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(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Tuesday

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):
Order, please!

Statements by Ministers

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

MR. BAKER:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of Premier Wells, I am announcing today the following changes in the Executive of the Public Service of the Province.

Mr. Howard Noseworthy will be retiring as Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, effective March 28. Mr. Noseworthy has faithfully served the public of this Province for some 26 years, principally in the area of labour relations. As he leaves the Public Service for a well earned retirement, on behalf of Government and the people of the Province, I would like to wish him and his family health and happiness and every success in the future.

Mr. Clarence Randell, Deputy Minister of Works, Services and Transportation will be seconded to the position of Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour Relations for a six month period, effective March 20th. Mr. Randell has considerable experience in public administration in the Province. In this new assignment he has been asked to carry out a full review of the existing organizational structure and staffing in the Department and effect changes aimed at improving program delivery and efficiency where

appropriate.

Mr. Bruce Peckford, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Department of Works, Services and Transportation will be appointed to the position of Acting Deputy Minister of that Department during the period of Mr. Randell's secondment.

Mr. Robert Langdon, Assistant Deputy Minister, Occupational Health and Safety will be leaving that position to assume new responsibilities as Special Advisor for Occupational Health and Safety matters within Government, operating from the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. In this position Mr. Langdon will report to Mr. Bruce Peckford, Acting Deputy Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

A further announcement on the appointment of a new Assistant Deputy Minister of Occupational Health and Safety in the Department of Employment and Labour Relations will be made shortly.

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

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments on this announcement today. First of all Mr. Noseworthy, who many of us here know personally, has served the Province well for 26 years, I guess it has been, and in some very difficult times, I might add. We, along with the Government, wish him and his family well in his future endeavors. With respect to Mr. Randell I presume this is a sign or a signal that the Government

recognizes there are some problems over in the Department of Employment and Labour Relations. The individual seconded, Mr. Randell, is a very capable person, without doubt, without a question, and I hope he is able to light a fire under the Minister, and perhaps we might get an occasion from time to time to hear from the Minister in the House as to the state of labour relations in the Province and other matters under her jurisdiction. I note it is only a secondment for six months so I trust we can expect some reports from the Minister periodically. With respect to Bruce Peckford being appointed as the Acting Deputy Minister I have to say this: this appointment has been made by the same crowd who when they were in opposition, when Mr. Peckford was moved from The Workers' Compensation Board, you will recall, to Assistant Deputy Minister in Treasury Board when I happened to be the Minister, this same crowd howled and hollered, patronage.

MR. BAKER:
That is not true.

MR. RIDEOUT:
You have no memory at all, not a short memory.

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, we said at that time that the appointment was made on merit and I see now, and I believe now, that the Government has finally recognized that indeed Mr. Peckford does possess great qualities and that the appointment is made on merit, so the Government is finally admitting that they were wrong when they were in Opposition as they have been on so many other occasions.

With respect to Mr. Langdon, he

was my next-door neighbour in Grand Falls, Bob Langdon, so I know him well, and I also know that he too has made a considerable contribution, I believe, to the Occupational Health and Safety issues of the Province - as the Member for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy) would know - he too is a capable person. I am not quite so certain as to the position being moved to the Department of Works, Services and Transportation. I am not so sure that that is a wise decision, but we will have to wait and see what transpires.

Finally, with respect to the appointment of a new Assistant Deputy Minister of Occupational Health and Safety, we on this side look forward to the appointment. I hope the appointment is for someone who has earned his, or her, spurs in the Public Service in particular. That is what I would like to see as opposed to another Beaton Tulk appointment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:
I would like to remind hon. Members that I want order before I go to the next item of business so that the person who is to speak will be heard.

Oral Questions

MR. MATTHEWS:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MATTHEWS:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Fisheries. As a follow-up to questioning yesterday, could the Minister confirm for the House the conditions of funding to Fishery Products International of \$11.5 million. Was it a condition of funding to FPI that the employment levels at Grand Bank, Gaultois, and Trepassey must remain the same for 1990 and 1991, as it was at the time of the announcement?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, I can only tell the hon. Member what I told him yesterday, that I am taking the matter under advisement, I am having it checked out.

But I would like to say this: In the final analysis, Mr. Speaker, an audit will be carried out to determine exactly how many people were employed and at what cost to Government. If it is found that there were less people employed, and we hope there will not be, then, of course, they will be paid, compensated, or reimbursed for the number of people who are actually on the payroll. But we are hoping, Mr. Speaker, that will not happen. I promised the House I would bring back a report, and I will keep my promise.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Thank you again, Mr. Speaker.

I would just like to say to the Minister that the employees of those three fish plants certainly will not take as much comfort from what the Minister said publicly last evening and what he just said in the House today, because they

thought when the Premier made his announcement and when Mr. Young made his, that they could at least look forward to twenty weeks work in the year 1990 and twenty weeks work in 1991.

Let me further ask the Minister this, Mr. Speaker. We have heard publicly over the last number of hours that the Union at the NatSea Southside Plant has agreed in principle to accept the shrimp proposal as offered by National Sea. Will any of the Provincial Government's \$3 million offer to NatSea be used by the Company to convert to a shrimp operation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, the answer to that of course is, no.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

MR. MATTHEWS:

Mr. Speaker, when the Minister rises again could he tell us what portion, if any, of the \$3 million Provincial Government offer will be utilized by NatSea and what for?

In continuing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, has he met with the officials of National Sea Products to try and find a solution for the employees on the Southside by suggesting that there be a mixed operation of shrimp and groundfish, as there are some four or five million pounds of inshore fish that right now fishermen are looking to find a market for? Because if National Sea refuses to buy that fish, then the extended notice period for the employees until August would, in essence, be ineffective, because they will not have fish to process

for the summer months.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the first part of the hon. Member's question, the amount of compensation that will be made available to NatSea will involve, roughly, a sixteen week extension of their termination of employment. It was intended initially that that plant would close on March 5th, and then NatSea agreed to extend that lay off notice an additional four weeks, which would bring them into April 5th, I believe it is - yes. The Province will then undertake to compensate the company for the cost of the payroll up to an amount of \$3 million, from April 5th to August 5th.

With respect to the latter part of his question, we are meeting, not constantly, I suppose, but certainly quite frequently with the owners of NatSea, trying to find ways and means of helping to alleviate the problems that will be caused by virtue of the plant closing, and hopefully to find ways and means of absorbing that part of the work force that will be displaced by virtue of the plant converting from a groundfish to a shrimp processing operation.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I had a question for the Minister of Energy, but, in his absence, I

will probably direct it to the Minister responsible for Treasury Board. Based on the fact that in last spring's Budget the PDD subsidy was eliminated from Newfoundland Hydro at a total cost of approximately \$30 million over three years, and a 1 per cent charge was applied on the guarantees of any bonds issued by Newfoundland Hydro and this 1 per cent would mean approximately another \$9 million to \$10 million in cost to Newfoundland Hydro, totalling approximately \$40 million, and based on the fact that Newfoundland Light and Power was awarded a price increase by the PU Board, effective February 1st, of approximately 4 per cent, could the Minister tell the House why Newfoundland Hydro could increase its rates without going to the PU Board?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. The President of Treasury Board.

MR. W. CARTER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am not knowledgeable in that aspect, as to whether Hydro has, in fact, increased its rates without going to the PU Board. My understanding is that Hydro cannot increase its rates until it has had the approval of the Public Utilities Board.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, for the last sixteen days of February, last month, anybody in those districts of the Province which come under Newfoundland Hydro have been charged the increase. The reason I do not know. I thought they

might have to go to the PUB, which was the understanding I got earlier this year when we questioned those people on it. But they have been charged an increase of approximately 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent.

Having said that, based on the information as of late by Newfoundland Hydro, when they said publicly they would have to go for approximately an 8 per cent increase over the next few months, of which approximately 4.5 per cent would be passed along to the consumer, could the Minister tell the House whether or not this 4.5 per cent would be applicable for each of the next four to five years?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the President of Treasury Board.

MR. BAKER:

I will certainly check into the situation and advise the hon. Member as soon as I can get an answer.

AN HON. MEMBER:

We hope not.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education (Dr. P. Warren). Let me say to the Minister that prior to and during the election campaign the Premier and Members of his caucus promised that if they became the Government they would abolish the school tax. I am of the understanding now, Mr. Speaker, that people,

believing the Premier would stick to his word, are refusing to pay school taxes. Could the Minister confirm whether or not there has been a decrease in the percentage of people paying school taxes in this Province in the past year?

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, there is some misinformation in the hon. Member's question. The Premier and the Government of today, the Party, did not promise to abolish the school tax.

MR. TOBIN:

You should have been in the House. If you were not here, how do you know?

DR. WARREN:

During the campaign the Party promised, Mr. Speaker, to totally review the system with a view to either abolishing the system or reforming it, and that process has been ongoing.

With respect to the second part of the hon. Member's question, Mr. Speaker, yes, there were some problems with collections. I expressed some concern in the public about these collections early in the year. I am pleased to say that the returns are increasing, that people are paying. I have confirmed that the tax will remain in place this year and there will be no change in the tax during 1990. People are now acknowledging their responsibility, and I thank the public for paying the taxes so that education can benefit from the funds that are made available.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Let me say to the Minister, for all of us who are in the House who sat on that side at that time, remember the Opposition who were over here saying, when we get in Government it will change immediately? Mr. Speaker, despite that, the Minister has now confirmed that there has been a decrease in the percentage of people who are paying school tax as a result of the promise made by the Premier. Could the Minister tell us now how many Newfoundlanders have been locked up in the past year, indeed jailed, placed behind bars as a result of believing the Premier and not paying their school tax?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Education.

