the Premier, which was

nineteen. The present Premier has reduced it to twelve plus one which is - fourteen plus one which is fifteen. And I applaud that, Mr. Speaker, but I do believe that there are certain combinations, and this particular Bill relates to one of them which is unworkable, it is unreasonable and it is unmanageable. There is just too much responsibility in too vital areas, Mr. Speaker, for this Minister to have the time to be able to respond to the needs of all the communities in rural Newfoundland and Labrador. He is not able to respond to all of the needs of the people in the recreation field, he is not able to respond to the needs of people in the cultural areas, he is not able to respond to the people in areas of fitness and so on. So this Minister, I do not, you know I do not say lightly because I pity him in many respects Mr. Speaker, this Minister has more than any one person can be expected to do. It was alright, it might even work if you are only dealing with a hundred municipalities maybe, maybe only half a dozen sport and recreation groups, maybe that is the reason for it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is why he is trying to reduce the number.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Stay tuned, yes, we will stay tuned. Maybe that is the reason why he tried to force a hundred and seventeen municipalities into forty one units, or whatever it is, to make his own job easier, Mr. Speaker, but, Mr. Speaker, making one's own job easier is not necessarily the purpose of Government. The purpose of Government is to respond to the needs of people wherever they are

in their own communities and in their own organizations and despite what the filler, the hon. the filler for Mt. Scio - Bell Island had to say Mr. Speaker, this combination is not going to work, and I suspect that before long, before long, the hon. gentleman for Mount Scio - Bell Island will have another opportunity, he might have another opportunity, so maybe he should stay tuned Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

I will remind hon. Members that once the Minister for Municipal and Provincial Affairs speaks he will close the debate.

I recognize the Minister for Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Bill, of course, deals with the new Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs and the fact that several previous Departments are now becoming part of the newly formed Ministry. It is interesting to note that many of the comments throughout this debate, if not most of the comments, have centered around amalgamation and the process of amalgamation, the feasibility studies and the hearings that have started, and that focus of course is an important one and speaks to the need for integration of the various components within the municipality. It is interesting to hear the Deputy Mayor, the former Deputy Mayor, I should say, existing Deputy Mayor, that is right, the Member for St. John's East, talk about how parts of my Ministry do not really fit within municipal life I think she said, and I believe she was trying to quote me in the fact that I made comment about all parts of the

Ministry, in fact being very important to the municipalities throughout the Province, and I fail to see her logic when she talks about cultural affairs, not necessarily being a vital and vibrant component of a given municipality. I would like to suggest that cultural affairs and youth, historic properties and museums, archives and so on, are very much a part of our municipal life and indeed many parts of our Province rely to a very large extent on those activities and the presence of archaeological finds, historic properties and museums, indeed contribute greatly to the success of many of our municipalities, in fact, I would go as far as to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that without those historic properties and archives being located within our municipalities, many of them would have great difficulty in surviving, because indeed they contribute to the tourism potential of giving locations in the Province and of many of our municipalities and contribute vast sums of dollars and contributes vast sums of dollars in terms of new dollars that come into our municipalities, into our various regions because we have historic properties, we have archives, and the very history of our Province predominant in many, many areas, including St. John's itself, but throughout the Province and in Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, the amalgamation process is one that gives consideration to the views of people, whether it be in written form by way of a brief, or oral presentations at a hearing. And we found it extremely important in making a decision to proceed with amalgamation, that we not delete communities from the process those

