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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

Before recognizing the hon. the Member for Humber East, on behalf of hon. members I would like to welcome to the galleries today seventy-five Democracy students from O'Donnell High School, Mount Pearl, accompanied by their teachers Mr. Mike Sutton and Mr. Patrick Mooney.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to propose for Your Honour's consideration that when the House of Assembly convenes tomorrow, which is December 6, that Your Honour call on members to stand and observe a moment's silence in memory of the murder of fourteen women students at L'ecole Polytechnique in Montreal a year ago. I believe by silently reflecting we can ponder what that massacre demonstrated about our society. And we as individuals and as part of the Legislature can think about what we can do to reduce the incidence of violence against women.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, let me say that I believe that everybody is aware of and sympathizes with and is in disgust with the fact that day by day women and children in our society, some women and children are under threats of violence and sexual assault throughout our society, and it is a situation

that we all agree is not a good situation. We all look upon this threat of violence, threat of sexual assault with horror.

However, Mr. Speaker, I have to take exception with immortalizing an act of a madman. I would suggest that there perhaps is some other more suitable way that we can recognize this threat of violence that exists in our society against the more helpless segment of our society. But I do not think that it is particularly appropriate to use the act of a madman, and I believe his name was Lepine, to forever each year commemorate the act of a madman. I think there has to be some other more suitable way of handling the situation.

Statements by Ministers

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in announcing the approval of "A Smoke-Free Workplace" policy for all employees -

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker: - of direct government departments. A total ban on smoking in Government workplaces will come into effect April 1st, 1991.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker: The intent of this policy is to provide for government employees, a safe and healthy work environment free from tobacco smoke and other forms of smoke. A phase-out period from now until April 1st, will allow

for a gradual transition to a smoke-free work environment. In-house workshops on how to stop smoking and other support services provided by the Public Health Units of the Department of Health will be available to all government employees.

Mr. Speaker, every effort will be made to assist Government employees through ensuring that they are provided with information on the policy, regular workplace counselling and access to recognized smoking cessation programs. Associated costs will be covered through existing Departmental budgets.

Individual Departments will be responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy for their employees. Where Departments share facilities with other employers who do not have a smoke-free workplace, these Departments must ensure that exposure to tobacco smoke is minimized.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by saying that all visitors to Government workplaces will be asked to respect the no-smoking policy. Also, Crown Corporations, Boards and Agencies will be encouraged to implement no-smoking policies if they have not already done so.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, first of all I thank the Minister for giving me advance notice and an advance copy of the statement. May I say at the outset, of course, we understand the need for a preventative measure like this,

a health measure. I would also have to say, though, that I am sure not everybody in the workplace will be jumping for joy about the announcement; I think that is pretty clear. As much as non-smokers may not feel that smokers have some rights I think it is pretty fair to suggest and point out that there is no provision in this statement, maybe in the policy there will be, be no provision for any kind of designated smoking area as does exist in certain federal institutions where they have a smoking ban, and in some provincial jurisdictions. They have, in fact, provided for smokers, who have some rights, a designated smoking area. So, I would point that out only in the sense that perhaps Government might want to give some consideration. Somebody has to speak for the minorities, I guess. And unfortunately if there is not such a provision made, then I can foresee 200 or 300 smokers, who are public employees, stepping outside the front of Confederation Building, or several of the media who might have to rush away from an interview with the Premier and run down to the front steps of Confederation Building to go outside to have a quick puff - a quick draw. So, you might wish to look at that aspect. Obviously the rest of the statement basically providing for a safe and healthy work environment is something we obviously totally agree with. The idea of in-house workshops is a good idea. Regular workplace counselling, access to recognized smoke secession programs, all of those things have to be done if such a policy is to be implemented.

I just want to ask a few questions of the Minister. Is the

Legislature - since I cannot ask the Speaker - is the Department of the Legislature going to help the Minister, for example, who introduced and announced the policy, who smokes like a tilt - he smokes like a tilt! Is the Department of the Legislature going to provide some kind of counselling for me, who is a moderate smoker, and other Members of the House who follow in the same category? But seriously, how is this going to be enforced? I mean if a public servant, for example, is caught downstairs in the cafeteria having a draw, what is going to happen to him? Will there be penalties associated? Will there be enforcement associated? Are there going to be smoke busters patrolling the corridors of Confederation Building? What exactly will the detailed policies be in terms of how this is going to be enforced and addressed?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Hopefully the Minister will have an opportunity perhaps - and I encourage him to - in the next day or so, to perhaps provide us with more details on how the policy will be enforced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health. I want to

say to the Minister that this morning, members of our caucus met with the President of the Newfoundland Hospital and Nursing Home Association, Mr. Nurse, and with their executive director, Mr. Burnell, and they gave us an overview of their latest presentation to the Government on recently announced budget freezes and the effects that budget freeze would have on the Hospital and Nursing Home Association and their institutions in this Province. Mr. Speaker, the association made it clear to us, and told us, that originally they were promised that decisions on the freeze would be coming to them by mid November. Now, the question I want to ask the Minister is this: is it still the Government's position that the final decisions on the effects of the budget freeze for hospitals and nursing homes will not be made known to the administrators until February or March when the Budget comes down, as the Minister and the Premier have been saying in this House over the last several days?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland Hospital Nursing Home Association made a presentation to myself on behalf of Government this past week. I believe the telling page is page 6, paragraph 1, Mr. Speaker. Newfoundland hospital expenditures have been relatively reduced in most recent years. For example, in the five years ending March 31 1990, overall provincial current account expenditures increased by 43 per cent, compared with an increase in hospitals' expenditure over those five years of 32 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

In 1990 and 1991 the Government recognized the past deficiencies in various health expenditures and, for example, allocated an 11 per cent increase for hospitals compared with a 6 per cent increase for the provincial operating expenditure, Mr. Speaker. Now there is no doubt that the Newfoundland Hospital and Nursing Home Association recognizes the contribution that this particular administration has made to health, in that we increased it almost twice as much as we increased the operating expenditure of the Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to the hon. Member's question as to when we are going to be able to make available to the hospitals just how much money they will have next year. I would hope that we could have done that in October month, Mr. Speaker. I would like to be able to do it in November month. However, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, who one time himself sat in a Cabinet, realizes that it takes time to work out the details of hospital budgets and school budgets and what have you. It is not a spur of the moment decision you can make. We are consulting back and forth with them. So that I cannot say specifically we will have an answer by November 30 or December 15. I can say that the total, absolute, unequivocal answer will be in the Budget which will come in March.

However, I am hoping, Mr. Speaker, that if it is at all possible, we will have a firm indication to each hospital board by the end of this calendar year as to where we intend to go with each board. And the reason I would like to be able to do that is because if indeed they have to make some savings within their budgets they will

need some lead time in order to put those savings into effect, Mr. Speaker. So I would wish I could be specific and say, 3:30 p.m. on November 15 we will do this, but that is not the case. We can only do it as soon as we can, and we are hoping to be able to talk to the hospitals and give them some firm indication before the end of this calendar year.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister is now saying exactly what we have been suggesting to him for the past couple of weeks. Maybe the magic date will be, for some reason, December 12. But let me ask the Minister this: the Association has said to us quite clearly, and I would assume has said to the Minister, that if they do not have those decisions - well, in their view almost immediately - then the decisions that will have to be taken as a result of the freeze are going to be more draconian than even they wish to anticipate.

Can the Minister confirm that the position articulated by the Association, that they must have those decisions pretty well immediately, is one that he agrees with?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, the Newfoundland Hospital Association did not mention to me about any draconian measures. They understand the situation this Province is in. They understand that this Province was practically put bankrupt by the previous administration, and that we are

left with this mess and that we are trying to straighten it out.

Thank goodness the Newfoundland Hospital Association is co-operating with us and they would like to have had their notice two years in advance. That would be a reasonable and logical way to do it, but members of the Association realize that when an emergency comes upon a Government or upon a hospital board or whatever the case might be, you cannot make spur-of-the-moment decisions, you have to work through all the details.

This presentation talks about the problems with treating every board alike. An across-the-board freeze, they are saying, would disrupt the system, whereas it might be to our advantage to treat boards differently in order to ensure a proper health care system. These are the kinds of things we are doing.

I share their concerns, and I would like to have been able to give them their budget in July or in August. But the situation being as it is, that is not possible to do, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I share their concerns but I am powerless to do anything about that until we work through the whole - the whole - problem.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, on a supplementary.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, despite the big lie perpetrated by this Administration, this Government inherited a budgetary surplus when they took office.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Minister this. Does the Minister agree with the position of the

Association that pay equity and Workers' Compensation will have a greater effect on the health care system than on other areas of the Public Service, and will the Government agree to fund those two major cost increases that have been requested of them by the Association?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. the Leader of the Opposition considers a \$5.6 billion capital account to be a surplus, I can see exactly why he left this Province in the mess in which he left it.

Mr. Speaker, the pay equity and the Workers' Compensation issues are two major issues that will impact on the cost of delivering health care to the Province next year. The Workers' Compensation will cost the hospital system somewhere between \$9 million and \$11 million next year.

Pay equity: I have heard all kinds of estimates, ranging all the way from \$6 million to \$15 million. So, of course, if you put two items into that magnitude, in excess of \$20 million, it will have an impact on the health care system: so will the cost of ambulances, so will the cost of heating, so will the cost of electricity, so will all the costs; the doctors salaries, all of these things go into spending the \$834 million which we are spending this year in health. So you can zero out either one, whether it is pay equity or workers' compensation, but we have to look at all the factors when we deliver health care.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister confirm that the Association has now said to the Minister and his Department that the budgetary freeze of which the Government is talking will mean, in effect, a 12 per cent reduction in the amount of funds they will have to spend next year, and on top of that the Workers' Compensation and pay equity costs will mean that the budgetary shortfall, if the Government proceeds with this freeze, for the health care system will not be the \$60 million that the Association was talking about a month and a half ago, but would, in fact, be \$88 million? Can the Minister confirm that the Association told him that in its presentation last Friday?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, yes, I will confirm that the Association told me that and that it is indeed included in the presentation. According to their estimates, if such and such is the case and something else is the case, it will range somewhere between \$60 million and \$88 million. Whether or not I agree with that figure is a totally different case, Mr. Speaker. But, yes, that is part of the presentation which the Hospital Association made.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have questions for the Minister of Health, as well. The Minister of Health has talked about wanting to convert twelve or more of the Province's smaller hospitals into nursing homes or chronic care facilities. Does the Minister recognize that many of

the rural hospital buildings, for example the one in Burgeo, are physically not suited to be used safely as nursing homes? Does the Minister agree that if there is going to be a chronic care facility instead of a hospital in several small towns around the Province the Government will first have to either build a new building, or else carry out major alterations to the existing structure?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, I refer the hon. member to today's editorial in The Telegram which backs up exactly the idea of changing the use of institutions, an excellent editorial which I would refer to the hon. member to read. It says, "It is perfectly natural, and extremely important, for the Conservative Opposition to raise the alarm when critical decisions regarding the health service are being made."

An Hon. Member: You are not allowed to read the paper.

Mr. Decker: It goes on with all this sort of thing. So if I am not allowed to read, I will pass it over to the hon. member and I would encourage him to read it.