DR. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education does not have any more details concerning that. I read in the paper an account of a development in certain parts of the Province, but the Minister of Education accepts that. With any tax there are enforcements available, and the courts were used in a case. That is all I know about the incident, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, let me direct a question to the Minister of Justice. Could he advise the House how many people have been jailed, since they became the Government, for not paying school

tax?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. DICKS:

Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. Member's question the only instance I know of, and that has been reported through the news media, is someone in Port aux Basques, if my memory serves me correctly. Other than that, I know of no other instance.

AN HON. MEMBER:

There were two. One in Eddies Cove.

MR. DICKS:

Eddies Cove - there was one instance that I have learned about through the media.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to direct this question to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. I see the Minister of Health perking right up there.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He perked right up, yes.

MS DUFF:

I am waiting until next week.

In view of the fact that I think the most serious criticisms at the amalgamation hearings has been the lack of financial information that was available to municipalities on which to base submissions, and it is certainly widely understood by the municipalities in view of remarks that have been made by both the Minister and the Premier

in this House that we can anticipate changes in the current grant and debt financing structures, can the Minister confirm that the Government has commissioned a consultant report dealing with these issues, and that, in fact, this report has already been completed and submitted to the Department of Provincial and Municipal Affairs?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, yes, I can tell the hon. Member we have commissioned such a report, and the results on the first draft, if you like, have been submitted to me. We have now asked the consultants to do some more work for us.

The consulting firm, incidentally, is working with our own staff, it is a joint effort. Four or five of our own staff are faced off against the responsibility of reviewing the existing grant structures, all of the four or five main areas where we assist the municipalities, and they have been working over the last couple of months doing that. As I said, the first draft is in to me and, as a result of that, where they used only 20 communities, I believe it was, as a sample, I have asked them now, in light of the work they have done, to complete the project and, in fact, do all the communities in the Province, so that we will have a profile and we will know where we are coming from with the possible implementation of a new grants procedure and how it might affect if we did proceed - because there are several variations presented - how it would look on all the communities in the Province, not

just the sample they started with.

MS DUFF:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

In view of the importance of this information to the municipalities, could the Minister inform the House as to the time frame we are dealing with here when the final information will be available? And would he let the House know whether or not these recommendations will be dealt with on a priority basis, and any changes in the financing arrangements between municipalities and the Province be made available to the municipalities prior to the amalgamation decisions? Also, would the Minister please let us know if the municipal/provincial financing arrangements will, in fact, be used as a lever to encourage the final decisions on amalgamation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, it is a very good question. In fact, we are reviewing that very question in the Department right now. I think it very likely that I will recommend to Government a new grants procedure before we finalize the amalgamation proceedings.

MS DUFF:

I asked you -

MR. DOYLE:

How come the municipalities do not

know about it now, after the hearings?

MR. GULLAGE:

I think it would be unfair not to do so, especially if the recommendations are such that it would benefit the communities, and the grants procedure would be more useful to the Government and to the municipalities if put in place instead of what we have in place right now.

We are just about finished the hearings process, with only about three weeks to go for all the hearings to be complete. The commissioners then have to work on the remainder of the feasibility process - the hearings are only one part - and I have said to them that they have the grants recommendations to use when they are completing their work, and finally in completing the recommendation to me and, ultimately, to the Government. At that time, we will certainly be talking to the municipalities, as well. There will be no hidden agenda. We are not quite ready as yet, because I have not reached the point where I am ready to make a recommendation to Government. But once we have a recommendation to Government and we know where we are going with the grants procedure, certainly we will make sure the municipalities are involved.

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker, another supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

I still do not have any clear idea of the time frame we are dealing with here, and we are getting up

to the point when the next round of elections will take place.

I would like to ask the Minister if in fact Government is prepared to consider interim financial support packages to municipalities in groupings where there are very clear tax inequities or servicing inequities. I think the bottom line question is, when will Government lay its financial cards on the table?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Again, a very common question and a good question, Mr. Speaker. I have been asked it many, many times, and I have said repeatedly that it is very difficult for Government to react and to say up front, when we are at the hearing stage, what the financial implications are going to be and what Government is prepared to do for any group of municipalities. We have to go through the hearings and feasibility process, see what the commissioners have to say and what they have to recommend. There is no question in my mind we will have recommendations which will show a need for water and sewer and roads and other infrastructure. Government has to react to that and decide what the financial implications are going to be and what it will do with any given group of communities. It is too early to say, Mr. Speaker, but I can say that we are trying to reach a decision as quickly as possible within the Department as to what we would recommend to Government as far as the grant structure is concerned. As soon as I have that recommendation, I will be making the recommendation to Government, and, from there, we

will be talking to the municipalities.

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, would the hon. Minister confirm to this House that his Department is reviewing plans to privatize most of the maintenance and snow clearing functions of the Department of Transportation?

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:
Not that I know of, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Make no wonder Clarence Randell is getting out.

MR. MATTHEWS:
I would say Clarence could not take it anymore, and that is why he is going with Patt.

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

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when I produced the pamphlet on the point system last year, the hon. Minister did not know when his point system was being put in place, so I am not surprised at that answer.

Would the hon. Minister confirm that his Department is planning to lay off, or fire, thirteen security guards: four at Harvey Road, one in Central Newfoundland, two on the West Coast of the Province, and one at each annex of Confederation Building, and, most importantly, all security at the Colonial Building, which will interfere with research that is going on there in the nighttime?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Not that I know for.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:
Thank you.

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, in last year's Budget there was a new security program introduced and it is under review. With regard to the employment implications, I do not have any figures and I do not know what they will be eventually. However, we are reviewing the security arrangement in all buildings, and I will certainly be only too happy to get all the information for the hon. Member, once it has all been finalized, and I will table it in the House for him.

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

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Minister one more question. He obviously does not seem to know what his Department is doing. He never has had a very good handle on it.

Would the hon. Minister be informed of the fact that the Union representing these people

has already received notice of thirteen layoffs?

MR. TOBIN:

Shall I tell him what page it is on?

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that is worthy of an answer.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

For the benefit of Hansard, that was the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Would the Minister inform the House, and can the Minister confirm, that the Department of Employment and Labour Relations is about to transfer responsibility for electrical inspections, which is clearly a Government responsibility, onto the backs of the municipalities?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I do not know where the gentleman is doing his research, but he is certainly ill-informed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

MR. DOYLE:

Can the Minister confirm, then,

that her Department is about to recommend to Government that a central agency be established for electrical inspection that will have as its mandate complete cost recovery, and that these inspections will no longer be given for the benefit of the consumer free of charge? Is there going to be cost recovery on it?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

He is still playing these foolish games that he played in the last sitting of the House. If anything like that would be coming from my Department he would hear about it under the correct process, not by asking me a question in Question Period.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Oh? Then what is the purpose of Question Period?

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is to the Minister of Environment and Lands. As all of us hunters know, for a number of years the Government has encouraged a party licence application, where the greatest number of applicants would have the opportunity to use the licences that are in the system. Now this is not the case, it has been changed this year. I ask the Minister, has he considered the

ramifications of such a move?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Of course, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. TOBIN:

What arrogance!

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that is arrogant. There are a lot of hunters out there. In fact, I think there are about 35,000 of us who applied for licences last year, plus our rights. We put money into the economy, and I expected a better answer than that.

A supplementary. Where did the pressure come from for this change in policy?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Let us set the record straight, Mr. Speaker. The hon. Member asked me if I considered the ramifications and I answered quite properly, yes, I did, to the first question. He did not ask anything else. Where did the pressure come from? You would have to define pressure, Mr. Speaker. I do not know what he is talking about when he is talking about pressure.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. PARSONS:

Mr. Speaker, this is shocking.

Shocking!

My final supplementary: Would the Minister then consider reverting back to the pro-party applications? One, because it gives Newfoundlanders a much greater opportunity to hunt, and secondly, there is a more dangerous involvement when hunters enter our wilds alone. Would the Minister take the bull by the horns and give Newfoundlanders and Labradorians back their rights, and change the licencing process to what it was originally?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands.

MR. KELLAND:

Mr. Speaker, I can take the bull by the horns for male only licences. Having said that, I should, in seriousness, respond to the hon. Member, Mr. Speaker. We would consider any changes that would be of benefit to the hunters of Newfoundland, and Labrador, which you left out of your question, by the way. The changes that took place this year were done on the basis of good management and, in fact, to allow more people to access quite a big resource that we have in this Province, a very valuable resource. But, I am open to suggestion. If that is not the best method, Mr. Speaker, I assure the hon. Member, and hon. Members, that I would consider any suggestion that would benefit and improve the circumstances of hunters and the management of the resource. I am certainly open to suggestions. Any time the Member has a free moment and would like to come over and see me and chat about it, I would be more than happy to accommodate him, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation. The Minister is now aware that the ferry service to Fogo Island and Change Islands has been disrupted because of a breakdown in one of the Provincial ferries. This has resulted in all kinds of scheduling problems. Can the Minister now tell this House and the people of Fogo Island and Change Islands when they will each have a regular dedicated ferry run to service these Islands?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. GILBERT:

I would assume, Mr. Speaker, when the other ferry is repaired.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister does not have very long answers today. In light of his answer, though, will he now instruct his officials to increase the number of scheduled runs a day from two to three, so that they can better service and accommodate the people of both Change Islands and Fogo Island?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, my officials have been in contact with the ferry commissions on both Fogo and Change Islands. They explained the situation, advising them that

we will try and solve the problem when the vessel is repaired and goes back to normal service. At the time, we are doing the best we can.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A final supplementary, and it still pertains to the ferry.

Since the Minister has already announced a \$25 million ferry to be constructed for that run, could he now inform the House of the expected date of completion for this new ferry?