who were asking that they not be part of a given group of communities considered for amalgamation, without hearing from the people themselves, giving them the opportunity to hear from each other and, in fact, listen to the briefs presented by the various councils and have information presented by the Department and by consultants who might be engaged by councils throughout the Province. And to delete people from the process, on the basis of a request from a council or a petition that might be presented, I think would be grossly unfair, I think would be wrong. It certainly does not speak to the way the act is written. The feasibility hearings and The Municipalities Act clearly states a procedure which gives people the right to be heard at hearings in a given location, to present their views for or against amalgamation or annexation or whatever might be taking place, in this case, amalgamation. And we felt it wise to continue on with a couple of exceptions. We did delete, and I think it was mentioned by one of the hon. Member's opposite, we did delete Labrador City and Wabush, even though we had them on the first list, because of the difficulties of the two mine agreements between the towns and the mining companies in that area, and we did not want to impact upon those agreements at this time, because they are different, and we felt by putting the two communities together, our advice was, having looked at it after seeking advice, that it may not be proper to proceed with consideration of amalgamating those communities at this time. And we also deleted, of course, Steady Brook that may or may not have been a mistake, but we did delete Steady Brook. And since

then, of course, both councils have been advised because they have asked me whether or not they should consider being part of the feasibility process and making representation at the hearings and, of course, I responded saying that both Steady Brook and Corner Brook can appear and should appear, if they so wish, and make representation concerning Marble Mountain and concerning whether or not they would like to make a case for Marble Mountain, I would think, being included in one community or the other. And, in fact, I think both councils are going to do just that, make a brief to the Commission concerning how they feel about the Marble Mountain Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the results of the hearings may be a little different from what we hear from hon. Members opposite. All we have heard I would say to a large extent both in the press and from the Opposition, is the negative side, speaking very negatively all of the time the fact that this is going to result in a lot of communities not wanting, in the final instance, amalgamation. I would like to suggest that that may not be the case. So far we have only heard from councils and mayors, we have not heard from the people, at least I have not heard from the people. I do not see delegations in my office opposing amalgamation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. GULLAGE:

With some exceptions.

But we are talking about 115 communities and the numbers of communities that are objecting in any way at all by way of petition

or otherwise are very, very much in the minority. And school is not out on the amalgamation process yet, Mr. Speaker. We have to hear from the people, we have to hear from community groups, we have to hear what the councils have to say, and the process may result in a much different result than we are hearing now from Members opposite.

The benefits of amalgamation, Mr. Speaker, are many, not the least of which is much better planning. You know, any discussions I have had with other Ministers throughout Canada, and I have had many of them, there seems to be a consensus that communities with very small populations have great, great difficulty, with the cost of providing services today to provide those services in cooperation with government or otherwise, on any kind of a bases, and with any kind of a tax base, in any kind of a viable way unless they have at least a minimum size population. In the cases of amalgamations that we are proposing with the exception of three or four groupings all of the proposed new communities have populations of at least 1,500 people. And that is really where we started. We identified the groupings that would result in 1,500 or more people, on the basis that that seems to be a consensus of a minimum population that a community needs to be viable.

It is no secret if you go throughout Newfoundland, particularly on the Coast, and see a community of 200, 300, 400, or 500 people, they are all having great difficulty surviving. In most cases, in fact, their budgets are supported to a large, large extent by the Province. We want to change that, particularly in

areas where communities have common boundaries, where the community being proposed for amalgamation can easily be incorporated into a new community. In some cases we are talking about three, four, or five communities that can come together and form a new council, and a new community. We feel that is important. It is important for planning. A better plan can be put in place to address the future. It is important for planning for water and sewer and roads. It will be more cost effective as far as the provision of services is concerned, putting water and sewer lines, running the mains throughout these municipalities, is much more cost-effective if done for one municipality rather than three or four or five, each trying to do its own thing. Each applying to Municipal Affairs every year trying to prioritize their needs and doing it in isolation to their neighbour.