Now the hon. member says if we are going to change the use of some of our institutions, then some of them will have to be replaced. I am aware of that. Because in addition to leaving us \$5.6 billion in debt, in addition to leaving us with the highest income tax and the highest sales tax and the highest everything else in this Province, the hon. members opposite also left us with some hospitals which were dilapidated,

which were falling into the ground, and would have died a natural death if we had not come on the scene and tried to salvage them.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad she mentioned Burgeo. Burgeo is one case where, if the hon. member will go back to last year's Budget, she will see that we made available two hundred and some-odd thousand dollars to do an engineering study and to do all the planning to put in Burgeo a community health care centre which includes, I believe it was twenty or thirty chronic care beds, two or four holding beds, a primary care clinic with an X ray and with a lab, a perfect, ideal model of what primary care should be in this Province, and I am glad to be part of the Government which recognized that need in Burgeo; we recognized it in Port Saunders, and likewise we put aside \$200,000 in last year's Budget and we are doing the planning to put that facility in Port Saunders. We recognized it in St. Lawrence and did likewise, and planning is going ahead.

Some of the institutions out there which are not being fully utilized, which have 60 per cent vacant beds, could, indeed, be turned into chronic care facilities with very little expense to the taxpayer. It could be very easily done. Some, like Burgeo, will have to be replaced. We are dealing with it. I am hoping, Mr. Speaker, that we can find the money in our limited capital account to do something with Burgeo, but I cannot commit that. Because with the Province in such a mess, we have to spend our money where the need is greatest. I am hoping that in places like Burgeo, and other

places where the need has been left so desperate by the previous administration, we can, indeed, do something about it.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Province is in a mess now. About a year and a half ago there was a current account surplus. I have another question for the Minister of Health, Your Honour.

Does the Minister of Health admit that hospital and nursing homes are already anticipating Government budget cuts and are closing beds, giving layoff notices, leaving vacancies unfilled and filling other positions temporarily instead of permanently, bracing themselves for the minister's December decisions or budget decisions in the spring?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, I do not have the knowledge to answer that question, as to what each hospital administrator is doing, but I can tell the hon. member what the hospital administrators are supposed to be doing. When I met with them, in October past, I advised them that anything they could do which would not impact on health care, if they could save some money without impacting on health care, then they should feel free to do it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would say that even if we did not have this fiscal problem which was partially brought upon us by the previous administration, even if we did not have that problem it would be a

prudent and proper use of taxpayers' money to make savings wherever it can be done without impacting on the health care of the people. So I would think what the hon. member will find is that in most cases, or in all cases where this is happening, it is not impacting on health.

Now, I will also tell the hon. member that one of the members of this House brought to my attention that one of the nursing homes in the Province was not filling the beds as they became vacant and that there were, indeed, two vacancies in that particular institution. I have since had someone from the department advise that particular home that that is not what we are asking them to do. Because it looks now that we will not be allowing any chronic care beds to close in this Province. If we were to close the chronic beds or to close beds in nursing homes, it would mean a backup in the acute care beds, Mr. Speaker, and that would be undesirable. This is one of the dangers which the Association pointed out about treating everybody equally. If we treated everybody equally, we could close some nursing beds and they would back up into the acute care system. What the administrators are doing I cannot answer for, but what they have been told to do I can answer for, and they have been told not to do anything which impacts on patient care until after the decision is made, hopefully by the last of December but it might be longer.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do not know where the minister has been the last few

weeks, but won't the minister admit that there already has been backing-up, as he would call it, there already has been a negative impact on patient care, and there has been a rise above the 300 level of the number of medically discharged patients occupying acute or active care beds in this Province?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Health.

Mr. Decker: No, Mr. Speaker. I do not know where the hon. member is getting her information.

Ms Verge: (Inaudible) from hospitals and nursing homes.

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, to date there has not been one five cents taken out of the health care budget in this Province. We are still operating on the \$834 million which was allocated. So for this fiscal year there has not been one solitary red cent taken out of the health care budget. If, as the hon. member says, there is a back-up of services, it has nothing to do with fiscal restraint. I would suggest it has more to do with the fact that the previous administration allowed the health care system to become disorganized, to become unorganized, to the extent where we have close to 1,000 acute care beds that we do not need, and we need 500 beds for chronic care people. I think it is a matter of previous disorganization. It has nothing to do with the fiscal realities in this year, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of

Social Services. I should say first, Mr. Speaker, that I believe, as do my colleagues, that handicapped individuals should be fully integrated into the community. But if, Mr. Speaker, the Minister does away with group homes, what plan does he have, what criteria will the Minister use to adequately support those people in their natural community environment? Has the Minister an overall plan? Has he a plan in place? And will he make it public?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, yes, we do have a plan in place. Secondly, we do not intend to close all group homes. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the percentage of group homes that will be closed compared to the number we have in the Province is a very small percentage. The only reason we intend to close some of the group homes is because we know that a number of the people who were moved from Exon House into group homes, which are really mini-institutions, have now advanced to a degree where they can now be placed into the community, either in therapeutic foster homes, into foster home care, or into co-operative apartments.

I think the overall number we plan to move in the group home system is about forty, which will mean, possibly, the closure of five to six group homes. But our intention is not to close group homes just to move people out of them, as these people are now advanced enough and developed enough that they would be better suited to the community.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: I agree, Mr. Speaker, with the Minister, that very often group homes are mini-institutions. But, Mr. Speaker, in the group homes that will close, who will be involved in the decision making with respect to the needs of the individuals who are in those homes and the implementation of the plan? Will the Minister involve the individuals concerned, their families, and the Association for Community Living? This thing, Mr. Speaker, has to be done right.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the hon. Member opposite must have gotten the press release sent out by the Association for Community Living, because that is where he has developed his questions.

Mr. Hodder: No, I did not.

Mr. Efford: Certainly the Department of Social Services will consult on that with the Association for Community Living, as we have already been doing over the past year or year and a half, the M.R. Division of the Department of Social Services, the regional and district offices of the Department of Social Services, the Foster Parents Association, the Therapeutic Foster Homes, the parents and relatives of the individuals, wherever necessary to consult. Whoever, Mr. Speaker, has any relationship, whether it be professionally, a relative relationship, or whatever, with the individuals we plan to move, at the wishes of the individual or the families, they will be

consulted.

That is the way we operate in the Department of Social Services, and that is our intention for the future.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I should tell the Minister that I met with the Association long before they issued the press release. But I would refer to the press release, where they mention the fact of the cost cutting. Mr. Speaker, the Government has now shown that it is pretty adept with the cost-cutting knife in this Province. Will the Minister agree that adequate dollars be provided for each individual? - adequate dollars. Will an appropriate amount of money be provided so that individuals are assured of the kind of support that they need so that they can fully participate in society?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Surely goodness the Member opposite does not think that we would move the people into the community or into foster home care or therapeutic foster homes or co-operative apartments without providing financial assistance? In fact, Mr. Speaker, we have proven that the amount of money that we will be able to divert from the cost of operating the group homes will be more than enough to get people into community living, which is a better option, by the way, and we will be better able to utilize the amount of money we are now spending on group homes in other programs, not only in the M.R.

Division of the Department of Social Services and the Rehabilitative Division, but in other areas of the Department of Social Services where we desperately need other monies.

So it is not a cost-saving factor to Government, it is the better use of money we are now spending where it is not being wisely spent, in group homes. Because it is better to keep people in the community. Group homes are mini-institutions, over cost, and not necessary for people. And anybody who can move into the community will be moved there. But there will always be a need, I suspect, for some group homes within the Province. We have no intention of doing away with the group home philosophy, but wherever possible, everybody in this Province, regardless of their mental or physical disability, deserves an equal opportunity, as does everybody else, either in the work force or in community living. And nobody, without exception, is going to be avoided by the minister or by the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: I am sorry to hear, Mr. Speaker, that the minister said he is not getting rid of all of the group homes. I think the philosophy should be to integrate every individual into the community. But what I am asking most of all, Mr. Speaker, as this is a pretty important moment in the life of the more unfortunate people in our Province, is that he has a plan to ensure that the residents of those group homes he intends to move are not abandoned to their fate as has happened, as the minister knows, in the United

States and in England, where this sort of move took place, they are not abandoned to their fate during a similar exercise. And I will ask the minister, can he assure the parents that this is not a cost-saving measure, because he has to assure them of that, but a positive development?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me tell the hon. member opposite that I only attended one conference outside of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador this year. I do not travel very much, but when I travel I consider it to be very important. That conference was the Association for Community Living across Canada. We were told and we proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is leading the rest of Canada in deinstitutionalization provisions for the physically and mentally delayed people and community living.

So I am not going to stand in this House of Assembly and be judged on what the rest of Canada or the United States are doing. We are providing exceptionally good care for the developmentally delayed people in this Province, and we will continue to do that. We do not have to learn from an other provinces in Canada or anybody in the United States, we are quite capable of developing the service on our own. And we are not only doing that, Mr. Speaker, but we are showing the rest of Canada how to do that.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a couple of short questions for the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation. The minister will recall that on Friday evening and night of this week we had a significant snowfall, at least on the Avalon Peninsula and other parts of the Province. Would the minister care to explain why, as of Saturday afternoon and as of Sunday noon, the road between the Foxtrap weigh scales and the Avondale Access Road was not cleared?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, as far as I am concerned, the roads were cleared. I was on the highway all weekend; I drove on the highway; I drove back, I drove in. I was to my District. But just to give you some idea about what is going on, I thought the question would come up, I do not have it for the week, but the last report I have here, the Donovan's unit, the crew at Donovans and what they did, the Foxtrap unit - I will table that so you can have a look at it and then I will get the information for this week and table that tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister might have been on the road all weekend but I do not know which road he was on. I know the Trans-Canada Highway from Foxtrap access to Avondale access was not cleared as of Sunday dinnertime. I am informed that it was not done by Sunday night but I

cannot guarantee that because I was not there at the time. Will the Minister confirm that within his department now there is a regular schedule shift system from Monday to Friday and no regular schedule shift system on weekends?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: No, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. R. Aylward: The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: The Minister admitted that there is no regular schedule shift system on the weekends, Mr. Speaker. Will he confirm that the foremen who this year have lost all their overtime which they received in the past have had their shifts changed so that a foreman now in a district has a seven day on shift and a seven day off shift, and would he confirm that during the seven days on if there is a one or two day snowstorm that this foreman might have to work in excess of forty-eight hours to cover the territory that he is given?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for that question because we have heard so many questions about changes in shifts and overtime that our foremen worked, so when we made some changes this year we went out and did a poll of all the foremen, the 160-odd that are working with the Department, and asked them how they would like to work, and 78 per cent of them decided they would like to work seven days on and seven days off. So, 78 per

cent of those people decided they would like to work that way because it fits into their schedule and they are quite happy with it. We are quite happy with it. We think it is the best system that we have ever had and the public are happy because the roads are being done the same as they were always done.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Mr. Speaker, was that poll done by the Minister when the foremen thought they were getting paid overtime the same as they always did, or after their overtime payments were cut? Will the Minister explain what shift systems are in place now for the regular Monday to Friday, and weekends, in this Province for the highway system, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, the same shift system is in place for the ordinary worker as there always was. The foremen are there and they will go out, and if they see the need they will call out the workers the same as was always done. There is no change, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West. There is time for one short question.

Mr. Tobin: The Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs confirmed some time ago that there would be drastic changes made to the municipal grants structure, I would like to ask him now, if he will tell the House, has he informed many councils or the councils in the Province yet?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

Mr. Gullage: Mr. Speaker, yes, we have undertaken a comprehensive review of the grants programmes which are in place over the last fourteen, fifteen months and we have had discussions with the Federation of Municipalities.

The executive of the Federation has had consultation with my officials and myself and we are reaching a conclusion I would think, rather shortly, on a new grants programme to replace the existing programmes which are in place.