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. GILBERT:

I am glad the Member recognizes he is getting a new ferry down there and we will be able to provide good service. In the meantime, we are providing work for a couple of hundred people in Marystown, over the next couple of years. (Inaudible) equally proud that he is representing a District which is not forgotten by this Government, and we are looking after it.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I remind the hon. the Minister of Transportation that he is merely carrying out a commitment we announced in the election.

MR. WINSOR:

The contract was there, ready for him to sign.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, and it is a follow-up to my question yesterday, in the House, with respect to the serious situation that exists out at the Grand Falls mill. I will not go into all the details; everybody is aware of what is transpiring. Yesterday, I asked the Minister if she would not consider personally getting herself involved and making a phone call to the two parties to see if she could not offer some way of resolving this very serious situation. She said, no. I asked her if she would reconsider it, basically. Does she have anything new to report today?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

I say the same thing I said yesterday. I will not repeat it; it is reported in Hansard. I might add that the hon. gentleman for Grand Falls knows that I would be acting totally irresponsibly as a Minister if I responded in any other way, or behaved in any other way.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that what exists out there now is a bit of a power play, in that the company is saying publicly - I am asking the Minister if she is aware of this - 'We will not talk to the union until the picket

lines come down.' Whilst the Union is saying - the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Flight) is aware of this - 'We will not take the picket lines down until the company talks to us. I am asking the Minister point blank, directly, will she call the company and ask them if they will call the union, communicate with the union and tell them, yes, we will speak to you if you take the picket lines down. I think that is all that is required. I have a feeling that if she took that kind of personal initiative, she might resolve a potentially explosive situation.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:

I would feel much more comfortable, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman for Grand Falls was taking a more responsible attitude towards this unrest in his particular District and was not trying to use it for political gain.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Go resign. Resign, if you cannot take the responsibility.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, that scares me to no end, that this Minister would take that kind of an attitude. She knows full well that I spoke to her privately, outside the House yesterday, and I expressed my concern on this matter. So to accuse me of playing politics with it is nothing short of - well I

probably cannot use the word, so I will not use it. The Minister is not carrying out her responsibilities, and it is clear she is trying to divest herself of any responsibility.

I have a supplementary question on the same kind of topic to the President of Treasury Board, the Government House Leader. The Premier met with a delegation from that mill two months ago, January 17, and I believe it was clear that the workers at that time wanted a firm, written commitment from the company about their specific plans, the long term viability. That was what was discussed at that meeting, the future of the mill. Can the Government House Leader advise the House and advise the workers when the Premier will be fulfilling a commitment he made at that meeting, which was to convene a tripartite meeting of union representatives, company representatives and Government representatives, to discuss the future of that mill? I believe the Union has asked that the meeting be held sometime after February 23, when the question of severance is resolved? Is the Government House Leader able to tell me when that meeting will be called? - or the Minister of Forestry, it does not matter?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to inform the hon. Member when the meeting will be held. The meeting will be held as soon as it is convenient for the union. There was a commitment made to the union, I will tell the hon. Member, that after the agreement was put in place, after the

redundancy package was put in place, and it was indicated by the Union that it would not be convenient to have the meeting until the last week in February - well, the last week in February or the first week in March. It is my responsibility to convene that particular meeting, and I will tell the hon. Member the meeting will be convened. The Union, Mr. Speaker, is now deciding on when is an appropriate and convenient time to meet with the company.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT:

I am telling the hon. Member exactly what the situation is with regards to the meeting that is to be held between the company, the union and the Ministerial Committee.

And might I further say, Mr. Speaker, while I am up, just in case there might be a misunderstanding here, the purpose of that meeting is not in any way intended to affect the agreement or anything which is going on out there now, it is to give the union a chance to indicate to the company that they do not believe that the company has made a long-term commitment, to look at the \$100 million the company has committed. That is the purpose of the meeting, and, as such, there is no real rush for the meeting. Mr. Speaker, I would hope that puts the Member's mind at ease. The meeting has been organized, and it will be held when it is convenient for the three parties concerned.

MR. SPEAKER:

The time for Question Period has expired.

I just want to make a comment on Question Period today. I want to remind hon. Members that it serves no purpose when a Minister is answering a question to have other questions going back and forth. It just disrupts and destroys the effectiveness of Question Period. There are a couple of Members who consistently think that they must comment and insert loud utterances, if you will, whenever anything is being done in the House. I want to inform hon. Members, that the Chair is going to be observing that, because it does nothing to enhance the debate or enhance the image of the House.

0 0 0

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The point was just demonstrated fairly well. The Chair had just taken its place when some hon. Members started talking, and I have not called the order of business.

Order, please!

MR. SIMMS:
Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I just want to make sure I understand clearly your Honour's ruling here. Surely Your Honour is not suggesting that there cannot be any conversation, or talk, or banter back and forth. Because that is all these hon. Members were doing, as I understand it.

MR. SPEAKER:
Not at all.

It is just that when the Chair is going on to the next item of business the Chair would like to be extended the courtesy so that hon. Members can hear the next order of business is.

MR. SIMMS:
The practice is that you carry on.

Presenting Reports by
Standing and Special Committees

MR. GILBERT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time, I would like to present the Annual Report of the C.A.Pippy Park Commission for the year 1988-1989.

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. KITCHEN:
Mr. Speaker, I wish to present the Report of the Department of Finance for the year 1988-1989. This report contains a description of the activities in the Department of Finance during the past year.

MR. GILBERT:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

At this time I would like to table the Report of the exceptions to The Public Tendering Act for the months of December and January, while the House was closed.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Eagle River.

MR. DUMARESQUE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is my pleasure, today, to table the Report of the Elections and Privileges Committee. Last December, this Committee was given a mandate to report to this House on two things: 1) Whether the broadcasting of the House of Assembly proceedings would be made this Session and, also, to determine the question of televising the new House of Assembly, expected this fall.

Today, I am very pleased that we are presenting a unanimous report which outlines five specific recommendations affecting this particular Session of the House. If I may, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say thanks to the Committee Members, from Port au Port, Pleasantville, Bonavista South and Ferryland, for their hard work and indulgence in this effort. I would also like to say that I believe it is a very historic day, because what we are doing today is presenting to this House the thrust for openness and accountability of Members of this House of Assembly to the people of today.

I would just like to say also that we were working under two particular principles, one, that politicians have to become more accountable to the electorate, and

that this is a way to do so; two, the old adage that the best electorate is the most educated electorate. Mr. Speaker, these were two things that propelled our discussions and today we are very pleased to present and recommend, first of all, that full audio transmission of the House of Assembly proceedings be granted to the Press Gallery through the House of Assembly facilities; that television coverage of the Throne Speech and the Budget be granted; that the newspapers and other print journalists be permitted to take still pictures of proceedings throughout the Session under guidelines established by the House; and that no television cameras be permitted in the Chamber during this Session except as outlined in recommendation two, and pending completion of the Committee's final report.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Elections and Privileges Committee of the House of Assembly should be given the mandate to review and report upon the broadcasting of the House of Assembly and to deal with complaints from Members arising from such broadcasting.

It is my pleasure today, Mr. Speaker, to table this for all hon. Members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

Petitions

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

From the outset, Mr. Speaker, I did not realize until about five minutes before the House was to open that the petition I had to present was a copy and not the original. The group involved had sent me in a copy instead of the original and as you were in a meeting before the House began, I did not get a chance to discuss it with you. I would, therefore, like to make that clear before I begin to present it and check to make sure it is okay with the Speaker whether I should go ahead with it or not.

MR. SPEAKER:

Could the hon. Member just give me one moment?

Order, please!

In this respect, and for future reference in the House, I think it is best if the hon. Member just got the approval of the House to present the petition.

Is approval granted?

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As we have stated before in this House, the period for petitions is not going to be held up by technicalities and all that kind of thing. If the intent of the petition was for the hon. Member to present the petition to the House of Assembly, whether it is a copy or an original, I would be willing to accept it, if that is indeed the intent of that petition.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank hon. Members for their approval. It was, I guess, an honest mistake. They sent in the copy and not the original, not realizing that we required the original.

The prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, I would like to just read it:

We the employees of the Department of Works, Services and Transportation, Deer Lake, are submitting this petition to protest the layoff of the two carpenters in the Deer Lake unit. We see this layoff as the phasing out of the Carpenter Shop in Deer Lake. We would like to know why this is happening only in the Deer Lake area and not province-wide.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by sixty-eight employees of the Works, Services and Transportation Department in Deer Lake and the surrounding areas.

It is rather ironic, Mr. Speaker, that earlier my colleague representing the District of Kilbride brought up the subject of the possibility of the privatization of the maintenance part of Transportation and the ice and snow removal, that was the two mentioned if I am not mistaken, in other instance some employees in the Department of Public Works, namely some maintenance and security people. I know it is not now, I do not know if it will be, after Thursday's Budget, the path or the road that this Department and this Government will take as pertaining to the Department of Transportation in this Province.

In this case, speaking particularly to this petition, the Carpenter Shop in Deer Lake, as people know, I am sure the Minister and probably some others, as well, know, that that is a new building put there some years ago by the Provincial Government. It is one of the most modern Department of Transportation depots in Eastern Canada. It has pretty well every convenience that you could attribute to any garage or such facility in the Province or, like I said before, in Eastern Canada. It has a body shop, paint shop; pretty well everything is in it, including a carpenter shop. Now, I understand, in the carpenter shop there are two employees who got their notice. One has been there for some 22 years and the other for 3.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How long, twenty-two?

MR. WOODFORD:

Twenty-two years. They got their notice, I do not know if it is this Friday or the next, to be laid off. It is evident that the shop, as of today, I believe, is filled with cement, there are bags of cement put in there. So it is obvious that there must be some downgrading in the service there - they are the only two carpenters - a complete withdrawal of services with regard to carpentry work in that depot.