We want to change that, Mr. Speaker, we want to see communities share services, as they are doing now in many, many cases but we would like to formalize that. A lot of these communities are quite willing to come together. We are hearing about the communities, and there is a minority, of councils saying that we do not want to amalgamate. What about all the councils and all the communities that do want to amalgamate, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest there are far more willing to amalgamate, and will amalgamate, when this process is complete, than we hear from the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard some comment about the recreation, sports recreation, and fitness

part of my ministry. I want to say that we have three distinct Federations, the High School Federation, the Parks and Recreation Federation, and the Newfoundland and Labrador Sports Federation. We have seen comments in the Press about how that is not the way to go, some people think. We should not have independent, self-supporting bodies out there, with a mandate to deliver services for sports, and leisure and recreation. I suggest that these bodies are important to us. They are independent. They represent all of the sports bodies in the Province, and to see the way that it is being condemned lately in the press, makes me wonder, when no suggestions are made, literally no suggestions are made of how it can be improved, a sports commission. So what do we do, set up a sports commission, we disband all the bodies we have now and start from scratch. We try to form groups to replace the groups that we already have in place, that are working very efficiently and very well, with the professionals that are in my Department.

Mr. Speaker, we have good people in the Department of Sports, Recreation, and Fitness, they have been there, many of them for ten or fifteen years, professionals in their own right, and they work very, very well, with the three sports organizations, the three Federations that represent sports, recreation and fitness throughout the Province.

Now if somebody has complaints, and we have heard some complaints in the Press, but not really saying what is wrong, but simply saying here is another way to do it. Well, sure we all know there are other ways to do it. Every

Province practically has a different way to do it. But I do not want to hear those things. What I want to hear is tell me what is wrong, because if it is working well I am certainly not going to change it, and I have not heard anybody say what is wrong with our present organization. From the input that I am getting and from the people I am talking to both outside of Government and inside, it is working very, very, well.

Mr. Speaker, regional emphasis. We are talking in my Department about a great focus on the regions throughout the Province.

I think that is true, not just of my Ministry, but also the Ministry of Development, the fact that we are focusing on Rural Development Associations and the importance of these associations. They tie in very well with what is happening now in the municipal area. The fact that we are encouraging councils to work together, we are encouraging them to have regional recreation committees, and encouraging them to have regional servicing boards so they can corporate and provide services on a regional basis, really speaks for the mandate of the Government.

We are talking about regional development, and whether it be my Ministry or any other Ministry, we are all working together to see that we can more effectively and on a cost effective basis provide services throughout the Province so that the people can access these services in greater numbers. Because it is very difficult for any one community with a small population, a small tax base to do very much on its own, they have to co-operate with one another. They have to do it,

whether it be on a basis of sharing services or coming together formally in a new community by way of amalgamation, or whether it be sharing services, expertise and facilities on a regional basis, which we are encouraging as well.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) volunteer amalgamation.

MR. GULLAGE:

That is right. We have many, many situations as well where we have volunteer amalgamation. We are not just identifying communities in isolation to other communities that maybe considered. We have had communities come forward and say, we would like to be considered in this amalgamation process as well, and we have left them off the list for whatever reason; in some cases, because their populations happened to be below the 1,500 mark that we started with.

We started with 170 communities that were easily identified as having common boundaries when we started, and we brought it down to 115 with populations of 1,500 or more. That does not mean that we cannot do amalgamations beyond that number. Many of these communities we left off the list, with populations less than 1,500, have come forward and asked to be considered as well, and indeed we will consider them. There is one in particular the hearings have been set up for, outside the list we have identified. In fact, I would think, because they have come forward, that amalgamation will most likely take place.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that the various parts of my Ministry fit together very well. I repeat what I said earlier, that they all fit

within municipal life. Contrary to what the Opposition says, they do not fit very well together, they do not all fit into a community and all work very well within a community, I say that is wrong. I say every single part of my Ministry fits very well within community life and speaks very well for the major thrust of Government, which is to see services provided both within municipalities throughout the Province and on a regional basis, to see a better more cost effective delivery of services for our people. I think our Department, as much as any Department, more in some areas, is addressing the major thrust of the Government to provide services more effectively, better services to our people, better administered, with better planning on a long-term basis. I think my Ministry speaks very well for that mandate.