Mr. Speaker: I told the hon. Member there was time for one short question, but there is time for a shorter question.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, if that is the case, then I would like to ask the Minister whether or not he has asked the councils right now to delay the submissions of their applications or their budgets? When will he be notifying the councils, in order for them to submit their budgets. Will he not confirm to the House, that indeed, there will be drastic changes, and tell us how many councils in the Province will receive less funding as a result of the new changes to the grants structure?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

Mr. Gullage: Mr. Speaker, I cannot say which communities will be affected because the programme is not finalized and accepted or otherwise by Government, but we will shortly have a recommendation finalized, one way or the other,

and then the communities will be advised as to the implications for their particular municipality.

Mr. Speaker: Question Period has expired.

Before continuing or going to the next item of routine business, on behalf of hon. Members, I would like to welcome to the galleries today, Mayor Walter Swyer of the Town of St. George's accompanied by the Business Manager, Mr. Francis Alexander.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Just on a point of order, I guess, to use it as a method to get some information.

The Committee on House Rules: everybody remembers that famous committee that was started and set up, I do not know, months ago, and I thought we had done most of our work and had it completed several weeks ago. I thought the intent was to table the report in the House this fall session, have it as a trial period for the rest of this fall session and then the next spring session, I am just wondering where it is and when we can expect to have it. I do not know if the Chairman can answer it or the Government House Leader.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Mount Scio.

Mr. Walsh: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, to come, for

his question. The report will be released, hopefully within the next two days, hopefully tomorrow.

I am anticipating that the Department of Justice and the law clerks will have the report in the Committee's hands, hopefully by tomorrow, with a chance to peruse it and make sure it covers all the points that we are looking to bring to the House, and I would anticipate, that with all due course, by Friday we will be able to present the report in the House.

Notices of Motion

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow present the following resolution:

WHEREAS CBC television and radio provide essential communication services in Newfoundland and Labrador, especially through the production of local and regional news and current events programmes; and

WHEREAS CBC corporate policy over the years have gradually diminished the amount of locally and regionally produced programming and increased programs produced in Central Canada and in the United States, and;

WHEREAS the CBC has announced dramatic cuts in spending which will, in effect, eliminate local television programming in Newfoundland and Labrador and retain our only regional programming in St. John's;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House call upon the Federal

Government to ensure that the necessary funding is provided to retain the present level of television and radio services and programming in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms Verge: (Inaudible).

Mr. Efford: Some chance!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday in Question Period the hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern asked me a question concerning the overall policy of the Department of Social Services as regards adoptions and the giving out of information. In the answer I gave yesterday I said it was a correct answer, although the Opposition did say very clearly that it was not. But I just want to give the correct answer for the information of the House of Assembly, because it was asked during Question Period yesterday.

First of all, let me tell the hon. Member that -

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Is the hon. Member on a point of order?

Mr. Simms: It is to a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Simms: I am trying to quickly research Hansard. I cannot find where the minister said he would take notice of the question. And for that reason it is not appropriate for him to rise under Answers To Questions, if he indeed has not taken notice.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: In fact, I think he indicated yesterday, and invited the Member to speak with him afterwards or to meet with him afterwards, and I think the Member is quite prepared to do that. I do not think there is any need of wasting time, particularly if he did not take notice.

Mr. Speaker: To the point of order.

The Opposition House Leader is correct. In this particular Order of Business notice must be given, a member must state that he is going to give notice. It is not a place for correcting answers, unless again the Minister says clearly the day before that he is going to review the answer and give notice at a later date.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Before going on to Orders of the Day, the Chair would like to make a ruling on a point of order that was raised by the hon. the Opposition House Leader a week ago Monday, and I thank the hon.

Member for his forbearance. I had indicated to him that I wanted to research the matter, and it would take me a little time, and he concurred. And I am ready today to give a ruling on that point of order.

Hon. members will recall the point of order was in relationship to a matter of private members being able to table documents. In his submission the hon. Member mentioned that he was certain in the past that documents were allowed to be tabled by private members, and his question was whether or not this had been done by precedent or by consent? He himself mentioned the ruling that when he was Speaker he had made.

So having given that preamble I will go down through the ruling that I have written, with a little ad libbing along the way, where I think it is necessary. There has been uncertainty in this House over the years surrounding the rights and obligations of members with respect to the tabling of documents. There is an impression among members that the right to table is circumscribed in some way. As sometimes when they get up to table documents, if we study Hansard, they would be prefaced by Mr. Speaker, if it is in order, I would like to table - or Mr. Speaker, if I am permitted to, I would like to table and I refer hon. members to Hansard February 15, 1973, page 295, and Hansard April 24, 1973, and Hansard April 25, 1978, page 4031. If there is a thread of consistency running through these impressions it is the belief that a member, having cited the document, can be required to table it.

This, in the Chair's opinion, is based on a misinterpretation of

the authorities, which in the recent editions have become more clear and more precise.

For example, I quote Beauchesne, subparagraph 495 subsection (1) which states:

"A Minister is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House without being prepared to lay it on the Table."

And quoting Erskine May, subparagraph 495 section (2) states:

"It has been admitted that a document which has been cited ought to be laid upon the Table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interest. The same rule, however, cannot be held to apply to private letters or memoranda." And that particular quotation has been quoted in our House by either Government House Leaders and Speakers in making rulings related thereto on several occasions.

But I want to point out to hon. members this quotation may be at the root of the confusion as it refers to tabling by ministers, but very often the House took it to be tabling by members. And I want to point out to hon. members that our House was not the only one which did that. In checking with other Houses I found that they too had been doing the same thing because there was a lack of clarity here. Clearly it was referring to ministers but in the rush in making decisions sometimes we took it to be referring to members, and other Houses have now been following the more recent edition.

But I quote for hon. members that

as I said this seems to be at the root of the confusion, and this is clear in the wording of the 20th edition of Erskine May, which states:

"A Minister of the Crown may not read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he is prepared to lay it upon the Table of the House." And the key thing here again for hon. members is, "unless he is prepared." That is - a minister can quote from a document, he does not necessarily have to table it, unless requested to do so. And when requested to do so, of course, he always acquiesces.

Just another point here: what would happen in our House is that, because we took that to apply to members, that an hon. member would approach it in different ways. He would say, Mr. Speaker, I have got a document here, I know I am not allowed to table it, but I am going to read from it. And by saying that the hon. member assumed then that he was required to table it. But again there is nothing which says that because a person automatically reads a document that they are required to table it on request. And not with a member but certainly with a minister.

So if I read this again: "A Minister of the Crown may not read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he is prepared to lay it upon the Table. Similarly, it has been accepted that a document which has been cited by a Minister

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I find myself trying to talk over noise.

"Similarly, it has been accepted that a document which has been cited by a Minister ought to be laid upon the Table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interests. A Minister who summarizes a correspondence, but does not actually quote from it, is not bound to lay it upon the Table. The rule for the laying of cited documents does not apply to private letters or memoranda."

We have that dealt with in other areas of Beauchesne. Beauchesne in subparagraph 495 section (6) states quite clearly that a private Member may not table a document voluntarily or otherwise. And it says: "A private Member has neither the right nor the obligation to table an official, or any other, document."

Finally, Erskine May's 20th edition, at page 434, refers indirectly to the rule against tabling by private Members. And it states: "There is no rule to prevent Members not connected with the Government from citing documents in their possession, both public and private, which are not before the House, even though the House would not be able to form a correct judgement from the partial extracts.

The 19th edition of May at page 432 goes on to say in this regard: "... inconvenient latitude has sometimes been permitted, which it is doubtful whether any rule but that of good taste could have restrained."

In other words, although private members may not table there is no

rule to prevent them citing a document which cannot be before the House, inconvenient as that may be.

The most comprehensive ruling we have found in our reports was made by a Deputy Speaker in 1978 (April 25, Page 4037). A member refused to table a document which he had quoted concerning allegations of wrongdoing. In arguing that the document should be tabled the Government House Leader quoted Beauchesne Paragraph 159, Subsection (3), now Paragraph 495, Subsection (2) which applies not to members but to ministers, as stated before. The Speaker in ruling that the document must be tabled cited the authorities in respect of ministers tabling and members citing documents not before the House and I quote: "Another rule or principle of debate may be here added. A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a dispatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he is prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevents counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

It has also been admitted that a document which had been cited ought to be laid upon the table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interests. A Minister who summarizes a correspondence, but does not actually quote from it, is not bound to lay it upon the table. The rule for the laying of cited documents cannot be held to

apply to private letters or memoranda." We have different rulings on that, as I said before.

The citation is in the paragraph dealing with ministers in both the 19th and 20th Edition of May but it is different in the wording of the 20th Edition and it clarifies the situation, and it is this: "Similarly it has been accepted that a document which has been cited by a Minister ought to be laid upon the table of the House if it can be done without injury to the public interests".

Finally the May quotation pointing out the inconvenience of allowing the citing of documents by private members who are not permitted to table is quoted: "Members not connected with the Government have also cited documents in their possession, both public and private, which were not before the House; but though the House is equally unable to form a correct judgement from partial extracts, inconvenient latitude has sometimes been permitted, which it is doubtful whether any rule but that of good taste could be restrained."

A ruling of March 3, 1981 respecting the tabling of exhibits, cited in the House recently, concluded that while exhibits could not be tabled by private members they could table documents. While Beauchesne was quoted in support of the prohibition against tabling exhibits no authority was cited respecting documents. The Chair must assume that the Speaker and the hon. Government House Leader, or Opposition House Leader alluded to this. The Chair must assume that the Speaker of the day was relying on the practice that had evolved relating to documents,

which appears to have been largely by consent.

In reviewing our practices and the authorities on which they were based the Chair is led to the conclusion that the House has been relying on a practice which was based on imprecise interpretation of the authorities, which resulted from a lack of clarity in both earlier editions of Beauchesne and Erskine May which have been corrected in later editions. So, rather than perpetuate this misapprehension the Chair feels obligated to bring the matter to the attention of members and to rule in accordance with the authorities that only ministers may table documents and that members have neither the right nor the obligation to do so. Of course members can do so with the consent of the House. And I point out again for hon. members that Speaker Bosley interpreted the rules in Beauchesne so stringently that he would not allow the tabling of documents even by consent, but I will inform hon. members that the rules by subsequent Speakers have not adhered to that and they have allowed the tabling of documents by consent.

I would also like to point out to hon. members that the tabling of documents never became a large issue in this Assembly until the early 80's. Two exceptions were in 1973, when it was ruled that private members could not table documents during the time of routine business for the tabling of reports by Standing and Special Committees. Gradually with the more formal establishment of Committees it was established that only the Chairman of such Committees were permitted to present the reports of these

Committees.

Therefore in this respect we have witnessed an evolutionary development of the rules and procedures to meet the changing requirements and complexities of the House. And furthermore, because of more recent clarifications by Erskine May and Beauchesne we are now provided with a more precise definition of the rules and are able to make more definite and certain decisions relating to the whole area of tabling documents that was not previously the case.

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you for that very comprehensive clarification. I just wonder as a further example

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: I just wonder as a further point of order if Your Honour would indicate then in this whole issue if members, for example, on this side are standing asking questions and quote from a letter signed or unsigned, whatever, there is no point in members opposite, for example, yelling out and saying, 'Table it! Table it!', because a member here on this side, for example, is not permitted to table it. Is that clear?

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: There are two points the hon. Opposition House Leader raises there. And one would have to go to Beauchesne, and I said

that when it came to letters, private letter and memoranda that there were extra rules in Beauchesne dealing with that. And I believe - I do not have the quotation in front of me now - but I believe that it is clearly stated that hon. members should not cite from unsigned letters. I believe that is pretty clear, but that is something that we can look at. But again one only depends on the ruling by Erskine May of the good taste and courtesy of hon. members. But to deal with the other matter, the Opposition House Leader is quite correct in that hon. members may say 'table the document' but it has no validity.