Now I do not have to explain to the Minister or any other hon. Member in this House the importance of this. Two jobs, some may think, 'Well, that is not much.' It is a lot. We cannot afford the luxury this day and age, and more specifically today, the way things are going in this Province, to lay off anybody, especially when you have to have

the work done anyway. And it is just two employees. If you were talking about a department that was overloaded, twenty or twenty-five, and you say it will take 20 to do the job, then so be it, maybe it would be understandable. In this case, the information provided me, and I repeat, the information provided me, is that the two carpenters will be laid off.

That depot in Deer Lake comprises the whole of the Northern Peninsula, over 300 miles of coastline, all the Labrador area, west to Port aux Basques, and I believe, east to Grand Falls, if I am not mistaken. Now that is a fairly big area and a fairly big chunk of the Province for any highways depot and the employees in it to be responsible for. The people employed there are very competent people. That is evident, I would say, from the amount of time put in by this individual, a total of twenty-two years. It was rather sudden. What they are afraid of now, is not only the two jobs but, I suppose, the uncertainty of what would happen in the near future with regard to the rest of the employees.

MR. SPEAKER:

I inform the hon. gentleman that his time is up.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to clue up. The Minister, in his response, although he may not be cognizant of what is going on there right now, would probably be able to fill me in on some of the questions that I have already asked. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Works,

Services and Transportation.

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I hear the petition that the hon. Member has presented in understanding that any time there are any jobs lost, whether it be one or five or ten, there is a certain degree of suffering involved, and nobody wants to be involved in it. However, in the Department of Works, Services and Transportation there are somewhere in the vicinity of 2,000 full-time employees, and I guess the employees you are talking about are covered by a collective agreement. With the streamlining of the Department, bringing the Department of Public Works and the Department of Transportation and various other Government services into one, there are no doubt going to be some employees affected, as already has been shown at the head office level. But, as to the questions, I will certainly check into it. I will have my officials contact the employees concerned to talk about the concerns that they have and to advise them why the action has been taken, and I will acquaint myself as to why the action was taken. If it is not justified, I will certainly see that justice is done, but if it is justified and it is a normal agreement covered under a union agreement in a collective bargaining situation, and because of the downsizing of the Department and the streamlining, I can assure the hon. Member that there is not much I can do in a situation like this. If there is some injustice being done, I will certainly look into it and I will get an answer back to the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Kilbride.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this petition we have here, in my eleven years in the House of Assembly I cannot remember a group of employees of a Department presenting a petition to the Opposition to have it presented against the Minister in this House. Mr. Speaker, the significance of this petition shows that people in the Department, workers in the Department of Transportation are extremely concerned, and this petition shows me that this is proof of privatization of the Department of Works, Services and Transportation.

Today we had an example of some thirteen security jobs being dropped throughout this Province, and those jobs eventually will be either electronic or private. To maintain buildings in this Province, a building like the Colonial Building, in St. John's, has to have security people, or everyone who is going to do research in that building during the night, and there are many people, particularly people from the university, will have to be given keys to the building, and I do not think that is going to happen. This is another indication that there are discussions going on in the Department, and in Government, about privatizing Government services, in particular services that are to be carried out by the Department of Works, Services and Transportation.

Mr. Speaker, if these jobs could be done cheaper privately, they would have been done long ago. I do not hear of any tax reductions to the people of Newfoundland while consideration of

privatization is going on. I say it is a ploy by the Liberal Government to create cushy contracts for their supporters and the people who have been paying the \$55,000 for the past five years to the Premier. I guess we will now have some paybacks to these contractors.

Orders of the Day

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to do Motions 6 to 21, inclusive.

MR. SPEAKER:

What is the wish of the House? Shall we take them all?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER:

Okay.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to introduce a Bill, "An Act Respecting A Pension Plan For Certain Employees In The Province," carried. (Bill No. 14).

On motion, Bill No. 14 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs to introduce the following Bills: A Bill, "An Act To Amend The Assessment Act, 1986," (Bill No. 22); a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Urban And Rural Planning Act," (Bill No. 9); a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Municipalities Act," (Bill No. 23), carried.

On motion, Bills Nos. 22, 9 and 23 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Provide For The Regulation Of Motor Vehicles Used In The Transportation Of Persons Or Goods For Compensation," carried. (Bill No. 12)

On motion, Bill No. 12 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Fisheries to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Fish Inspection Act," carried. (Bill No. 18)

On motion, Bill No. 18 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Environment and Lands to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Revise And Consolidate The Law Respecting Crown Lands, Public Lands And Other Lands Of The Province," carried. (Bill No. 25)

On motion, Bill No. 25 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Development to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Freedom Of Information Act," carried. (Bill No. 6).

(Bill No. 6)

On motion, Bill No. 6 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Education to introduce the following Bills: "An Act Respecting The Department Of Education," (Bill No. 3); "An Act To Amend The Education (Teachers' Pensions) Act," (Bill No. 5),

carried.

On motion, Bills Nos. 3 and 5 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Health to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Amend The Welfare Institutions Act," (Bill No. 20), carried.

On motion, Bill No. 20 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Social Services to introduce the following Bills: "An Act To Amend the Day Care and Homemaker Services Act, 1975," (Bill No. 10); "An Act Respecting The Department of Social Services," (Bill No. 4), carried.

On motion, Bills Nos. 10 and 4 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture to introduce the following Bills: "An Act To Amend The Livestock (Health) Act," (Bill No. 19); "An Act To Revise The Law Respecting The Management, Harvesting And Protection Of The Forests Of The Province," (Bill No. 11), carried.

On motion, Bills Nos. 19 and 11 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Justice to introduce a Bill, "An Act To Repeal Certain Obsolete And Spent Statutes," carried. (Bill No. 21)

On motion, Bills No. 21 read a first time, ordered read a second time, on tomorrow.

MR. BAKER:

Order 1, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. MURPHY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Again it is a privilege for me to rise in this hon. House to speak in the Address in Reply to the Throne Speech that was delivered so graciously the other day by the Lieutenant-Governor.

I want to address sincere congratulations to the hon. the Member for LaPoile (Mr. Ramsay) who so eloquently moved the Gracious Speech and to the hon. the Member for Placentia (Mr. Hogan) who seconded that motion.

Mr. Speaker, I think our hon. friends opposite, in yesterday's sitting of the House, were quite adamant that the twelve pages of this Throne Speech contained very little and/or next to nothing.

I would suggest to hon. Members opposite if this Government, knowing the Members of this Government, can what is documented in this Speech, this time next year the people of this Province will be basking in the sunshine of Liberalism, the red glow of Liberalism.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, let me respond to some of the ramblings of the hon. Opposition House Leader who had nothing to say about this particular document, or felt there was nothing in this particular Speech to say anything about. Still and all, he rambled on for an hour and told this hon. House that he could speak for a week. Then, yesterday, the hon.

the Member for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews) rose and discussed what is a very extremely important issue to me and to all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, namely, the fishery.

I would suggest that the Throne Speech could be 112 pages long, with issues relating to the tremendous crisis that surrounds all of us as Members in this hon. House, with respect to the catastrophe that has befallen the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, the crisis in the fishing industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to stand up here and take political shots, if at all possible - it depends on the hon. Members opposite - and lay blame anywhere. I think we all well understand and know that the mismanagement of that resource has gone on for almost eternity, and the people primarily responsible for that mismanagement are the jurisdictional people, namely, the Federal Government. I know that this time last year, just about on the eve of when the hon. the Leader of the Opposition was to be sworn in as the third Premier of this Province -

AN HON. MEMBER:

The fourth.

MR. MURPHY:

That is right, the fourth. I forgot about the other Tory.

AN HON. MEMBER:

You are allowed to forget about him.

MR. MURPHY:

I am allowed to forget about him, I suppose.

Anyway, he was in crisis. He had

tremendous concern about the fishing industry and what it was going to lead to. One year later we have seen the destruction of the offshore fishery, whereby the scientists in Ottawa have told the industry that the Northern cod allocation was reduced to 197,000. Now originally it would have been reduced to 190,000, but the hon. the Member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), that great friend of Newfoundland who has all of a sudden forgotten, I think, were he was born and bred, went out -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, well fine. Sobeit. True though it be, or whatever, it is now 197,000 metric tons because he tried to make a deal to save one of the plants, which I have no problem with. He tried to make a deal to save a plant - only one plant - in his District, namely, Trepassey. However, one of his protégés from Treasury Board days, one of his blooming young stars on the horizon, let him down. Mr. Crosbie said, "I was betrayed." Now I do not know who betrayed him. I will leave it to history to say who betrayed him. So the 7,000 additional metric tons that he got of his cohort and friend Mr. Siddon went into the system. I am sure the hon. Minister of Fisheries is glad to have that 7,000 metric tons. I am sure he is.

However today that fish plant, Mr. Speaker, would be getting ready to put the chains and locks on it only for the initiative of this hon. Gentleman here and the Premier of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

They went to Mr. Young and his Board of Directors and offered two years of assistance until the fishery hopefully would revive itself and get back on its feet because of Tory mismanagement at the Federal level, and the inability of the Tories at the Provincial level to do anything other than to grab onto the 1986 and 1987 wonder years.

Well what happened to the plant on the Southside. Where was the hon. MP? Where was he? He was unheard. He was unseen. He was not seen, Mr. Speaker, nor did he do anything positive. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, because of the persistence and the initiative of this Government with NatSea - that big company that has its head office in Nova Scotia - this Government yesterday announced that they would remove the groundfish operation on the Southside as of August 5 of this year. The initial announcement last year, when the hon. Member's badgered and tossed barbs at me, because the plant in my District was going under and nobody over here was concerned only me. That very plant now has a life, it is alive and the hon. Members know why.