I would like to thank all Members for their contribution to the debate, Mr. Speaker, and I would hope that this bill will pass. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On, motion, a Bill, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Municipal And Provincial Affairs," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House, on tomorrow. (Bill No. 29)

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to next do four first readings and then get to Committee of Supply on the

Guarantee Act. I just want to point this out so members will know what is coming next.

AN HON. MEMBER:
First readings?

MR. BAKER:
First readings, motions five to eight. That is only a matter of form, and we will get them on the main part of the Order Paper.

MR. RIDEOUT:
I know it is a matter of form, but I think it is a matter that first readings be done right after Orders of the Day are called, but for now we will let it go.

MR. BAKER:
No, not necessarily.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Yes, it is.

MR. BAKER:
Motion 5, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Provide For The Regulation Of Motor Vehicles Used In The Transportation Of Persons Or Goods For Compensation," carried. (Bill No. 39)

On motion, Bill No. 39 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:
Motion 6.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Education to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Education," carried. (Bill No. 32)

On motion, Bill No. 32 read a first time, ordered read a second

time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:
Motion 7.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Social Services to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Department Of Social Services," carried. (Bill No. 47)

On motion, Bill No. 47 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:
Motion 8.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Amend And Consolidate The Law Relating To Public Utilities," carried. (Bill No. 44)

On motion, Bill No. 44 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:
Motion 2, Mr. Speaker.

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

Committee of the Whole

MR. CHAIRMAN (Snow):
Order, please!

Resolution

That it is expedient to bring in a measure further to amend The Local Authority Guarantee Act, 1957, to provide for the guarantee of the repayment of loans made to, and

the advance of loans to certain Local Authorities.

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Chairman, this bill, An Act To Amend The Local Authority Guarantee Act, 1957 provides for the raising of money by certain local authorities. Under the Act the Crown in right of the Province may loan to or guarantee the repayment of a bond or debenture issued by a local authority named in the Schedule up to the amount and for the terms set out in the Schedule in relation to local authority. The particular amendment to clause 1 amends the Schedule and adds these municipal loans listed there that were made during the period of April 1, 1989 to October 16, 1989. In other words, it brings it up to date, namely October 16, 1989.

I believe this is a fairly routine matter and I will answer any questions that are brought up, if I can.

MR. RIDEOUT:
Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. RIDEOUT:
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. the Minister of Finance is partly right in and he is partly wrong. I mean, it is a routine matter, but it is not a simple routine matter. This particular bill amends The Local Guarantee Act by

adding to the amount of financing guaranteed by the Province through the Municipal Financing Corporation. I did not add it up, but I would expect it is around, maybe, \$45 million or \$50 million, which is the normal loan guarantees that the Government guarantees each year for water and sewer infrastructure, for the 60/40 paving program, for the 75/25 Municipal/Provincial Government Fire Fighting Program, and so on. This is an important piece of legislation, routine in the sense that the Government has already guaranteed those loans to the banks on behalf of the municipality, but important in the sense that on the credit of the Province the Municipal Financing Corporation will go out and raise the \$50 million, whatever is incorporated in this bill, and then pay off the banks along with the accumulated interest, so that, therefore, that amount of debt is rolled into the Municipal Financing Corporation; debentures are taken out by the municipality concerned for the amount of time indicated in this particular bill.

I just want to make sure, Mr. Chairman, that we all understand what we are doing here. What in effect we are doing here is increasing the municipal debt as guaranteed by the Province through the Municipal Financing Corporation by whatever the sum of money is in this particular bill. And it might be interesting, Mr. Chairman, for the Minister to tell us, as we do on those kinds of bills as a matter of course, what is the amount of outstanding debt that is guaranteed now by the Municipal Finance Corporation? What is the amount of debt that is outstanding? How much is the Province actually paying on a yearly basis on that debt, as of

the point this new debt will be rolled into it? In how many circumstances throughout the Province is the Government actually paying the lion's share of the debt on behalf of municipalities.