Orders of the Day

Mr. Baker: Motion 2, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to ask leave to introduce a bill entitled, "An Act To Revise And Amend The Law Respecting A Pension Plan For Employees Of The Government Of The Province And Others." (Bill No. 74).

On motion, Bill No. 74 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

Mr. Baker: Motion 3, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to ask leave to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Revise And Amend The Law Respecting Pensions For Members of The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary And The St. John's Fire Department And The Staff Of Her Majesty's Penitentiary." (Bill No. 75).

On motion, Bill No. 75 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.

Mr. Baker: Order 10, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act to Repeal The Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) Act". (Bill No. 42).

Mr. Speaker: We are into second reading and debating an amendment.

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

Mr. R. Aylward: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand I only have a minute left or thirty seconds and I will clue up very quickly on this note, that it is obvious from the debate that the MHAs cannot do the job of the Ombudsman. That argument has been put to bed with this debate and it is obvious that the Appeal Boards, the argument used by the President of Treasury Board cannot do the job. If you look at page eighty-eight in this year's report, you can see that the Ombudsman solved a case that the appeal system could not solve.

There are no cost savings because if the Minister of Finance was serious about cost savings, he would have eliminated the Newfoundland Information Services, which would not be as drastic a step as this one and saved an extra \$120,000.

Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier and the Government to hold public meetings on this matter and it was refused. I asked them to allow the Ombudsman to come before the Bar of this House and plead his case, which I think would have been a courtesy, and that was refused. Now I ask, when the President of Council gets up to clue up debate, I ask, that at least the Government would allow the Members on their side of the House to have a free vote on this matter, because as I understand

it, there is at least one Member over there who is not very comfortable with what is happening with this Legislation, so, I will finish my debate, Mr. Speaker, by asking The President of Council if he will free the Members on that side of the House to have a free vote on this matter, which I believe to be of vital importance to the democratic society and continuance of democracy in this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

Mr. Hewlett: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll have a few brief words on this bill. The hon. the Leader of the Opposition has spoken for two hours, at some length on this particular matter. The critic, the hon. the Member for Grand Falls, the Opposition House Leader has spoken for an hour and the hon. Member for Kilbride has also spoken quite eloquently on this particular bill.

First when this matter came up, it was referenced in the Budget Speech this year, Mr. Speaker, and it came across to hon. Members as a cost saving measure. However, as this particular session of our Assembly evolved, it became obvious that this would not be a cost saving measure; at first Government indicated savings in the order of a couple of hundred thousand dollars, then as numbers were being bandied about as the days progressed, that rose to \$400,000, but when it was pointed out that the incumbent in the position involved has a six year contract to run and may have contract buy-out rights, pension rights etc., the line that this was a savings measure was

eventually dropped.

The Minister of Health, in a rather unfortunate comment indicated, and it may or may not be indicated in Hansard, Mr. Speaker, that the present incumbent in the job was a political hack. The Minister of Health spoke rather eloquently last night and skated much more elegantly than Wayne Gretzky could on very thin ice and basically spent his half hour trying to explain away the comment that the person in the post at present is somehow a political appointment and therefore not worthy of the position or the position is not worthy of being kept.

So, that particular line did not wash and especially, Mr. Speaker, when people from this side of the House pointed out that when the current incumbent's term was up, some years ago, I think in 1985, a number of Members of the Liberal Opposition of the day, some of whom now sit on the Government side, were extremely praiseworthy of the incumbent and indicated that his record was such that they would be unanimously supporting his re-appointment to the position.

Government has also used the line that the position is no longer needed, it is redundant, that the multiplicity of appeals boards and tribunals, the existence of public forums, such as our open line shows etc., access to instantaneous electronic media, have all helped the public bring their concerns forward, to help put pressure on Government to have their grievances redressed etc.

The other line that the Government has used, Mr. Speaker, is that members of the House of Assembly, along with the open line shows and

other appeals forums would provide the services of an Ombudsman for people living in their districts. The fallacy in that argument, Mr. Speaker, is quite simply this, that neither Bill Rowe nor Andy Wells nor Chris Greene, in Corner Brook, an MHA or an Appeals Board have the type of legislative power that resides in the Office of the Ombudsman; these people do not have the right to order things to be done, to subpoena documents and evidence, to order redress where it is, in the judgment of the Ombudsman, a matter that an individual has been wronged, either deliberately or accidentally, by the actions of the Government or its bureaucracy.

So, therefore, Mr. Speaker, I must say, after listening to the train of debate for the last little while, I was puzzled and it reminded me of a play that was at the Arts and Culture Centre, I guess a year or so ago, regarding a certain minister of the Crown and the actor portraying the minister basically said that he was puzzled. Mr. Speaker, I was puzzled, Tom was puzzled, Len was puzzled, Norm was puzzled, Kevin was puzzled. We were all puzzled, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we were stumped, and it took some reflection to really come to grips with why the Government is going through with this. All the arguments put forward as to why the Ombudsman's Office should be eliminated eventually where shot down and, as I indicated, I was puzzled, and I was stumped. But no longer, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Efford: Stumped about what? You have been stumped all your life.

Mr. Hewlett: Now that I reflect on it, Mr. Speaker, it makes

sense, and it makes sense from this particular point of view - I think the hon. the Member for Kilbride pointed it out in his presentation to the House. There was, sometime after the last election, a move afoot, I do believe, to offer the position of Ombudsman to a prominent Liberal supporter in the Province.

An Hon. Member: Name him!

Mr. Hewlett: I am not going to name the individual on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker. That would be inappropriate. But, needless to say, when the offer was made I do not think the Government fully understood the ramifications of such an offer and it was quickly found out that the post involved would involve a ten year commitment on the part of someone taking the post, it would involve, indeed, laying off the current incumbent who still had a six month contract in hand.

As a result, that particular turn of events became impractical, Mr. Speaker, especially in times when we are into restraint. It became impractical to carry out that sort of move, so I think, indeed, as my friend from Humber East pointed out in her presentation, in a fit of pique the Government decided the best thing to do is eliminate the post altogether.

But, more importantly, Mr. Speaker, the reason the post of Ombudsman has to go is because the post of Ombudsman, regardless of the incumbent having the post, the post has power, Mr. Speaker. An individual private member of this House, a member of the general public in dealing with the Government, in dealing with the Government bureaucracy, does not have power. We do not have the

power to order things to be done, we do not have the power to subpoena evidence, we do not have the power to order redress. And I think this is a Government, Mr. Speaker, that has a very centralized concept of power. Power resides almost exclusively in the hands of one man in this Government, a moderate amount perhaps in certain senior ministers, but this Government has a fixation with centralized power. It does not have the nerve to take the power of the Auditor General away from him, Mr. Speaker. That, I do believe, would be regarded with a great degree of public outrage, both by the media and by members of the general public. But this position is probably not as well known to the general public of the Province, its role is not as appreciated as that of the Auditor General, and, therefore, it is a position of power that this Government can move in on and can eliminate.

This position, Mr. Speaker, presents in a very small and, I would suggest, miniscule way, a threat to the administration in very general terms, not in any specific case. But this position has power, and the move to get rid of this position is an indication of the single-mindedness of this administration, the single-mindedness of the leadership of this administration. This desire to remove this position is indicative of the iron will that will not bend but may yet snap, Mr. Speaker.

The Premier runs a very tight ship. There is no one in this Province with any doubts whatsoever that he is 100 per cent totally in charge. I have watched Ministers in this House learn the

hard way that the Premier is totally in charge, Mr. Speaker, and I do not think the Premier wants officers of this House or any officers of the Government to have any sort of power independent of his own. So, Mr. Speaker, in addition to shutting down half of the Province, this particular Government now is going to shut down an independent office, an office of this particular Assembly, an office with independent power. And I think that is by far and away the main reason this administration is eliminating this office: this administration will brook no attempt on the part of any person or institution to interfere with its exercise of power.

Mr. Speaker, this is what it is all about. It is not about giving the power to Bill Rowe or Andy Wells or Chris Greene or any individual Member of this Assembly, it is not about giving the power to appeal tribunals, it is about taking the power away from an officer of this Assembly who does not sit around the Cabinet table of this administration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Port au Port.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say very few words about this bill. I have served under the Ombudsman in this Province for a number of years, and I have always had great respect for the work the Ombudsman has done. Mr. Speaker, it certainly is a backward step as far as the Province is concerned, and it certainly gives us a black eye in the eyes of the other Provinces in Canada, in Britain, and, indeed, in other Commonwealth countries.

The Ombudsman is a good idea. It was conceived in the late sixties and early seventies, and it was conceived at the same time that the idea of a Public Accounts Committee, the idea of a watchdog over Governments, was conceived. Mr. Speaker, when I first came into this House we did not have a proper Public Tendering Act, and I remember the Member for St. John's East then, who is now a Justice of the Supreme Court, sitting down in that corner and pushing for a good Public Tendering Act for this Province. And how far we have come, Mr. Speaker, since 1975, when public tendering was not what it should have been.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the idea of an Ombudsman was put there for the same reason, so that a person, the citizens of this province, of this country, who had for whatever reasons, and usually they are political - we have seen in this House of Assembly, since this debate started, Ministers saying, well, you did it to me when I was over there, I will now do it to you. Or letters not being answered. I do not remember specific instances, but this was the reason the Ombudsman was put there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Government did not like the person who was the Ombudsman, but I do not think they should have thrown out the baby with the bathwater.

Mr. Efford: Why?

Mr. Hodder: Because, Mr. Speaker... no, no, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for silence. The Minister of Social Services is up to his old tricks again. I only have very few words to say, and intend to say them.

Mr. Speaker, it was just recently I saw in The Evening Telegram an ad - well, it was about six months ago or so, or perhaps a year - from the Province of Alberta, which was advertising for an Ombudsman. And what amazed me, Mr. Speaker, is that they did not go to their own Province alone to advertise for an Ombudsman for Alberta, but advertised all across Canada.

An Hon. Member: Did you apply for it?

Mr. Hodder: No, Mr. Speaker, I did not apply for it, but I was tempted. Mr. Speaker, one of my old teachers, Professor Dan McAllister, who was a professor at UNB when I attended there, and taught me, he was the first Ombudsman of New Brunswick, and he carried out that job with a lot of dignity. I must say, Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman's office in some of the Provinces has had a higher profile than it has had in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I remember when the Ombudsman brought in reports. Because one of the things the Ombudsman could do when there was a problem - I do not know if it was under the Conservative administration, but I remember that the rule was that if the Public Service Commission were to recommend a number of three people to a Minister for hiring, that number one would be hired.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Hodder: The Public Service Commission, I do not know what the rules are now but these were the rules. I was sitting here in Opposition, in the Member's party, when the Public Service Commission would recommend three names and

the rule, when the former administration was in power, was that number one would be picked. If number two was picked -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hodder: No, no, Mr. Speaker, I must tell -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!
Order, please!