In my discussions with the hon. Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Speaker, we did have meetings and I was privy to some of those meetings. I do not mind telling the Members opposite, and telling this hon. House, that initially that plant was gone. It was finished. It was history. And we offered and asked NatSea, when they mentioned shrimp, how come they could not mix groundfish and shrimp? How come they could not

still process groundfish on the Southside as well as have a shrimp plant? And we were told straight and honestly, that their advisors had told them that because of a bacteria problem this was impossible.

I then raised the issue of the one in Port aux Choix, where Fishery Products could handle groundfish and shrimp, and they said no to the quality, and they were adamant. But at least through the initiative again of this Minister, the Minister of Fisheries in this Government, and because of the Premier of this Province, thank God today at least 60 per cent of the jobs that were available this time last year on the Southside will be available August 5 of 1990.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the President of that union who showed very sincere emotion over all of this problem existing at NatSea, said this morning, and I will not quote her, but basically what the lady said was, that the option in front of them has been accepted in principle. So the union has accepted it, so we know that these jobs are now in place. We have time. The heat and the light and all that facility over there will be utilized and used now on a permanent basis. We all hope, I would hope, that as time goes on the possibility is always there that this plant could very well get back into groundfish production.

I know that the hon. the Member for St. John's East Extern (Mr. Parsons) would have to be very, very concerned at this point in time that, as of April 5th, the lock was going on that plant. A tremendous amount of inshore product will be available, hopefully, if the cod traps fill

up as they filled up last year. And, due to the initiative of the Minister, last year, when he brought in that ship, we do have somewhere to take that inshore allocation.

Now I would agree with the remarks yesterday of the hon. the Member for Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews), that it is going to be a tough, rough year for the provincial Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter). He is going to have to make an awful lot of serious and courageous decisions because of the lack of inshore fish. And we have already seen that.

We will not talk about plant closures. Be wise and leave plant closures alone.

Talking about plant closures and talking about resolutions presented in this House, let me read from Hansard, Mr. Speaker: Fish plants that discontinued operation during the period from April, 1985 to April, 1989.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Now, let us hear that.

MR. MURPHY:

B. and M. Fisheries, Twillingate, closed! Baccalieu Fisheries, Grates Cove, closed! Coastal Seafoods Limited, Highlands, closed! Fishermen's Dock, Placentia, closed! Greenspond Fish Processors, St. George's, closed! Hindy's Enterprises, New Perlican, closed! Humber Cold Storage, Castor River Mouth, closed! Kenmount Sea Products, St. John's, closed! Parsons Pond Seafoods Limited, Parsons Pond, closed! Conception Bay Seafoods Limited, Petty Harbour, closed! Phoenix Fisheries, Black Duck Cove, closed! Port au Port Seafoods, Piccadilly, closed!

Terra Nova Fisheries Company, Limited, Lethbridge, closed! Fulford Fisheries Limited, Fox Island River, closed!

MR. HODDER:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is reading from a list here, and on two occasions he mentioned Greenspond Seafoods in St. George's, which had a licence but never opened. He mentioned Port au Port Seafoods, which had left - but Connors Brothers had come in. We got Connors Brothers back in. What is this Government going to do to get a new person there now that Connors Brothers have gone? If you are going to read your list, read it properly and give correct information.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of order.

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

MR. MURPHY:

It just goes to show, Mr. Speaker! At that particular time when Port au Port Seafoods closed, they did not know that Connors Brothers were coming in! How did they know?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

And I carry on: Terra Nova Fisheries in Lethbridge, closed! Fulford Fisheries in Fox Island River, closed! Blue Cove Fisheries in Blue Cove, closed! Branch Fisheries Limited in Branch, closed! And this is an

all-plants-open Opposition!
Marvellous! Marvellous, Mr.
Speaker! And I might add that the
Leader of the Opposition was then
the Minister of Fisheries!

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I recognize the Member for Burin -
Placentia West, I presume, on a
point of order.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, I think it is
important when any Member of this
House is providing information to
the House that the information he
provides be accurate information.
And the Member should point out
and the record should show that
the Member, in talking about these
plants closing, neglected to say
that the Leader of the Opposition,
who was then the Minister of
Fisheries, saw to it that every
single plant that closed was
re-opened, Mr. Speaker, not like
his Leader.

MR. SPEAKER:
There is no point of order.

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

MR. MURPHY:
I would like to table this
document and then we will see if
all these plants are re-opened, as
said by the hon. Leader of the
Opposition, we will see. We will
see and if you are correct, I
promise you, Sir, I will
apologize. These plants were

closed. The St. John's plant was
announced to be closed and is now
re-opened by this Government, not
by the Opposition, not by your
Federal colleagues but by this
Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:
Now, Mr. Speaker, considering the
fishing crisis that we have in
this Province and to think that
the Federal Government would turn
around and commit a Newfoundlander
of the stature of Dr. Leslie
Harris, to do a report and have
that report in their hand and hold
on to it and not have the courtesy
to give this Government and the
hon. Minister of Fisheries, a copy
of that is horrendous and it shows
the concern of the Ottawa Tories
for this Province. When the hon.
Member for Grand Bank, rose in his
place yesterday, he indicated, and
the press picked up on it, of the
number of lay offs in FPI plants
throughout his District, Grand
Bank and Fortune. I referenced
that this morning, Mr. Speaker,
and my understanding is that
those lay-offs were nothing more
than normal lay-offs that have
occurred over a period of time.
What he failed to address
yesterday, living so close to the
historical Grand Banks, the 3PS
zone, that the communities of
Grand Bank and Fortune have lived,
strived and worked off for so
long, he forgot to mention it,
because he knows deep down, as the
Member for Burin - Placentia West
well knows, that without the
northern cod, the processing
plants on the Burin Peninsula
could not survive. But he did not
raise the issue of the destruction
which is going on in the hon.
Member for Fortune Hermitage
District where not one, single,

solitary long-liner, not one hook and line man has made enough to pay for his gas. He did not raise that and that is from Grand Bank to Port aux Basques. Ah, yes, most of the hook and line people - I know it, you know it and the hon. Member knows it. The hon. Member well knows that the whole demise of the South Coast hook and line fishery is nothing more than a Tory mistake from day one and these people endorse that Tory mistake. Let me speak, Mr. Speaker, about the Prime Minister of this wonderful country, Canada. I heard yesterday, the hon. Member for Humber East, jumping to her feet and raising the Meech Lake initiative, and the damage that this Government is doing to the constitution of this country. When the hon. Prime Minister turns around and uses the very heritage, the very lifeblood of this Province as a tool to sell trucks and cars out of Ontario and other parts of Canada to Russia, and when they buy from the industrial hub of this country, then we pay the price by turning around and having allocations of our fish dumped into the hands of the Eastern Block Nations. Those are the kinds of irresponsible mistakes on the part of the Federal Tory Administration that the people of this Province have had to live with far too long. Blame the Feds is right, because the hon. Member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) knows too well, he heard the hon. Member from Grand Bank (Mr. Matthews) rise in his place yesterday and say he is not sure there is no cod, and maybe we are not sure that there is no cod. Maybe there is lots of cod out there because the trawler captains that I know are telling me the same thing as they are telling the hon. Member for Grand Bank. But does the hon. Member

for Grand Bank want to take a chance that they are right, because this industry has been told by the scientific data presented by the Federal Tories and by the Harris Commission that the TAC should now, on northern cod, be 125,000 tons not 197,000 tons.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this, you cannot have your fish and eat it too. This Province has the capacity to handle a half million metric tons of groundfish - we have the capacity. The problem is, Mr. Speaker, we do not have the fish. That is the reality. Therein lies the problem. And all the rhetoric and all the garble and whatever of the hon. Members opposite is not going to help one fishermen on The Bill of Cape St. George's, down in Flatrock, or up in Twillingate. It is time for us to stop this silly nonsense and speak, as all hon. Members should, in a right and sensible manner when they are addressing the fishery.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, you are right. The hon. Member is right.

Give credit where credit is due. The only initiative in the last twelve months to handle the crisis in this fishing industry is the initiative of this Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Now you know the hon. Member for Grand Falls, the hon. House Leader Opposite, stood in his place yesterday and again said he would love the Economic Recovery

Commission to be a success. He would be inspired if the House team brought to this Province enough jobs where we could take our place equally in this great country. However then he spent 25 minutes tearing it all down. Well let me say this to you, Mr. Speaker, the Economic Recovery Commission is in place. I, as a Member of this Liberal Government, have confidence and will support that Economic Commission to its success or to its demise. But at least we should give Dr. House and his people all the room necessary and all the support possible to develop the type of Economic base that we need, outside of the 8 or 9 per cent that the fishery turns in in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, The Speech from the Throne goes on and talks about the Hibernia project. The hon. Members on this side are almost fearful to mention the word Hibernia because we know and well understand what happened to the people in this Province for the last 12 years in dealing with the word Hibernia. The newspaper of March 13, 1989: that was just before the hon. the Leader of the Opposition became Premier, and it says, 'Rideout hints Banks unhappy with Hibernia financing deal.' A year ago this Month, Mr. Speaker. So be very cautious when you have a Speech from the Throne, and you think and talk about Hibernia, because there are many people in this city and other cities and towns of this Province, who took the Government of the day on their word, and will never pay off the Banks what they lost on Hibernia. We are not deceitful over on this side, Mr. Speaker, we are telling the truth. And with soft conscious negotiations we will see what will happen to Hibernia.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

You know, Mr. Speaker, one of the other dreams in my mind, as I was fortunate enough to work there while the hon. Member opposite was sitting as a Liberal over here in those days, was working in Churchill Falls. And as the Speech from the Throne says 'That thrust for the redevelopment of the Upper Churchill, the added megawatts of power that we can put into the national system, the development of the Lower Churchill are now again at a very critical stage and critical time.' But let me say this, Mr. Speaker, the Lower Churchill is the renewable, renewable, renewable resource that will give jobs and prosperity to the people of this Province and again, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister of Energy (Mr. Gibbons) in his own quiet way is still and presently negotiating that great project. And the Liberal Government of the day started Churchill Falls and the Liberal Government of the day will finish this Churchill Falls.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

We were very hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that NATO was going to take advantage of the Goose Bay facility. However, again last week we saw the warbler, the blue-eyed Vice-President in Halifax, without anything to back it up, shooting off his face and demising again another project in this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Watch the language.