We all realize, Mr. Chairman, that in rural Newfoundland, in particular - as a matter of fact, there are not many communities in Newfoundland outside the larger centres, like St. John's and Corner Brook and Gander and Grand Falls and Stephenville, there may be a few others, Labrador City, there are not many -

MR. EFFORD:

What about Bay Roberts?

MR. RIDEOUT:

I do not know about the situation in Bay Roberts, but there are not many municipalities in this Province, Mr. Chairman, that bear the full brunt, that pay the full burden of their municipal debt. Not many! There are some, half a dozen, maybe a dozen, but in the vast majority of cases 80 per cent of the debt, 75 per cent of the debt, in some cases it might be 100 per cent of the debt, is actually being paid on an annual basis by the Provincial Government. Now, Mr. Chairman, the reason that is so is simply because many municipalities in this Province would never be able to avail of the financing required to install basic infrastructure and basic services if that were not the case.

Now, I guess it comes down, Mr. Chairman, to really six of one and a half a dozen of the other. While we are guaranteeing those loans in the first instance on the credit of the Province, and while in the second instance we raise

financing on the credit of the Province to roll it into the Municipal Financing Corporation, and while, thirdly, we, in fact, through the financial resources of the Province end up paying back, in 75 per cent or 80 per cent of the cases of municipalities in the Provinces, anywhere from 75 per cent to 100 per cent of the amount. I remember the President of Treasury Board, when he was a critic on this side, saying that we are actually cooking the books. What we are in effect doing by another means is providing grants for municipalities to build their municipal infrastructure.

I remember the President of Treasury Board saying in the last days of the last Administration that this was wrong, if it was going to be grants then it should be grants, if it was going to be loan guarantees then it should be loan guarantees, and if there was going to be a split in the responsibility for repaying that, then that should be up front and be part of it and everybody should be aware of what it is.

So, Mr. Chairman, while this bill, on the surface of it, is housekeeping and has to be passed, while on the surface it is routine, it is a very, very important piece of legislation in that it adds to the overall provincial debt, but, more importantly, it adds to providing municipal infrastructure to maybe 75 or 100 communities, or whatever, in this piece of legislation, so that they would not be able to avail of the water and sewer programs, and the fire fighting programs, and the recreation programs and the street upgrading programs without this kind of support. But I think it

is incumbent upon the Ministry from time to time, when they introduce this kind of bill, to take a while to make sure that the House and the taxpayers through the House are aware of what is accumulating and how much is accumulated, how much the Province is paying on this debt, what municipalities are, in fact, paying all their own way, part of their own way, or none of their own way?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Chairman, I asked the officials of the Department not long ago to put together a comprehensive package indicating how much was outstanding for each community in the Province.

They compiled it for me up to August 31. I have asked them to update it a bit so that I can give you a current amount of what each community had outstanding in the Province. I think that would be a good thing for me to table in the House, and I will table it at the first opportunity. Perhaps I will table the one that is available now, to the end of August, to give you an idea. But there have been a number since then that would not be on that list. So I agree that this is an important point.

The other point I would like to respond to, since the hon. Leader of the Opposition mentioned some points that had been made by the President of Treasury Board on a previous occasion, are the rates. When NMFC borrows money, it does so at a rate which is somewhat higher than at what the Province borrows. So it might be something to think about, as to whether the Province should borrow the money

and give it out in grants for those cases, because you would probably save some money in the long run. That might be something to think about.

On the other hand, if you do that, it probably discourages municipalities from paying off what would be a loan. I think it is something to be thought about. If there really should be a grant, then possibly it may come in that way. But at the moment we are set up so that when a municipality wants money, it goes out, as you say, in the form of a loan guarantee, a bank loan, and when the work is finished, then it is long-term financed through the Newfoundland Municipal Finance Corporation.