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, I will tell the Minister that there is on public record an Ombudsman's report to this House of Assembly, where a Minister of the Crown, a Conservative Minister at the time, had hired number two instead of number one, and without the concurrence of the Premier and reasons being given, and when he could not get satisfaction, he brought the matter in in a special report to the House of Assembly and thereby made it public.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was one -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Hodder: That was before the Member's time. But, Mr. Speaker, that was done. As I said before, when I walked into this House in 1975 there was no Public Tender Act. The Public Accounts Committee, the Ombudsman, was a move across the country and across the Commonwealth and across the democratic countries to bring justice to the system and to get rid of the old-style politics, and we cannot blame the old Premiers of the Province for being the way they were, because democracies have changed across Canada pretty well in line with each other. In

the days of Canada's formation - I mean, we have all read the history books and we know that societies advance. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the advances in society was the Ombudsman.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the Member has read the Ombudsman's Act, but what the Government is saying, on the other side, is that anybody can do this job, that a Member of the House of Assembly can be an Ombudsman, that someone on an open line show can be an Ombudsman. But, Mr. Speaker, in the Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) Act, 'The Commissioner', section 22, 'may summons before him and examine on oath any person who is an officer, an employee or member of any Department or agency who, in the Commissioner's opinion, is able to give information referred to in the subsection.' And on it goes, Mr. Speaker. We cannot do that as Members of this House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, section 27: 'For the purposes of the Act the Commissioner may at any time enter upon the premises occupied by the Department or agency and inspect the premises subject to sections 20 and 21 and carry out therein an investigation.' I believe 21 is that there has to be notice. And, Mr. Speaker, under section 28: 'With prior approval of the Lieutenant-Governor the Commissioner may by writing under his hand delegate to any person that power.' - he may delegate that power.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are clearly things that Members of the House of Assembly are not able to do, that no one else in this Province is able to do. So that, as we have seen in many cases, where governments do things which hurt

the individual in this Province, and where the government stonewalls, at least the Ombudsman had the power to do these things.

Mr. Speaker, section 31: 'Any person who, without lawful jurisdiction or excuse, wilfully obstructs, hinders or resists the Commissioner or any other person in the exercise of his powers are guilty of an offense liable under summary conviction.' Mr. Speaker, how does that jibe with Members of the House of Assembly who may question? All we have, Mr. Speaker, is the ability to come in here and make a noise! Mr. Speaker, we have no ability to carry papers, to enter premises, to call for papers. We have none of these abilities. But, Mr. Speaker, the Ombudsman did; it was a safeguard for the citizens of this Province.

Mr. Efford: Sit down, boy. Sit down.

Mr. Hodder: There we are, Mr. Speaker. There we are. There we have the old nightcrawler, Mr. Speaker. His greatest contribution to the House of Assembly is to sit there and moan and groan.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible) write the questions for you and send them over (inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Oh, yes, Mr. Speaker. The day will come when the Minister has to write me a question and send it over. That will be the day! The Minister gets upset because I do not ask him questions when he wants me to. Well, I tell the Minister, I will ask the questions when I want to. He may be a dictator in his Department, but he is not going to dictate to me or dictate to this

House of Assembly. Mr. Speaker, he is just a nasty, arrogant man, the Minister of Social Services.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, that is all I had to say. They say when you get into a shooting match with a skunk you are always going to lose.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hodder: I think this is a terrible move. I think it puts the Province in a terrible light across this country, and I think it is a backward move. If you are going to do away with the Ombudsman, you may as well do away with the Public Accounts Committee and The Public Tendering Act, because it all means the same thing. Members opposite are just smarting and hurting, and they do not believe what they are saying.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The question we are voting on is the amendment. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? All those in favour 'aye'.

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: Those against 'nay'.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the nays have it.

If the hon. the President of Treasury Board speaks now he will close debate on the bill.

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I explained in the introduction, this particular bill was indicated in the Throne Speech this year. It was indicated that we would be bringing in legislation to repeal The Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) Act and we have now done so. I have explained the reasons, and members opposite have dealt with the reasons one at a time. I have indicated the changes that have taken place in the last number of years in Government and in the civil service of this Province, and in the facilities available to MHAs. Members opposite have taken the arguments one at a time and dealt with them, and in each case they have indicated that MHAs by themselves cannot take over the duties simply because the powers are not there, and then they have dealt with the boards and so on.

The one thing I would like to say at this point, Mr. Speaker, is that I guess no one individual, or no one avenue has exactly the same duties and powers as the Ombudsman, but the combination of the boards, the MHAs, and the mechanisms that are in place, we feel adequately cover and protect citizens of this Province from decisions made by Government that may be not exactly in the interest of the particular citizens. So, Mr. Speaker, that is the only comment I would want to make about the debate at this point. We have a Committee stage to go through yet on this bill, as well as third reading, so I move second reading.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill be now read a second time? All those in favour 'aye'.

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: Those against 'nay'

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Carried.

Some Hon. Members: On division,
Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Call in the members.

Division

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House that the said motion be now read a second time?

All those in favour of the motion, please rise.

Some Hon. Members: Shame! Shame! Shame!

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, the hon. the Minister of Social Services, the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, Mr. Hogan, Mr. Reid, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Crane, the hon. the President of the Council, the hon. the Minister of Health, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Noel, Mr. Gover, Mr. Penney, Mr. Barrett, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, the hon. the Minister of Justice, Mr. Grimes, the hon. the Minister of Education, the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dumaresque, Mr.

Short, Mr. Langdon.

Mr. Simms: What a shameful act! You should resign, the lot of you.

Mr. Speaker: All those against the motion, please rise.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hewlett, Mr. Doyle, Ms Verge, Mr. Simms, Mr. R. Aylward, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Woodford, Mr. Hodder, Mr. A. Snow, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Warren, Mr. Power.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Clerk (Ms Duff): Mr. Speaker, ayes 24, nays 14.

Mr. Speaker: I declare the motion carried.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Repeal The Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman) Act," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House, on tomorrow. (Bill No. 42).

Mr. Baker: Order 16, Mr. Speaker.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Reconstitute Newfoundland And Labrador Development Corporation Limited And Certain Divisions Of The Department Of Development As Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation" (Bill No. 72).

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce this Bill on behalf of the hon. Charles J. Furey, Minister of Development, who is unavoidably absent at the

time. This particular Act, To Reconstitute Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation Limited and Certain Divisions of the Department of Development as Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, is an extremely important bill.

Mr. Speaker, what is being done essentially is that a new Crown corporation has been set up, and that corporation takes over some of the responsibilities of the Department of Development, and the responsibilities it takes over are those having to do with the development of small business in the Province, as well as taking over the duties of NLDC, Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, which has been in existence for some time. NLDC and sections or segments of the Department of Development have been put together into a brand-new Crown corporation.

The purpose of this Crown corporation is outlined in great detail in the bill, but essentially what it is going to do is it is going to provide a decentralized mechanism to promote economic growth in the Province; it is going to provide mechanisms around this Province, in the regions of the Province, mechanisms for easier access to Government programs, mechanisms to ensure that people who have ideas for the development of small business in the Province have an opportunity to present their ideas to people, not here in St. John's, not in Confederation Building, but people all over this Province who have the power to make decisions and who have the power to distribute various types of loans or access to various types of money without having to come into Confederation Building. It is a

very important step in the decentralization of Government, it is a very important step in ensuring that there is local control over the local areas.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could go through all the sections of the particular bill. Some of them are self-explanatory. Obviously Section 1, The Short Title, and Section 2, The Definitions, are self-explanatory. Section 3 deals with the Establishment of the corporation and it makes clear that this is a new corporation, that it is neither NLDC nor the Department of Development, but is a combination of the two into a brand-new Crown corporation.

Sections 4, 5, and 6 deal with the scope of the corporation and the connection between Rural Development and the old NLDC Corporation. The scope of the corporation is dealt with. The status in Section 7, and the Board of Directors in Section 8 are, again, self-explanatory, Mr. Speaker.

Sections 9, 10 and 11 are very important sections that members of the Opposition obviously will want to spend some time on. These have to do with the objects of the corporation, the powers of the corporation, and the powers of the board of the corporation. There is quite an extensive list, and I should point out at this time, Mr. Speaker, that this list is taken from, or derived from a list that previously existed which would describe the objectives and the powers and duties of the Economic Recovery Commission. So this is in very close alliance with the powers and the duties of the Economic Recovery Commission.

Section 12, The By Laws,

self-explanatory. The powers to borrow: I am sure members of the Opposition will want to spend some time on the powers to borrow, because that is really important.

Section 17: The Corporation, subject to the approval of Cabinet, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, may borrow money for its purposes by way of temporary, interim or long-term loans; and secure repayment of money borrowed by: included in there would be the issuing of bonds, debentures, or other securities of the corporation, executing and delivering mortgages, assignments, conveyances, and so on. So there is a detailed list of methods or powers that this corporation has to borrow or to get access to money - and the money may be borrowed at the rate of interest and upon those terms and conditions, and may be secured in the form that the board approves. So, Mr. Speaker, there are extensive powers to borrow.

The next few sections, up to section 25, deal with borrowing, deal with guarantees of payments, and agreements that can be reached, short-term loans and appropriations. The Financial Year, Section 26, is the same as the financial year of the Province. Yearly budgets must be prepared, Section 27. Section 28 deals with the revision of budgets and so on. So the remaining sections are merely proforma sections that have to be there to limit and describe what the corporation can do. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the main sections of this bill, the very important sections are 9, 10 and 11, which really outline the powers the board has.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I could go

through each section and describe it in detail, but I am sure Members Opposite have had ample opportunity to look at this corporation that already has been constituted, that in essence is functioning out in the field now. I am sure that Opposition Members may have some questions about that, but the corporation is functioning in the field now, they have set up five regions of the Province: they have a presence in Labrador, they have a presence on the West Coast, a presence in Central Newfoundland, a presence on the East Coast, a presence in St. John's. And the decentralization I mentioned earlier has in fact been done, and decisions are being made. Granted, they are being made now under NLDC. When this Act passes, then they can quite properly proceed under the name Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation. Mr. Speaker, it gives me tremendous pleasure to introduce this bill on behalf of the Minister of Development.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

Mr. Woodford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister responsible for Treasury Board, in his summarizing of the bill, in his last few words, said this Enterprise Newfoundland has been functioning for some time. That was one of the questions I asked last night in our Committee, why it took so long, why it took eighteen months to bring this particular bill, Bill 72, to the Legislature.

Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador has been operating for some time out in the different regions of the Province over the last eighteen months. I would say

more specifically the last three or four months, the real operation or capabilities of the Corporation has come into play. But why did it take so long for a bill such as this to come to the floor of the House, and why in the last couple of days or the last week or so that the House is sitting this fall if it is so important?

If it is so important and the Administration thinks it is of such importance to the people of this Province and to the way it is going to conduct some of its blending, I suppose, of the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation and the Rural Development Authority especially, how they are going to conduct their business over the next little while, Mr. Speaker, then it begs the question why, at the last minute, is it brought into the House?

Mr. Speaker, this says that the Act shall come into force on January 1st, 1991. So no Member here is under any illusion that the Government with its majority can put the bill through, and in a very short period of time. That is well understood. When I asked last night in our short meeting on this particular bill with the officials who are responsible for the institution of the bill and the management of the affairs of Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador over the next number of years, we were voted down by Members of the Committee who said no, there would be no public hearings.

An Hon. Member: Terrible! Shame!

Mr. Woodford: My reasons for asking for public hearings, Mr. Speaker, is simply this: That there may be someone out there who

has been involved in small business over the years and involved in the Rural Development Associations. I have had some comments, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure members opposite have, from members of Development Associations in the Province expressing certain concerns about Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, and about the Economic Recovery Commission itself and its approach to Development Associations in the Province. So I thought by having public hearings some of those people may be able to appear before the Committee and make their views known.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, in going through the bill one of the things that comes to mind is the responsibility of the Department of Development. All the lending through the Department of Development, that was done before through the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, has now been passed into the hands of the Economic Recovery Commission. It is under another name, namely Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, but really no lending will be done unless it is sanctioned by the ERC.