MR. MURPHY:

Yes, shooting off his face. If he cannot say anything positive to help this Province, why does he say anything at all?

MR. SIMMS:

Clean up your act! Sit down, boy!

MR. MURPHY:

We see that sliding away from us. We see that sliding away from us, Mr. Speaker.

MR. TOBIN:

I wonder what your majority would be in the South?

MR. MURPHY:

I tell the hon. Member for Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) right now in this House that it would be bigger than his majority, I guarantee you that right now. Because the only chance he can hope of getting elected again is that the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. W. Carter) and the Minister of Development (Mr. Furey) save his soul.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

They are not driving out of Burin - Placentia West, they are rowing out of it.

Mr. Speaker, again I could go on and on and on about the quality of this Speech from the Throne, condensed, but condensed with platinum and gold. Not condensed with cucumbers, rhetoric and tossed salads as we saw for years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

A very important area, Mr. Speaker, is the area of post-secondary education. Surely

heavens if we are going to develop the new jobs then surely we must develop educated Newfoundlanders who will be confident to go into those jobs. And I say to the hon. Minister of Education (Dr. Warren) it is a credit to you, Sir, and your Department, the White Paper on Post-Secondary Education. You are to be congratulated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY:

Today the hon. Minister for Employment and Labour Relations (Ms Cowan) sat in her place and was charged at, harassed almost by the hon. Opposition House Leader. She had her people in place in Grand Falls, but could not say anything, Mr. Speaker. But again this Government will deal with The Public Service Collective Agreement under the House Leader (Mr. Baker), this Government under the Minister of Labour, will deal with it - for seventeen years these people avoided it. But as we see in the Speech from the Throne this Government has the courage and the strength and the forebearance to deal with it.

Then I see my hon. friend from Fogo (Mr. S. Winsor) standing in his place the other day in the Speech from the Throne and bringing a resolution in.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. W. CARTER:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries, on a point of order.

MR. W. CARTER:

I think, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Member for St. John's South misled the House. I do not think it was intentional or deliberate, but he did mislead the House. I think, in the interest of history and posterity and given the fact, of course, that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition is the champion of the all-plants-open policy, I should put on record that he mentioned there being 16 plants closed from the period 1985 to 1989, the period, I think, when the hon. Member was Minister of Fisheries. Mr. Speaker, he did mislead the House, because that should read 24 plants were closed during that period. In the period April 1985 to April 1989, 24 plants were closed by the champion of the all-plants-open policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than a ploy to take some time away from my colleague so I will be very, very brief and deal with this at another time. The hon. gentleman will find that out of all 24 - I have only 16, and obviously there are others - I do not know about all, but certainly 90 per cent closed and re-opened.

On the other hand, the four the Government has listed, that closed since they went into office, only one of those has re-opened. So, we have a much better record than they have.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order, just a disagreement amongst hon. Members.

The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, let me say to the Member for St. John's South that when he was getting on with his foolishness, he said the only way I would be elected again is if the Minister of Fisheries and the Minister of Development save my soul. Mr. Speaker, I have great respect for the Ministers Opposite, but I never realized they were empowered to save souls. I know they are Ministers, but I did not know they were empowered to save souls.

Mr. Speaker, let me say to the Member for St. John's South that when he gets up and rants and raves about St. John's, does the Member for St. John's South know that the Premier of this Province stated, 'If Burgeo or St. John's have to go down, it will be St. John's, and that the people working in the fish plants in St. John's can get jobs at the Radisson, at the Battery and Hotel Newfoundland?' Did the Premier of Newfoundland not say that? Is that support you, the Member for St. John's? Is it Mr. Speaker?

On the CBC program, Morning Side, on Feb. 5th, what did the Premier of the Province say? 'I acknowledge and accept that those

plants must inevitably close in order to deal with the massive crisis in the fishing industry. All we are doing is giving them a little bit of time.' What confidence in the St. John's fish plant and the workers on the South Side. You should be ashamed of yourself to sit in a caucus led by a man who put the knife to the workers of the St. John's South fish plant. And we can go further than that. What happened when the crowd from Grand Bank came in at 1:00 p.m. in the day, down in the lobby of the Confederation building, when they said to their Premier, 'Put up some money and keep our plant open?' 'I would if I could, but I cannot,' and he was backing into the elevator, Mr. Speaker. With that, the door closed. Then he said, 'Upstairs, boys, we have to do something.' Out of the blue, '\$11.5 million, Vic.' No conditions, Mr. Speaker. What does that say for the representation the Member for St. John's South gave his constituents when they did not have a penny and their plant was announced closed for weeks? Where was your representation? He sat there and toed the line. You should be ashamed of yourself to sit in that caucus. FPI got the money. There was no (inaudible) up here.

MR. MURPHY:

That is why the plant is open, and it will be open when you are long gone.

MR. TOBIN:

The other thing, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MURPHY:

Read Crosbie's letter now. Read it all.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, I will; l. Indeed, I will read

Crosbie's letter.

MR. MURPHY:

Read who it is addressed to.

MR. TOBIN:

You did not read Crosbie's letter, did you? No, Mr. Speaker, because there are some facts there that should make you ashamed to sit in the Assembly. You should be ashamed to sit in the Assembly. You are a disgrace to your constituents. You should do the honourable thing and resign. That is what you should do.

He got in this House and he said, The St. John's fish plant 60 per cent open, thanks to the Government and the Minister of Fisheries. What about the battle fought by Linda Hyde and the fish plant workers? Why did you turn your back on them and not mention their names or give them one iota of credit in your speech today? Why did he not give them one ounce of credit today? He took it all himself. I submit that the representation made by Linda Hyde and the Fishermen's Union on the Southside Plant was a lot more effective than what he said. And for him to thoroughly ignore their contribution to what is happening there today is an insult to every man and woman who works in that industry on the Southside, and he should apologize. If there is a decent bone in his body, Mr. Speaker, he will apologize to them.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Read the letter from Crosbie now. Come on.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, I will read the letter from Crosbie. Sure I have a copy of the letter from Crosbie. He writes the Member, 'When National Sea was considering what fish plants it might have to close in

Newfoundland, the Government you support made it clear to NatSea that the plant located on the Southside of the harbour of St. John's was the most dispensable of their plants and certainly should be closed before plants such as Burgeo.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

Would the Premier deny he said that? Mr. Speaker, is the Member for St. John's South saying that the Premier did not say that? Are you saying the Premier did not say it?

MR. MURPHY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

No, Mr. Speaker. The Member has acknowledged that the Premier said that, and that is another reason why he should apologize. You have the Member for St. John's South acknowledging that the Premier of this Province said that. 'The Government you support made it clear to NatSea that the plant located on the Southside of the harbour of St. John's was the most dispensable of their plants and certainly should be closed before a plant such as Burgeo.'

MR. MURPHY:

According to Crosbie.

MR. TOBIN:

Did the Premier, on the morning show of February 5 when referring to Gaultois, Trepassey, Grand Bank and NatSea say, 'I acknowledge and accept that those plants must inevitably close in order to deal with the massive crisis in the fishing industry. All we are doing is giving them a little bit more time?' Did the Premier say

that?

MR. MURPHY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Again, Mr. Speaker, he acknowledges that the Premier wanted to close the St. John's plant. So how can that man, who represents the work force down there, stand in this House and give credit to the Premier for saving the plant and totally ignore the contribution of the union and Linda Hyde?

MR. MURPHY:

They were (inaudible).

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible) you did not even mention them.

MR. MURPHY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Oh, yes, you did. Why then \$11.5 million? It is not near enough for the fishing industry in this Province, but the big boardrooms, the big boys in the fishing industry - ah, he cannot take the heat, Mr. Speaker. He has to leave. The strange thing about it is I feel sorry for the man. He went out there hanging his head, and so he should. I would say he has gone to the news media, as he usually does, to say 'For God's sake, say I mentioned Linda Hyde's name.' If I were like him, I would have gone too. But I would not have forgotten to say it. Why did the Government say to FPI and to National Sea here is money for the fishing industry to keep the employees working? What did the Government have against the employees at Fermuse, Ferryland, St. Mary's, Riverhead and Belleoram? Why did they not offer

that company the same amount of money, Mr. Speaker? Why did they turn their backs on these individuals?

What about the group over in Jersey, Placentia? The Member over there has been looking for an operator. I heard him on radio, working hard trying to find one because the Government of this Province turned its back on them. But there was no problem giving FPI money, when there was a \$100 million bailout to them a few years ago. I supported giving them the money. Do not get me wrong. I think they need more.

MR. EFFORD:

Your time is up.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) take John.