The rate has bothered me. It is not a large amount more; I think it is part of a percentage point more that we spend on the money. I do not have that information at my finger tips now, but I will certainly undertake to provide that type of information to the House, both on the annual cost, how much generally is written off for all intents and purposes, and how much is absorbed by the Province. Certainly I will provide very soon the amount that is outstanding for each community in the Province.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the matters to it referred and have directed me to report that it has adopted a certain resolution without amendment and recommends that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

On motion, report received and adopted, resolution ordered read a first and second time, bill ordered read a first, second and third time, now, by leave, Committee ordered to sit again, presently.

On motion, resolution read a first and second time.

On motion, A bill, "An Act To Amend The Local Authority Guarantee Act, 1957 (No. 2)", read a first, second and third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 42).

MR. BAKER:

Order 2, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Committee of the Whole on a bill, "An Act To Amend The Income Tax Act (No. 2) (Bill No. 15). The motion is that I do now leave the Chair.

On motion, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider said bill, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

Committee of the Whole

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

Bill No. 15.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this Bill, as is contained in the explanatory notes, is to amend The Income Tax Act to reflect changes that have been made in the Income Tax Act of Canada and to modify the Provincial Act to apply certain administrative provisions of the Federal Act directly.

Now once these provisions are made they are worded in such a way that it will not be necessary to keep amending all these sections every time the Federal Government changes their rules, it will be a streamlined procedure to do that, and that is basically the purpose of this legislation. It is not a substantive change in the legislation, it is merely routine housekeeping matters, but I will be glad to try to answer any questions that are raised.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

MR. WINDSOR:

Mr. Chairman, as the Minister said, really this is mirror legislation to reflect changes that have been made in the Federal Income Tax Act, and also to put into parallel the provisions of our Act that are now not applying Federally. So, there is not a great deal that can be said about these changes without going through it in great detail. I suppose we could find some things to talk about. I think it would

be more important that we look at some of the changes that are being made federally over the next year or so, and see how they will impact on Newfoundland specifically. Maybe the Minister would like to address some of those larger, more general questions of the changes that are taking place federally, what the Minister's position has been, and what he has done to try to alleviate some of the things that are taking place federally, at the income tax level.

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 3, Bill No. 16, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Shall clause 1 carry?

MS VERGE:

Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Chairperson.

I just have a short question for the Minister. Actually, the Minister might have addressed this when he introduced the Bill and discussed the principle, but I missed his speech on that occasion. I would like to ask the Minister what prompted the Government to put forward this Bill? What is the background to it?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

As I understand it, the question has to do with the background to the Bill. I did not quite hear it.

MS VERGE:

Yes.

DR. KITCHEN:

The purpose of this is to permit the licencing and establishment of wineries and distilleries in the Province. At the moment, the Newfoundland Liquor Corporation has the right to regulate and licence breweries in the Province, and this would give the Liquor Corporation the right to licence distilleries and wineries, so that if somebody wants to set up a winery to make blueberry wine, cloudberry wine, liqueurs, or whatever, they are able to do that, or to do other things in relation to that, like bulk purchasing to import wine materials to make into wine and so on, not just our local things. Up until now the Liquor Corporation did not have the power to do that, and now they will have the power to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Chairperson, I realize the Bill has the effect that the Minister just explained, but my question had to do with what prompted Government to initiate this change in the legislation to make it possible for individuals or private groups to be licenced to operate wineries or distilleries. Is there, in fact, anyone in our Province who wants to start a winery, who wants to make blueberry wine or any other kind

of wine? If so, can the Minister elaborate and explain fully the background of this legislative initiative?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

We have had some inquiries on that matter, not in the distillery area, but in the winery area, and it is for that reason that we wish to proceed.

The distilleries: We thought while we were at the winery we might as well put in the distilleries too, even though we have not had any dealings with distilleries. But this would give the Liquor Corporation the ability to round out its mandate to authorize breweries, distilleries and wineries, and that is it, anyone who wants to go ahead with that. We have had some inquiries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion, Clauses 1 through 5, carried.

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 4.

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

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 5, Mr. Chairman.