If you gave a lot of successful businesspeople in this Province the job of enhancing the employment opportunities in this Province and then told them that they have a bank with very broad powers and any amount of dollars to do their job with, then I guarantee you that a lot of those people would be able to do the same job and do it very quickly with just one person and a very small staff. They would not want five or six people on a board getting \$75,000 a year, along with setting up offices in every region

of the Province, along with all new furniture, cars, computers, and so on, to carry out the affairs and carry out the aspirations of a lot of businesspeople in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, going through the bill and asking some of the questions I asked last night on the Committee, some of the things that come to mind, I suppose a few comments, because I had most of the questions answered last night by Dr. House and some of the other officials who were present at the meeting, except for the involvement and the broad powers and the amount of funding that can be accessed at any given time through the ERC, and the taking away of the powers of the Minister, a Minister of the Crown who was duly elected by the people of the Province to serve this Province, and the only person, I might add, who would be answerable come election day on any mistakes or successes he might have made in his term of office. The members of the Economic Recovery Commission are answerable to nobody except the Premier himself and that, to me, is taking away from the powers of the Minister responsible for a Department who was duly elected to carry out that right.

The Economic Recovery Commission in this Province is really the Cabinet of the Province, a Cabinet that was duly selected by the Premier to carry out the duties of managing the affairs of this Province. They are the Economic Recovery Commission of this Province. They were selected to do just that, and they are the people who are answerable for each and every Cabinet Minister on that side of the House. One of the concerns I had was, what was going

to happen to the Rural Development Authority? The Rural Development Authority Board had always played a significant role, a very important role, in the affairs of small business of this Province. It acted separately, under a different Department.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation always was to me, Mr. Speaker, the same as a commercial bank in this Province they had the same attitudes. I say again, and I said it before, they had no social conscience, as far as I am concerned. They only catered to something that came like a mega project, or someone looking for \$200,000, \$300,000, or probably \$400,000 or \$500,000. If you came in as a small businessman and mentioned the fact that you were possibly looking for \$30,000 or \$40,000, well, then, they looked at you as if you had two heads - what are you doing in here? And if you did get it, you paid the same price as you would to any lending institution. There was absolutely no difference in the amount of interest paid to NLDC than was paid to a commercial institution in this Province. In fact, if you had a good record and you were a good client of any lending institution in this Province, you could come out with a better rate. I have seen that happen.

So the only source and the only other avenue that small businesspeople have in this Province, and when I say small business people, Mr. Speaker, I am not just talking about the rural areas of the Province, but they are the areas of the Province that I knew more about and I was closer to and had a feeling for, but pretty well all over the Province, even the urban centres accessed

funding through the Rural Development Authority over the years and, I might add, the majority of those people were very successful and went on to run very successful businesses in this Province.

But one of the reasons they accessed and they came to the Rural Development Authority, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned to Dr. House last night, and I pleaded with him, look, make sure, although the Rural Development Authority Board is integrated with Enterprise Newfoundland, that the flexibility still remained to treat certain aspects of small business in this Province the same as they did under the Rural Development Authority.

Now under that Authority they made loans at three percentage points below prime. It was much the same as the ACOA Program, whereby I think one part of it was a 6 or 7 per cent buy-down, an interest buy-down on certain loans. Now that to me, was vitally important. The answer given to me last night, Mr. Speaker, was that this would be looked at at a meeting. I think it would be on December 12, that they would look at the possibility of that. They gave no guarantee, absolutely no guarantee, but a commitment. They did understand where I was coming from and where other members were coming from, and they gave a commitment that that would be addressed, I think it is on December 12.

An Hon. Member: They encouraged you to meet with them on that issue.

Mr. Woodford: Yes, as the member said they encouraged me to meet with them on that issue. But I

cannot go along to the Economic Recovery Commission and say I would like to sit down and talk to you. I am not going to do that. But if they ask for some advice, if they think there is anything I can add to it, I certainly will, the same as I would do in my district.

An Hon. Member: That is why they asked you to come, they thought you had something to contribute.

Mr. Woodford: When anybody asked me about that particular program in the district, Mr. Speaker, I was always glad to tell them about it, and always glad to help them with their applications, if necessary. But that is one of the things that should stay there. I think this would benefit each and every member in this Legislature, and every small businessperson in this Province, that some flexibility should be left in Enterprise Newfoundland to look after the needs and aspirations of the small businessman in this Province, and especially an incentive such as the program that was always there, whereby they accessed funding at three percentage points below prime.

It gave them that little chance. If they walked into a bank to look for \$10,000 and they had \$40,000 worth of collateral, they had no problem; the bank would write off a cheque, sign everything over to them, and give them the \$10,000. But I will guarantee you, once you missed your first, second or third payment, it is give me, give me, give me; and they might give you a call, and they may give you a second one, but I will guarantee you when it came to the third one, there was a sheriff knocking on the door, calling in the loans, and calling in the promissory

notes and everything else that you signed, you had no chance. But under the Rural Development Authority there was some flexibility. If someone had a hard time for a few months due to weather conditions or a breakdown of equipment, as often happened, especially anybody involved in the woods industry, or there was a poor tourism season and some one had just put up some nice cabins and all of a sudden, as Buddy Wassisname says 'the arse dropped out of her', they could come in and ask the minister for some forgiveness and for some extra time to repay their loans, and they did not move on them, they gave them a chance. That chance should still be left there, and I stressed that fact last night. And I think it will. I think the people who were there last night took our concerns to heart and I think they will probably institute that in the new Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador. So I would like to stress that. You know, it is one of the most important parts of that particular Rural Development Authority that I would like to spend time on.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have to tell anybody here who is associated with the rural development associations in the Province, in the rural areas of the Province, that first of all when they walk into a bank, unless they are experienced, unless they have some dealings with regard to mortgages or some type of business, when you walk into any lending institution in this Province, especially the banks, the very fact that an individual sat down with his application, or if not an application his idea in his head, he is intimidated by the individual in front of him. And that is another example, Mr.

Speaker, of what should be done with Enterprise Newfoundland.

I have looked around the Province at the five regions and I have seen the appointments of the Presidents, or so-called CEOs of each region as bankers - former bankers. And I said before, Mr. Speaker, the banks in the country, in this Province have no social conscience. And what I was afraid of, and my concerns are still there today, is that once they get down in the offices of Enterprise Newfoundland that they will have the same attitude. That attitude has got to go. I was told last night by Dr. House that one of the first things he told his Chairmen of the different regions was this - and it is a good sign - that yesterday you were a banker and today you are a developer. If that attitude stays there, when an individual sits down in front of him, then it should not -

An Hon. Member: Do you support that?

Mr. Woodford: Yes, I support it - then it should not be too much trouble to take that individual by the hand, if necessary, and lead him out into another office and say, Look, there is a gentleman here who can help you with your application. No guarantee of funding. I do not believe in throwing good money after bad. I am not saying that. What I am saying, and I would like to stress, Mr. Speaker, and some of the Cabinet ministers here can bring it back to the minister responsible for Development, is that they should not be left dangling. Every opportunity and every effort should be made to make sure that individual who walks into the office with an idea, or an idea and an

application at the same time, that he be given and afforded the opportunity to do his best with it. He may have it in his head - some people may have an idea in their head and cannot put it on the paper, but they may be able to run the business. Good managers in certain resource sectors in this Province cannot for the life of me fill out that application. I have seen it, other members in this House have seen it, and you are going to see it again. That is where we had better make sure that the buck does not stop in the office of a lender under Enterprise Newfoundland. There is an opportunity there for everybody in the resource sector in this Province, and in the service industry as well, to take advantage of some of the opportunities that are out there today.

We may be into a recession, Mr. Speaker, but the opportunities are still there. The opportunities are still there, but it takes someone to grasp them. Someone has to take hold and someone has to take it and go with it and run. And the opportunities will be there under this. If it is done right under the organization itself, it can be positive. But with that always comes a word of caution. I said earlier that not because an individual comes in with an idea or an application that it is guaranteed. You have to take it, look at it, look at its merits and make sure that the individual gets a good, sound hearing.

When I left Dr. House and his people last night I made it quite clear that they should not lose sight of that. That is one of the basic things. And I served notice, I told the Chairman on the

west coast of the Province, Dave Tizzard, I said, 'Dave, I will guarantee you that I am going to be watching.' And I will be watching to see what happens to the constituents in my area when they go to this Department for funding. Now, if I think an individual is not going to do it or I think it is bad, I will say it. But if I think it is a good idea and he needs help and he does not get it, I am also going to be very critical, and rightly so, because that is my job.

The amounts mentioned by Dr. House last night - I understood that when it was set up there would be approximately \$100,000 or \$150,000 on the local level - they would be able to go to \$100,000 or \$150,000 on the local level, but from the information last night it would be between \$75,000 and \$100,000. But even that is not bad on the local level. The other thing with this, to tie in with the amount of funding that can be approved on the local level, is the time factor. Under the Rural Development Authority it always was that if you went into the office in Corner Brook and made your application, it was probably there a couple or three weeks before it ever got out of Corner Brook, then it came out to St. John's and it went through another little board out here before it ever went up to the so-called Rural Development Board for approval or rejection. Now the individual never did know when it left the office in Corner Brook if he was recommended for approval or not. If he had to know that before it went out, he could have gone elsewhere, tried someone else, or something. This is one of the other things I stressed: have the turnaround, for God sake. Let people know within a very

short period of time, even a week to ten days, that they have a chance to access funding through the Department, or if not, let them go look somewhere else. But do not leave them hanging.

In questioning Dr. House last night I mentioned the ACOA funding, and the ACOA funding we used to have under the Rural Development Authority had a certain amount of stacking there, up to a maximum of \$60,000 between ACOA and the Rural Development Authority. If an application came in through the Rural Development Authority and the people in the Department thought they could access funds in the form of a grant, there was a certain portion that could be grantable under ACOA; they worked together on the same application, up to a maximum of \$60,000. There is a possibility of that particular part of it being changed. They are consulting now with ACOA officials to try to raise the maximums on that, and that will be beneficial to small and medium-sized businesses in this Province.

The resource sector of this Province, especially in the District of Humber Valley, which I represent, we have sawmillers, we have small pulpwood operators, we have pretty well all small tourism operators - cabins, hospitality homes - all kinds of outfitters, we have agriculture, pretty well every resource sector in the economy that can access and would be eligible to access funds through the Rural Development Authority, and now through Enterprise Newfoundland, and that is very important. For example, one that comes to mind is a sawmill assistance loan, or grant, or line of credit for operating,

whichever way you want to put it, whereby a sawmiller came in the Fall of the year, he did not want to saw in the Wintertime, because it is harder sawing and he did not have an avenue for his finished product - but the fellow in the woods could still cut. He would bring in his logs, the sawmiller would scale them, in the Spring of the year he would saw and the end product would go out in the Summertime and he would reimburse the Government in the Fall of the year. An excellent program. Because while the sawmill and the sawmiller were idle in the Wintertime, the jobbers and the people in the woods were kept busy and they could still bring their product to the mills. Also, small operators, jobbers in the woods, small operators with a timber jack and five or six men could access funding for their timber jack. And that is the way it is going to be, because the very reason for the ERC, or Enterprise Newfoundland, would be to create jobs, and to create jobs you have to have people, the small operators, the fellows who are going to hire the five, six, eight and ten people in this Province.

We are not going to have too many mega projects in this Province. We are not going to be able to depend on mega projects in this Province to take Newfoundland and Labrador out of the economic doldrums it is in today. We will have the Hibernias of the world, we will have the Churchill Falls of the world, but we are going to have to come right back and depend on the small businessman in this Province if we are going to survive as a Province at all, if we have any chance whatsoever. Self-employment to those small operators today is the way to go. The tourism industry, the fishery,

agriculture, every one of those industries can access funds through this Department, or used to through the Rural Development Department, and I hope that nothing has changed in that regard.