MR. TOBIN:

The Member for Port de Grave is a good one to talk about the fishing industry, when he was here advocating the middle distance trawlers should go. Last in first out, how often did you and the Minister of Fisheries say that? Then the other day we had one of the Members, the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. L. Snow), introducing a resolution to get fish for the middle distance vessels. What hypocrisy! Does the Member for Port de Grave, the Minister of Social Services, support the middle distance vessels now? What changed! 'Be it further resolved that the Provincial Government attempt to get the quota for the middle distance fleet reinstated without a reduction in the inshore cause.' What hypocrisy! How any Member who has been elected to this Assembly, be he Liberal or Conservative is not important, can desert his constituents, turn on

his constituents, how any Member can stand here and support plants closing in his district, is beyond belief. It is shocking! Mr. Speaker, would it not be more honourable to resign?

I was in the Government benches when Burin closed, and I can tell the Member for St. John's South and others who will toe the line of their Premier, that I toed no line when Burin was going down the stream, and my colleagues know this and so did everybody in the House of Assembly. I toed the line of the people of Burin - Placentia West who sent me here. The people who sent me here -

MR. FUREY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

What is that, Chuck?

MR. FUREY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Underdevelopment is yapping again. The Executive Assistant to Dr. House is yapping again. Let me say to the Minister of Development that he is another fellow who should not be toeing the line. He should go up to the Premier and say, Premier, I have the ability - which I think you have, by the way - to be Minister of Development.

MR. SIMMS:

(Inaudible) plant just closed, by the way.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, that is right. And he did not know about it until Bill Matthews mentioned it yesterday afternoon. And there is a fellow in his district in jail for

believing the Premier of this Province when he said they would abolish school taxes. He did not pay it and now he is locked up, barred up, clinked up, Mr. Speaker. They put him in jail for believing a statement made by the Premier, for believing the Premier.

MR. EFFORD:

Tell us what you did when you were Minister?

MR. TOBIN:

What I did when I was Minister? I can tell the Minister what I did not do. I represented the Premier of the Province, not my brother.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. TOBIN:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have taken enough from the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Tell us about the cameras.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, like every other Government Department, we had cameras. I do not know if that was the camera used to take a picture of the pig kissing John Efford.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Not him kissing the pig, the pig kissing him.

Now, Mr. Speaker, he is still over there.

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. And do you know

something? When we left the Department of Social Services all the things that were purchased out of the Minister's vote for the office, like other Ministers are doing now, he did not even have the courtesy to ask if we wanted any of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

Do you know what he did, Mr. Speaker? He kept it all for himself. Now that will tell you how selfish he is.

Mr. Speaker, let me get on to the issue of the Throne Speech. What about the amalgamation issue?

MR. MURPHY:

What about the fridge, the stove and the microwave?

MR. TOBIN:

What fridge?

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible) stoves out there?

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, did the Member want to get into stoves and the program initiated by the Federal Government some years ago? I would suggest the Minister of Social Services should be very quiet when he wants to talk about appliances in this Legislature. He should be very quiet, Mr. Speaker, about appliances. He should not, Mr. Speaker, pick me.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

No, no. I am not getting personal.

Now what about amalgamation? I do not see the Minister of Municipal

Affairs here. He has destroyed communities in this Province. He has pitted one community against another. He has created divisions within communities. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, do you know what he did? He put the Member for Placentia in the most embarrassing situation I have ever seen a Member placed in. A Member of his own Liberal Executive had to come out and criticize the Government for railroading amalgamation in his town - a Member of his Executive.

AN HON. MEMBER:

What did he not do it?

MR. TOBIN:

Do not worry about him, he is all right.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Did he support (inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

No, Mr. Speaker, he does whatever Felix Collins says. And there is good reason why he jumps when that line is pulled. Amalgamation is a deadly weapon in this Province.

MR. MURPHY:

Not in this town. Ask the Member for St. John's East.

MR. TOBIN:

Amalgamation is a dead issue throughout the Province.

Mr. Speaker, while the Minister of Development is here there is one thing I would like to mention to him, and that is as of the 31st of this month, the 31st of March, the Ocean Industry Agreement, which -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) amalgamation.

MR. TOBIN:

I am talking about something very

important. The Ocean Industry Agreement, Mr. Speaker, contains approximately \$10 million still for the construction of trawlers, a subsidy to the Marystown Shipyard for the construction of trawlers. As of the 31st of this month, that will be expiring and I want the Minister of Development to assure the House and the people of Burin - Placentia West, particularly the people at the Marystown Shipyard, that that money will remain earmarked for the Marystown Shipyard. I think it is important that that money not go anywhere else, but stick strictly for the Marystown Shipyard until the time it is to be used.

MR. FUREY:

Do you want me to answer that?

MR. TOBIN:

No, Mr. Speaker, he can mention it when he speaks in the debate.

MR. FUREY:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the Member, this is not Question Period. It is a time for debate, and when he speaks he responds to what has been raised.

MR. FUREY:

You are asking questions.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the saddest thing that has ever happened on the Burin Peninsula has happened in the last year, and that is that over one hundred former employees of the Marystown Shipyard have now left. Over one hundred former employees of the Marystown Shipyard have now moved to Mainland Canada to get employment.

MR. R. AYLWARD:
Tell him why.

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, I will tell him why. Because the Government of this Province refused to provide a subsidy to the Shipyard, in conjunction with the Federal Government, to build a shrimp trawler; because they delayed for one year the construction of a second ferry. That is why, Mr. Speaker. Yes, \$5 million is what they refused, right?

AN HON. MEMBER:
Nine million.

MR. TOBIN:
Mr. Speaker, I heard the Member for Mount Scio up there talking about providing a subsidy to the Shipyard workers. What difference is there in providing a subsidy to Shipyard workers than fish plant workers, mine workers, or any other workers in this Province? What, Mr. Speaker? He has been brought to task already by the union. He should be careful.

The Minister of Development knows full well the negative fallout from the Marystown Shipyard employees. The Minister of Social Services knows it. As a matter of fact, he was down on the Burin Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, and he stated publicly that he met with the crowd because of the desperate economic conditions facing the Burin Peninsula. Not only that, he has advertised for more social workers for down there, all as a result of the policies of this Government. The Shipyard is gone, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HOGAN:
I will send you over an article.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Placentia has an article, but let me read mine first.

Placentia Towns balk on Amalgamation. Placentia towns balk on amalgamation, Mr. Speaker. 'The Provincial Government has not released enough information on the proposed amalgamation of four Placentia area communities to allow town councils involved to come to any positive conclusion, the Commission studying the issue were told Thursday night.'

Mr. Speaker, that is something for a former Mayor of the area to be proud of, in here letting the Government turn on his constituents and communities like that. That is something for the former Mayor of Dunville to be proud of. How soon he turned his back on the people, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY:
Read it. Read it in the House.

MR. TOBIN:
No, Mr. Speaker. But I read the letter the Member for St. John's South sent over yesterday.

MR. MURPHY:
Yes. Sure you did.

MR. TOBIN:
Probably you would want to discuss the one you wrote yesterday with the Member for Placentia.

Mr. Speaker, let me say more about other issues. There is another issue, the transfer of social services, and I want to mention this in all sincerity to the Minister of Social Services. There is a very serious situation in this Province as it relates to home care for people living in their own homes. Right now, Mr.

Speaker, and I do not know if the Minister is aware of this or not, the Department of Social Services is withdrawing home care from some of the people who were receiving it.

MR. EFFORD:

The Minister is aware of everything that goes on in his Department.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, that is fair.

Well, then, what is happen in this Province today is that there are elderly people, living in their own homes, getting assistance from the Department of Social Services, where people come in a help them through the day or night, or whatever the case may be. Now what has been happening in the last few months is that this assistance is being withdrawn, and those people do not have the same type of care they had before. They do not have it, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to know what is happening with the funds that have been saved on the backs of the sick and suffering and elderly of this Province. I would like to know if any of these funds are being saved on the backs of the sick, suffering and elderly of this Province and diverted to the refugees.

MR. EFFORD:

Who signed the deal?

AN HON. MEMBER:

What deal?

MR. EFFORD:

(Inaudible) were paying for the refugees.

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, we have always paid for refugees, fifty-fifty,

cost-shared under the Canada Assistance Plan. But that is not important. What is important here, as far as I am concerned, and I think most Members would agree with me, is the protection of the elderly in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, what about education?

AN HON. MEMBER:

What about it?

MR. TOBIN:

I have ten minutes left. What about the White Paper on education? I have nothing against anything being done in this Province to improve education. I have nothing against anything that is going to provide better education in this Province, whether it be secondary or post-secondary. But, Mr. Speaker, there are twenty-five employees of the Eastern Community College, set up in Burin. Some of them have moved there and built new homes in the past year, and now the Minister has put out a White Paper that would remove these people from that area. He will be responsible for uprooting families, moving people from the area, if that happens.

DR. WARREN:

(Inaudible) answer that?

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. When he gets up to speak in the debate, I would like him to address it, I sincerely would.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, when you ask the Minister of Education a question, his answer is far more informative than when you ask a question of

the Minister of Transportation. The Minister of Education will give you a sincere and honest answer.

I tell you, I have a question coming one of these days for the Minister of Transportation.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He will be jumping up for it.

MR. TOBIN:

Yes, you will see he will be jumping up for it.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about this common first year program, where you have first year university programs, for example, in Burin, I hope they will also be able to go to St. Xavier or St. Mary's, if they wish, the following year.

DR. WARREN:

I will address that, also.

MR. TOBIN:

Okay, I appreciate that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just let me touch briefly on Transportation.

MR. EFFORD:

Your time is up.

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave.

MR. TOBIN:

No, it is not.

I will be presenting a petition in this House, one of these days, from the people of Petit Forte, and I expect some action, Mr. Speaker. I expect action on the Petit Forte road, for these hard-working, decent people who have had their jugular cut by the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I have not had time to get to the Economic Recovery Commission. I will deal with that later. But I can tell you that the Economic Recovery Commission has done nothing for the Burin Peninsula. About 300 people have left the Burin Peninsula since this Government was elected. They have gone to work on the Mainland.