A bill, "An Act To Amend The

Economic Council Act." (Bill No. 27).

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 6, Mr. Chairman.

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

On motion clauses 1 and 2 carried.

MR. RIDEOUT:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

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

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just for the sake of efficiency in the House, I think it has been customary, unless a Member has a particular clause the Member wishes to speak on, that we carry the clauses in tens, or carry them in some particular order rather than reading out the whole thirty-three. So just for the sake of efficiency, unless somebody has a question on a particular clause, we could go one to ten, eleven to twenty, or something of that nature.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Is that agreed? Will we do it that way?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 7.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Department of Forestry and Agriculture." (Bill No. 19).

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 8.

A bill, "An Act Respecting The Department of Mines and Energy." (Bill No. 25)

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 9.

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

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 10.

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

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 11.

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

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

MR. BAKER:

Order 12.

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

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

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

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. L. SNOW:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred and have asked me to report bills Nos. 15, 16, 18, 24, 27, 19, 25, 21, 23, 20 and 28 without amendment, and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, bills ordered read a third time, on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order 1. Address in Reply.

MR. EFFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

The Address in Reply?

MR. DOYLE:

What do we have the House open for?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, you do not be on your

feet long when they give you something to talk about. The hon. the Member for Harbour Main just asked a question across the floor, what is the House open for? Listening to the Opposition over the past two or three weeks, I wonder what the people of this Province bother to elect an Opposition for. I thought Oppositions had a purpose. In fact, when I campaigned in 1985, I campaigned very strong on that, that the Opposition is a very important part of a democratic government, and it is necessary to have an opposition in order to keep Government on its toes. But when I look at the disgraceful manner in which those people have been laid back in their chairs, not even able to keep me awake, and it has not been hard to keep me awake the past couple of weeks, because I have had very little to do in the House of Assembly, but they do not even have the ability to arouse your enthusiasm enough so that you would sit upright in your chair.

For instance, the former Minister of Justice stood in her place today and asked the same question for about the seventh time in the last two weeks, I believe.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Nine times.

Nine times. In fact, I would say that she goes home at night and just dreams up those questions to ask the hon. the Premier.

MS VERGE:
(Inaudible) nightmares.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
What was that remark?

MS VERGE:
I am not prone to nightmares.

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker, if she will allow me to answer that question when we go down in the elevator I will give her a good answer, but I would not answer it in the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:
That was in jest. I would not answer it across the floor of the House of Assembly.

I want to talk about some serious business that has to do with Government-related matters, and about the non-confidence motion put forth in jest. Is there another name for Lack of Opposition? There has to be another name for it.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Cucumbers.

MR. EFFORD:
Cucumbers. Yes, that is about the best thing we could call them, the failing in the light of the Cucumbers.

But seriously, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the House of Assembly is to carry on in an informative way what Government is doing, and give the Opposition an opportunity to be able to bring forth, hopefully, some solid criticism, or some solid information they could put forth in ideas to the Government as to what they should be doing or what they are not doing. But sitting down listening here the last couple of weeks, I made an offer last Thursday that probably they should ask me to come over there, while I am sitting here with nothing to do,

to coach them. I was going to charge them, going to do it for a salary, because they have been trying to take away my salary for the last couple of weeks. But since they are so desperate, and knowing their funding is so lacking, I think I will offer to do it for free. I will even have night classes, if they want to do it, Mr. Speaker, and I will start with the former Minister - for one day, I believe it was. The Member for Port au Port, was he a Minister for a couple of days? - and the Member for Burin - Placentia West, and the Member for Harbour Main, because they asked questions here last week about the Department of Social Services, and about the Youth Correction Center, and about the Remand Center down at Pleasantville.

Now, the first question we asked was who put it there? They had a youth correction center down at Pleasantville and no which, way or form would you even attempt to house cattle there, yet they had children there. It was unbelievable! That is a fact. Before that building was closed down there, you would not attempt to house cattle there overnight, especially with the weather conditions we have. I visited that correction center at Pleasantville - we are talking about the boys' home at Pleasantville, at the time.