Some of the reasons mentioned before by the ERC, when they said that past administrations did absolutely nothing to try to increase employment in this Province: What Government, what member of this House, sitting as a Minister on Government side, or whatever, would not make every effort to provide incentives for small business in this Province? It has been done, Mr. Speaker. They can say what they like. The Member for Mount Pearl was Minister of Development and Tourism for years. Nobody has to ask and say they did not make it. Everybody tried. They did their best. And you could put all the ERCs in place you like, you can set up all the banking institutions you like, unless you get the individual off the street and the person out there in rural Newfoundland, who has the idea to come in and ask for the funding and put the business in place, you can set up all the Commissions you like, you can have all the vending institutions you like, we are doing nothing in this Province, absolutely nothing.

There were incentives there for years, Mr. Speaker, and I mentioned some of them today in the Rural Development Authority, I mentioned some of the programmes through the Tourism subsidiary agreements - I mentioned some of those, and I mentioned those in the Agriculture Department. But I hope, more than any other Member in this House, that they create jobs and create lots of them. Because I will guarantee you, just

because it is called Economic Recovery, that does not mean a thing.

We need to recover - we need to recover - but I never saw an Administration yet in this Province that did not try to do something in the rural and urban areas of this Province to try to get Newfoundland out of its dependency on upper Canada and the UI and social assistance network which we have.

But trying with a population in a Province such as this, spread out over one of the biggest land masses in North America, one of the biggest, 570,000 people, as the Premier mentioned the other day - he obviously did not know it when he ran, because he did not understand 570,000 people were spread out over an area such as this, and there were 5,000 or 6,000 kilometres of road to keep up. We all knew it. I knew ever since I was a boy where I was living and what it cost to live in this Province, and I guess each and every Administration since then knew all too well what it cost to administer services in this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, getting into section 9(b) Promoting especially small and medium-sized enterprise, including private businesses, co-operatives, credit unions and community development corporations. In our questioning of Dr. House last night he confirmed that all - all - those organizations, development associations, cooperatives, could access funding through Enterprise Newfoundland.

The other concern I have is with Rural Development Associations. How would they access funds under

the Rural Development Subsidiary Agreement, for instance? That was always put through Development in conjunction with the Rural Development Board. So that funding will be in place and that funding will not change because the agreement that was put in place, I think it is 36.5 now; it was up in the last agreement and went from 25 or 26 up to 36.5. That will stay there, so the Rural Development Associations in the Province will not lose their amount of funding by any changes to Enterprise Newfoundland.

The powers of the Rural Development Association in the Province, Mr. Speaker, is something that I thought might be eroded. That is questionable yet. They are going to depend on the Rural Development Associations in this Province to try to take us out of this sad case of economics in which we are, the sad case of unemployment, but if they are going to help with it, they are going to have to be able to access more funding, they are going to have to be able to get answers out of the regional offices and get them fairly quickly, because the Development Associations, I must say, are close.

They are close in the communities, they know what is going on, they know if someone is interested in starting small business, and in some cases, Mr. Speaker - we did it when we were there, and they are doing it today and I think it is a good idea - the Development Associations usually have the expertise to do the applications, to go and access the funding and then, when they get it up and running, they pass it over to the private sector. We have a prime example of that in the community of Cormac in which I live. Every

animal that ever went out of it always went to the Hub Meat Packers in New Brunswick. To get anything slaughtered or anything like that, you would have to go to Deer Lake or probably further, Pasadena.

Now they have a slaughterhouse set up there, sponsored by the Development Association, and the necessary equipment in it. Now everybody brings their animals there: they are slaughtered, butchered and packaged. Moose, pork, anything they have, it is all put in there and it is one of the most successful businesses in the area today. They started off with one employee a year ago, this fall they had three employees working full time. Mr. Speaker, they did as high as 26,000 pounds of meat a week.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: No, (Inaudible). Twenty-six thousand pounds in a week that they - that is thirteen tons, you know, of meat, roughly. Cut up on a local level and packaged, working just an eight hour shift. So, beef, lamb, pork, moose, anything you want. And you could go and, especially this year where the weather was so warm, and the people - for instance the moose hunters, they could bring out their beef and for just a dollar a day, they could hang it in the cooler, and when the time was up they just get it cut and packaged and passed along to them.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: Oh, yes, oh yes. And it is very successful. In fact, to the stage now, it is a prime example, it is to the stage now whereby it could be passed over to a private business and he

could make money. No problem.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: Yes, there is one out there in Robinson's area too, I believe, that has been there for some time, I believe, I do not know...

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: Yes. And one of the reasons for it, and it was identified, but nobody could even get anybody to listen to them in the Department. Because Newfoundland Farm Products in Corner Brook killed nothing only the broilers. And they stopped doing the custom work. Fellow wanted to bring in an animal or a few turkeys, or anything at all, they could stop doing it. So there was an avenue there for someone to get into.

So, that is one example, and I can go on with many more, Mr. Speaker, but I will not get into that at this time. But to mention some of the things, Mr. Speaker, that were even mentioned by Dr. House that the former administration did: the implementation of the Newfoundland Stock Savings Plan that the Member from Mount Pearl was talking about the other day. We implemented that, and now it is gone. Very important to small business in this Province. But the first thing the Minister will probably say is: well there were only two or three people took advantage of it. But I say to the Minister, that under the circumstances and the economic situation in this Province today, that this is not the thing that you want to see about twenty-five or thirty applications, you have to wait until things change somewhat - and that is why I would say there is

low interest in this type of plan. But for any small companies today trying to get on their feet and start running that would have been an excellent programme.

'Reorganization of the community college system.' A quote from Dr. House, came out of the study on employment and unemployment. That was started and done. That has been changed again, taking autonomy away from certain areas of the Province. Two of the things that were worked on almost destroyed overnight. Third, the Province's Private Sector Employment Programme. An excellent programme that helped small business in the Province, paid 50 per cent of the wages up to a maximum of \$4 an hour, and I think it was twenty-six weeks, and, Mr. Speaker, that was gone.

Three right in a row mentioned by Dr. House, gone. Support for the service sector of the economy and literacy training initiative. There was \$600,000 I think put in the 1989 Budget, Mr. Speaker, for the literacy training, An excellent idea. But the only thing about it - how can you on one hand, put \$600,000 into the literacy programme in this Province to help out with the illiteracy in this Province, and on the other hand cut the libraries back 4.2 per cent. That to me is a bit hypocritical, and some of the areas that are going to suffer in this Province are the rural areas of the Province that need the services of a small library in their communities, and it looks very much like now that is going to go. But those are four or five of the ideas that were done by the previous administration and recommended under the Commission on Employment and Unemployment and now they are

after being instituted and almost gone overnight.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the questions I did not get the chance to ask last night and maybe the Minister might take it and find out why, that under the refrigerator check list in the past election of April 1989, one of the promises made was \$12.5 million extra for the Rural Development Agreement. Now, Mr. Speaker, the member could probably take that under advisement and probably see how much of that funding was actually accessed? How much was actually put in there? And let me know at an opportune time. But it was one of the promises made in the last election, and one of the promises, I might add, that is still being asked today and still being talked about today by the development associations of the Province.

Another fairness and balance in how funds are redistributed in the Province. This is another example of probably bringing out this particular promise from the refrigerator list, and see what is going to happen to the different regions of this Province. Because somewhere, Mr. Speaker, the Premier also said to develop regional assistance programs funded in direct proportion to the unemployment rate in a particular area. Now there is no better example for Enterprise Newfoundland and no better opportunity and chance for Enterprise Newfoundland than to carry out this promise than in the district in which I live. There would be an excellent opportunity and we will see what happens over the next little while. And concentration on small scale development rather than natural resource megaprojects. That was

the last one on the list.

So, Mr. Speaker, the jury will be out on Enterprise Newfoundland, and the jury will be out on the ERC, I would say for some time yet. But until we as members in areas of the Province check and make sure that we keep in contact with our constituents and see if those particular requests for lending are going to be brought in or not, we will probably never know about it.

But, Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that I would like to mention about the ERC, the broad powers given - Enterprise Newfoundland is one thing, it is an integration of Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, the Rural Development Authority mainly as a lending institution. But one of the big things in this, Mr. Speaker, and one of the big changes, and the question put to Dr. House last night was in Section 10 (e) and Section 10 (j), the so-called management or transaction committee - who they would be and how they would perform their duties - but mainly Section (j) which says 'Establish, incorporate, own and manage other corporations for investment purposes or to further the objects of the corporation.' Now that is pretty broad, Mr. Speaker. It was not involved I do not think, it was not included in any other sections of the acts, under The Rural Development Act or otherwise, and that gives ultimate power to the ER Commission to - for instance, one of the examples used was that they wanted to set up a tannery say in Baie Verte, for instance, that they would go in and they would initiate this particular type of business and then once it is up and running they could pass it over. But it

goes to show what I was getting at first that the power the ERC got over Enterprise Newfoundland and the monies that can be accessed by ERC to do its job.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, that the small businessman, or anybody I suppose who is trying to access funding in the Province, they will have a chance to appeal. If it is turned down on a regional level they have two other boards to go to and the final one is ERC itself. So that is a positive move, rather than to turn them down flat and they have nobody else to go to.

So, Mr. Speaker, except for some of the cost involved, I asked a few questions of that last night and my colleague for Torngat asked a few questions pertaining to salaries and so on. It was mentioned last night, and doing up some quick figures you could come up with probably around \$3 million just for the setting up of Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador. Approximately \$20 per square foot for office space average in the Province, and \$35,000 to \$40,000 for each office, and approximately \$675,000 for computers. Those figures were thrown out last night. So that \$675,000 for computers would mean the whole five regions; it is not just one office it's tied up in the whole five regions in the Province.

So, Mr. Speaker, to get back to what I said first. The question I asked is: why was this kept to the last minute? And if it was so important to the administration, why was it kept to the last couple of days before it was brought to the House?

And, Mr. Speaker, I would just

like to say in ending that, as I said before, the jury is still out on the ERC and the Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, and I for one will be watching for the verdict. Thank you.

Mr. Windsor: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Mount Pearl.

Mr. Windsor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I was waiting, I thought surely somebody opposite was going to address this piece of legislation.

An Hon. Member: Later on.

Mr. Windsor: Later on. I suspect there is nobody else from that side going to speak except the President of Treasury Board.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Windsor: You are going to speak after me? Speak to tourism, I assume.

An Hon. Member: No.