Anyway, the former Administration yielded to pressure from the Opposition - a very effective Opposition at the time - and they opened a correction center in Torbay, the old school for the deaf. They did it. They took the taxpayers' money and they opened up the correction center. Only about a year and a half ago they spent x number of hundreds of

thousands of dollars to do that to put the children down there. Now they are coming back, several months later, telling us how deplorable it is and asking why the youth correction center is open at Torbay. The youth correction center is open at Torbay because of a lack of feeling for young people. A lack of administrative ability put the youth correction center down there. Why did they not take Exon House, which was about to be closed up, a very excellent building, and turn that into a youth correction center, if the place in Torbay is so bad?

The former Minister of Municipal Affairs - I do not know how long he was Minister of Transportation - I had a great experience with him when he was Minister of Municipal Affairs. That was the time the eleven women came in from Makinsons and occupied his offices for seven or eight days and showed him how good a Minister he was at the time, when he looked across the table and told the people from Makinsons - and I have sat here in the House of Assembly for the last couple of weeks and listened when he criticized the Minister of Municipal Affairs for trying to give some services to the people - and he looked across the desk when they asked for \$15 thousand and said, 'No, we do not have \$15 thousand. We are unable to give you any money for water or services in Makinsons, because the Newfoundland Treasury does not have that amount of money,' and about four days later, I think, they gave something like \$2.5 million to Sprung.

I only found out about a week later that the reason was the member for Mount Pearl could not see to get in his backyard, he

needed a new lighting system out there. Did they get the money for Makinsons? Yes, they got the money for Makinsons, they got it from the Federal Government through the hard work of the MHA for the district.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:
They did not get it from that man over there. They got it from the Federal Government, from an excellent individual with feeling for people. It is too he was not elected to the Opposition over there, because they might have gotten some benefit from it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT:
They eventually gave the money to Sprung, though.

MR. EFFORD:
Let me tell you about the industry. Easy cucumber salad, oriental cucumber salad, lemon cucumber jelly salad. What a job old Chicken Wings would have with this.

Mr. Speaker, what an Opposition to put forth a non-confidence motion in this Administration, when all you have to look through is fourteen pages of sweet and sour spiced cucumber pickles, and baked cucumbers - now that is one. I guess I was going to restaurants about ten years before I figured out how they could come up with fried ice cream but, Mr. Speaker, it would take me much longer than that to figure out how they could bake cucumbers. What an industry to put over on the Southside when the fish plant closes up, a baked cucumber bottling plant.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Now it is out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:
Well, that is what I have been hearing from Members opposite all the time, the doom and gloom.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:
Mr. Speaker, could I have silence?

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

MR. EFFORD:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The doom and gloom is being preached all over. The people in St. John's are totally frustrated and are completely convinced. In fact, all the people who work in the eight fish plants in Port de Grave are asking me if they are going to have the opportunity to work in the cucumber factory in Mount Pearl, because the doom and gloom has set in all over the Island because of the Opposition putting forth the idea that all plants are going to close. We thought it was an all-plants-open policy, but all plants are going to close according to Opposition Members.

Mr. Speaker, we have good hope, because we now know how to develop - 6,000 jobs are going to be lost in the fishery this year - is it? - when the Federal Tories -

MR. MATTHEWS:
No, but there will be when you (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. EFFORD:

I had a lack of confidence in the cucumber operation in Mount Pearl, especially when we were in Opposition. I really questioned whether or not it could work. But I now know the future of those 6,000 people is going to be solved, because we now have cucumber jelly and we have baked cucumbers. We know the answer, Mr. Speaker. It is going to operate. I will adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker, until tomorrow. I will continue on then, and I will have all my thoughts together.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

The debate on Private Member's Day, Wednesday, will be the Resolution by the Member for Pleasantville. I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow, and that this House do now adjourn.

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