Mr. Windsor: I think it is important, Mr. Speaker, in opening, important to note, first of all, that the Minister is not even here to defend this piece of legislation which basically amounts to a total restructuring of his department. A total restructuring of his department, and he is not here to speak to the legislation, to introduce the legislation, to answer questions that we may wish to ask relating to his department and to this new corporation, which is a total departure from tradition. The Minister should, in fact, be here. I can appreciate he may be travelling, and travelling quite a

bit lately, but I just would have thought that he would be here, at least for this. The question now, Mr. Speaker, is why is he not here? I wonder why the Minister is not here. Perhaps it has something to do with the legislation, Mr. Speaker. All the legislation does is -- I was about to say it is rearranging the deck chairs, but it does more than that. It rearranges the deck chairs and throws the Captain in the brig because his hands are totally tied. He has taken all the authority away from the Minister charged with the responsibility for developing this Province, for creating an economic climate in this Province that is appropriate for business and industry to develop and thrive in. The Minister's authority has been taken -- I called him before, the Minister Without Portfolio, and that is probably the most accurate description I can give of him. His portfolio has been drastically reduced to create a crown corporation, to put all authority, all responsibility in it under this legislation. And the Act gives a tremendous amount of authority to this corporation, Mr. Speaker. Promoting values of an enterprise culture and encouraging self reliance throughout the Province, promoting especially small and medium size enterprises including private businesses, co-operatives, credit unions, community development corporations, promoting and assisting in the integration of local economic development and the work of educational institutions, developing and implementing programs to provide persons in any area of the Province having an interest in participating in the development of small and medium size enterprises with the means of accessing information as to the

opportunities for that development, together with information as to advice and assistance, both financial and other available, to facilitate that development. A very, very broad mandate, and a tremendous amount of responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to this new corporation. What then remains for the Minister, is the question, and what is the reporting relationship? We have asked the question many times and we have been given numerous answers. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, what this legislation does is make a public servant, an appointee of this Government, the most powerful person in this Province in relation to economic development in this Province and setting economic development policy. That is the concern here, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am led to believe that the Minister is very concerned about that. I wish he were here to answer. Because I am led to believe that that Minister has expressed his concern in Cabinet. I am led to believe, in fact, that there was a great set-to between the Premier and the Minister in Cabinet because of the fact that his authority in this regard has been taken from him. That the Department of Development -- which I believe, and I am a little prejudiced because I was responsible for establishing the Department of Development back in 1980, I was its first Minister. I am a little biased, I have to admit that. Because I firmly believe that the Department of Development was a good vehicle for forwarding the interests of business and industry in this Province. And I believe the Minister now realizes -- I do not believe he did last year when it

was announced that this Corporation would be created - I do not think he fully realized the implications of what was being done to essentially neuter his Department, Mr. Speaker. That is what it has done. He now has no control over the most important aspect of what the Minister of Development should be doing, which is creating an economic climate for development.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have no problem with some aspects of this Corporation. I have no problem with the financial part being administered by a Crown Corporation. But I see too many areas where this Corporation can indeed set policy with very little input from the Minister or from Government. It appears to me that the Economic Recovery Commission is indeed the Minister governing this Department. And it is interesting, I noted here, that it made it very clear, they went out of their way to highlight a part which says, nothing in this Act notwithstanding subsection (1), in respect of its direction of the activities of Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador shall report to the Minister of Development. The Minister, if he were here, would no doubt argue that it is clear in the Act, that it is made clearer in the Act. And I wonder why it has to be made so clear. It's because so much power was given to the Economic Recovery Commission.

How does the Economic Recovery Commission and the Economic Council and the Department of Development interact? The Economic Council answers to the Premier. Yet the Economic Council directs Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador as its Board of Directors. Where does the

Minister fit in? Is Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador actually controlled then by the Premier, through the Chairman of the Economic Recovery Commission? That, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is indeed the case.

So the Minister of Development has been usurped and his role is tremendously diminished. He is left with some responsibility for tourism, for trade and promotion, in some areas of science and technology, and import substitution, a few programmes of that nature. But the real thrust of what the Minister of Development should be doing, Mr. Speaker, has been taken from him.

And I am not concerned about the Minister - he is able to defend himself - but I am concerned that this Department of Government which should be and was a very influential, very effective Department of Government, has now been downgraded drastically. And that these people, appointed by Government, answerable to no one except the Premier, have so much authority to control development in this Province. Mr. Speaker, I am concerned as to how policy is set. How do we decide what is appropriate development for this Province? How do we decide the thrust of the money that is being spent by this Crown Corporation? How do we know it is being directed in the correct direction, in the way that the Government - being the Government they have the authority to set policy direction and set the direction for this Province - how do we know that this Crown Corporation is acting in accordance with Government policy?

You do not have a Minister to provide that kind of direction.

And that is a matter of concern. And we have seen it in the past when a Crown Corporation has that kind of authority, that there are no automatic, built-in safeguards. The Chairman of that Corporation is not answering to his colleagues in Cabinet every Thursday morning. He is not answering to his colleagues in caucus every Wednesday or Thursday or Friday morning, whenever it is your caucus meets. And those are important checks, Mr. Speaker, because a minister does have to answer in that regard. It goes back to the collective responsibility of Government, all ministers are equally responsible for all decisions taken. The Chairman of this Commission and the Chairman of this Corporation are not answerable in that light, they are not subject to that, they are given tremendous broad ranging sweeping powers.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I could speak all night on the merits of combining various aspects. I have said in this House before that I saw great merit in combining small business and tourism in this Province because I see tourism as being one of the greatest opportunities for small business. I find it very difficult to see them separated, but they are indeed separated, in that the Minister of Development is still responsible for tourism policy, but this Committee or this Corporation has the power to fund tourism projects, and we have seen it in the past, Mr. Speaker, when the Government of Canada had funding programs for tourism development. That we saw funds being allocated by the Government of Canada in areas which were not priority areas for the Province because they were being allocated on national priorities and not on

provincial priorities, not in the direction which the Government wished to pursue. And I fear the same thing can happen here again, the Minister of Development is still responsible for setting tourism policy, he still is responsible for setting direction of tourism in this Province, but the real funding mechanism now is in the hands of this Corporation who do not answer to the Minister - I answer to the Premier.

Now that is just one example of what can take place now, Mr. Speaker, with the programs formerly administered by the Department of Development. And I could go on and go right through the Department of Development and deal with that. I feel the frustration that this is done, the Corporation is established, and what we are really doing is ratifying what Government has already done. Once again they will use their majority to have this passed through the House of Assembly.

So I guess I am feeling a frustration of not having had an opportunity to make sorts of comments that could be made prior to the deed, in fact, being done. And that this is all after the fact. The Corporation is established. I think it is important to note though that really it was a reorganizing of the deck chairs, yet it has cost something, I stand to be corrected, something in the order of three million addition to these corporations, the Economic Recovery Commission, and Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador. Nothing is created by that, Mr. Speaker. That is not funding. It has nothing to do with their loan funding or their grant funding or their equity

funding, it has only to do with administration, at a time when this Government is, no doubt, finding it very difficult to reduce expenditures. I can sympathize with them on that. But to spend \$3 million for a new structure essentially, -

Mr. Warren: No, that is just for salaries.

Mr. Windsor: Just for salaries and administration.

Mr. Warren: (Inaudible).

Mr. Windsor: Wait a minute! Regional offices of the Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation \$3.5 million.

Mr. Warren: Salaries only.

Mr. Windsor: Just for salaries. No doubt from that there were the salaries that were paid by Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, previously it would deduct from that, but then there would be other costs of buildings and maintenance and transportation and travel and cars and all the rest of it. I think the figure is something like \$3 million extra that had to be made available this year simply to restructure and to have a new organization. Well I hope they are effective. I see some merit in having regional offices that have a broader range of powers than the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation did have before. We had established regional offices of the Department of Development, admittedly not having enough funding really to do the job.

So that is what this is doing, providing funds for those regional offices, expanding them, combining

them with Rural Development Authority, and I see some merit in that, Mr. Speaker. I cannot be critical of that. I have always had the concern that Rural Development funding, tourism funding, small business funding, were in many ways being paralleled, and I hope that there may indeed be some efficiencies here, but more importantly that the funding will be used more effectively as a result of the fact that they are now combined under one corporation, so I can see some merit in that. But, I do once again, Mr. Speaker, express grave concern that the Department of Development who were charged with travelling world wide, attracting development, creating an environment that is attractive for industry and investment in this Province, has now been watered down to the degree that they are left with nothing more than caretaker of a few small programs, and that the real authority and the real policy setting authority is now in the hands of a Crown corporation and persons which are not answerable directly to the people.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Seeing my friend for Lewisporte wants to say a few words I am willing to let him go ahead.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

Last night when I attended the Committee meeting on Bill 72 I

decided in all fairness that I was extremely impressed with the answers that I received from the officials at that particular meeting. In fact I think it is fair for me to say, naturally as my colleague has indicated, we are disappointed that the Minister of Development has lost a lot of clout. I think that is pretty evident, but at the same time I believe it is fair for me to say, and I say this on behalf of the people in Coastal Labrador in particular, that I believe that this Bill, Bill 72, gives the avenue that the people in Coastal Labrador have been advocating for years and years. If nothing else works right I would hope, and I will be watching Mr. House and the members of his team, and if he can back up in action what he indicated last night, and how he indicated he was going to bring the service to the people, and not do what an employee did last week: when an employee in Goose Bay picked up the telephone and said, I got your application but you do not qualify, thank you very much. That is not the kind of service that the people in Coastal Labrador want. They want employees of this group, Newfoundland and Labrador Enterprise Corporation, they want the staff of this office to make sure that they will go into the small communities. Mr. Speaker, there could be good potential business people in communities such as Postville, Paradise River, or Black Tickle, and all they need is somebody from this group to go in and say to them, how can I help you? That is what is needed to be done and I am quite pleased that last night Dr. House gave me the assurance that this was going to be the route that he would be taking, and if that is the route that he will take I will be the

first to compliment this Newfoundland and Labrador Enterprise Corporation for doing something for the people who have been forgotten for years and years. I have no problem in saying I am willing to give the benefit of the doubt to this group. I believe if they are as sincere out in the field, if the field staff is as sincere in the field as the leaders were last night, then I believe we will see improvements to the way of life of many people living in Coastal Labrador. And with those few words, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that it is a move in the direction that I know is going to benefit, I know it will benefit the people of Labrador and in particular the people of Coastal Labrador who are so far away from the main stream of Government activity.

I want to say loud and clear that I will watch the progress of this corporation, I will watch and see if they are going to hold up to their mandate and if they will, if they will, I assure you, Mr. Speaker, I have no problems in supporting their initiatives, because the people in Coastal Labrador do need assistance, do need field people to go into the communities and work with the people on a continuing basis, because many applications are rejected from Coastal Labrador because they are so far away.

So let's bring the service to the people to help the people to get the service that will give the proper service to the communities and this is all I am asking for. With those few words, Mr. Speaker, I will just say that I am willing to give Dr. House and his team a chance to improve conditions for the people in Coastal Labrador.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. Minister speaks now, he will close the debate.

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have listened with great interest to the comments made by the Opposition concerning this particular bill. I know that this debate on second reading is a debate in principle rather than in detail and that in principle, there were some rather good things said about it by Members of the Opposition.

I am sure that when we get to our debate in detail, which is the Committee stage reading, they will have other points they will want to bring up.

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased at this point in time to move second reading of this bill, that concerns the establishment of Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation.

On motion, a Bill, "An Act To Reconstitute Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation Limited and Certain Divisions of the Department of Development as Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador Corporation", read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House on tomorrow. (Bill No. 72).

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, by leave of the House, I would like to suggest that we now call it five o'clock and come back tomorrow at the regular time. Any particular comment?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of functions, I think, that members have been invited to, I guess from both sides, that it would be convenient to get to. But I ask the Government House Leader if he would advise us what business routine he plans to follow tomorrow when the House sits? And in addition to that I want to remind the Speaker, while I am on my feet, of an important announcement which I think he asked me to remind him of that he wishes to make before we adjourn.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Government House Leader.

Mr. Baker: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I plan to move to the Committee stages of the bills, which will be orders 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 on the order paper. So, we will move into the Committee stages during the sitting tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: The important announcement which the Opposition House Leader alluded to is: as members will recall back some time ago certain members expressed the suggestion that we should take a picture in this House the last session, and it looks like we are nearing the last session. We have checked out as to whether we can do it some time in the Spring, but I am told that the minute we are out of here that things are going to change. And because of the complication of the Leader of the Opposition not being able to be here tomorrow at opening time, we have asked hon. members whether they could get here at 11:30 tomorrow morning. We will have everything ready so that we can get the picture taken.

I think if some hon. members are not present we will have to go ahead, but we thought the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier - they want the pictures for memorabilia and they would certainly want these people there. We know there is a Cabinet meeting, but we have asked the Government House Leader if he could see to it that we came here just for the shortest time possible. So, at 11:30 tomorrow morning all members be here in their places appropriately dressed for posterity.

It has been moved and seconded that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: Against, 'nay'.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Carried.

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