I wish the Member for Pleasantville were here, Mr. Speaker, so I could give him full marks for his courage to stand up against this Government that wants to hire Doug House at a salary of \$105,000 a year. The Premier talks about reducing his Cabinet. Mr. Speaker, he has given more powers to an unelected Cabinet than he has given to his elected Cabinet.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:

Mr. Speaker, I have great confidence in the Minister of Development. Do not forget that. I think he is a bright young man, a very capable fellow, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

I do not think so.

MR. TOBIN:

Well, I do. I think the Minister of Development is a very capable young man, I really do. And for the Premier to leave him with no responsibility whatsoever, to cut the guts out of his Department, is wrong. It is wrong! The Premier should let the Minister of Development be the Minister of Development. He got elected, he has earned his spurs. Why should Doug House replace the Minister of Development? It is shameful, Mr. Speaker.

I will say it every time I get a chance to say it, Mr. Speaker. Maybe there are people out there who could replace the Minister of Social Services - probably Beaton Tulk. We could probably recommend Beaton Tulk replace the Minister of Social Services. As a matter of fact, I heard he is calling the shots in the Department. I can tell you one thing, it did nothing for the morale of the employees in the Department of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:
(Inaudible) good morale.

MR. TOBIN:
Indeed there is good morale in the Department of Social Services. The appointment of Beaton Tulk was bad in the beginning, but now that he is calling the shots over the Minister -

AN HON. MEMBER:
He is not?

MR. TOBIN:
Yes, he is. Does he go directly to the Premier and bypass you? Answer that one. Has he ever gone directly to the Premier and bypassed you? Has he?

MR. EFFORD:
(Inaudible).

MR. TOBIN:
No, I am not saying so, I am asking you a question.

Mr. Speaker, I am not the spokesman for Social Services. I have asked your leader a hundred times to give it to me, but he will not. I would really like to have it, Mr. Speaker, so that I could display the incompetence of the present Minister. But their leader has seen fit not to give it to me, so I have no other choice but to respect his wishes. I am

sure the Minister would love me to have it, too.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

MR. TOBIN:
By leave, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
By leave! By Leave!

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
Thank you, gentlemen.

Mr. Speaker, it is certainly an honour for me to get up and speak in this Throne Speech, the 1990 version. I would like at this time to thank the proposer and seconder for the magnificent job they did. I have been here for awhile now and I have heard a few Throne Speeches, so I thought we would go into a little bit of history today as I start off in this, so I will the blue covered ones.

First of all, the Leader of the Opposition got up and he talked about the thickness of our report. You will notice there is not much difference in the thickness. The difference is the quality that is inside the cover. That makes the difference between ours and theirs, Mr. Speaker.

We will take the Throne Speech of 1985. I thought that would be an interesting one to start off with; it was the one when I first came to the House, so I will just scan

it and see if there is anything worth talking about. I heard my colleague for Grand Falls go on about the one for 1990 yesterday, so I thought it was time we should refer back to some of the Throne Speeches of the not-to-distant past, some that are around now. The highlight of the Throne Speech of 1985 was a thing called the Atlantic Accord.

MR. EFFORD:

Remember that one.

MR. GILBERT:

There was going to be instant prosperity. That was how it was introduced when the Atlantic Accord came up. Now, that we had shaken off the serious arrangements, or the agreement that was given them by the previous Government, the Liberal Government in 1982, this was the catalyst that was going to provide instant prosperity to Newfoundland. The Speech of 1985, that would about sum up what was going on. My colleagues who were here at the time, and I, we had some doubts about the Atlantic Accord and if it would do the job the fellows who were over here then, and who are over there now, were saying it would do.

If someone were to go back through Hansard, in my discussion of the Atlantic Accord I told the Premier, a gentleman who is not here now, who has retired and gone to his rest - in the time I had been in the House, every time someone stood up from our side, someone on this side would stand up and talk about the Churchill Falls Agreement, and I told the Premier, when I spoke on the Atlantic Accord, you might feel that you are entrenched in the history of Newfoundland, but I think, when people look at the

Atlantic Accord, you are going to be judged in the same way you are judging the Liberals for the Lower Churchill. And you can see now what has happened with the Atlantic Accord.

I spoke against the Atlantic Accord, but I will tell you what I will do now, I will tell you the conclusion of the 1985 Budget Speech is nice. It says, "Together Government, business, labour, citizens groups and individuals can make it happen. The future is now in our collective hands. My Government is confident that it will not let the golden opportunity slip through its fingers as has happened so often with the sands of times past. In the words of the quote Tennyson, 'we must resolve to be one equal temper of heroic hearts made weak by time and faith but strong in will to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.'" Now that was the conclusion that was put in 1985. That was a fine way to go with the 1985 Throne Speech. I noticed the only thing of quality that was in it was a few lines from Tennyson, the rest of it was rhetoric we were so used to getting from the Members of the Government in 1985.

We now have the Throne Speech for 1986. More Atlantic Accor. We were promised more instant prosperity again in 1986. But one of the significant points in the Throne Speech of 1986 was the Government noted that because of the significant change in the attitude brought about by the 1984 election, there was now this spirit of Camp David prevalent between the Federal and Provincial Government so that all was now going to be rosy. We had now solved all the problems that we had in Newfoundland because we had

a real good arrangement. The two Brians', hand in hand, were going to inflict prosperity on Newfoundland, I think was the statement that they made somewhere, I believe it was on the west coast somewhere during that 1984 election. They would not be afraid to inflict prosperity, and here it was this attitude that had kicked out the mean, Liberal Government in Ottawa, and now the two Brians' were going to do the job.

Another important point that came in the Throne Speech in 1986 was free trade. Free trade was going to be the salvation that year, it was going to be the answer to all our problems. It was stated how our resource base industries were now going to find that market in that haven to the south. We had no more problems. Free trade was going to solve all our problems. Now we all know what free trade has done for us, Mr. Speaker. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, it is interesting because during the 1987 election - remember the one that was won and fought on the basis of free trade? And I am sure the Member for Burin - Placentia West remembers statements that I made in Burin where I accused the Tory Government of selling out the people in Newfoundland. And I pointed out that the president of F.P.I. and the president of National Sea would certainly not be affected by free trade - they would not be affected by free trade, but let me tell you that the fellow that was cutting fish in Ramnia or Gaultis or some place would be affected by it. And the Member came out and, again, supported his people and said that free trade was good for us. But at what cost? And that is the point I am trying to make, Mr.

Speaker, winning, to them, is all that matters. It does not matter what the cost or what it has done to Newfoundland. So the situation we find ourselves in today is partially due to the free trade agreement that you were so proud of in 1986.

Here is the situation that we find ourselves in right now. Since this Tory Government came in in 1984, Mr. Speaker, and they were so proud to talk in 1986 about this great arrangement and this great agreement they had. There has been \$100 million in Federal cutbacks, \$100 million in Federal transfer payments cut coming to this Province of Newfoundland. So let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that honeymoon we talked about in the 1986 Throne Speech was some honeymoon. And I tell you right now the people of Newfoundland are paying for it to the tune of \$100 million that has been cut in Federal transfer payments.

We come now, Mr. Speaker, to the 1987 Throne Speech, my God, this is a good one. Notice the thickness, you will notice it is Tory Blue and the quality is terrible.

MR. SIMMS:
(Inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:
But you will notice that was the same time you were a Liberal I would submit, and when I was taking you, I was saying, 'Len, my son, you are a Liberal.'

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:
But anyhow let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, in 1987 there was another one of those speeches that had

neither quality nor quantity in it. But, Mr. Speaker, you see the Throne Speech of 1987 is right here now. The selling point that came into this was the FPI privatization, and the sell-off of the weak plants that followed. As a result of the privatization there was the divestiture program that we all heard about and all those plants were sold off so that FPI was made strong and the Province of Newfoundland picked up the loan guarantees to buy all the rest of those plants.

So not only did we provide windfall profits for the rich and the few people who had shares in FPI and were ready for it, but they put FPI back in the position that they were in in 1982, and the only thing is we created those plants around the Province that FPI had in 1982. They got rid of them and they made some quick profits and now it is back on the backs of the Newfoundlanders again. So you can see that the 1987 Speech was a great one and did a lot for the people of Newfoundland.

But we also noticed in that one, Mr. Speaker, the first signs that the honeymoon between the Tories in Newfoundland and the Tories in Ottawa was over. You heard the two Brians were not seeing eye-to-eye. As a matter of fact they were not even talking to each other. And things came up like the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks, and overfishing, and the Premier asking the Prime Minister to get involved. But then one of the bright lights of the speech towards the end was that we welcomed ACOA. Now we all know the benefits that ACOA has reaped on Newfoundland or inflicted on Newfoundland. We know what ACOA did. It inflicted more depression

on Newfoundland than was there before.

AN HON. MEMBER:
(Inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:
The Member who is sitting in the back cannot speak coherently from his own seat so I am sure he cannot do it from another one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
And the conclusion that came from the Throne Speech in 1987: 'As we move forward with our economic and social programs in this session until 1987 we must do so with faith and perseverance that characterized our forefathers. Their inherent strength and hard earned knowledge of wind and tide and complexed occurrence of human experience assured a good catch, a bountiful harvest. My Government pledges to use and maintain that legacy for this and future generation.' And let me tell you some catch - some legacy!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:
That is what we had in our 1987 Throne Speech if you must get down to it.

Now this is an interesting one, 1988 is now down to the point where it is getting smaller all the time, even the quantity is not in it. The quality was never there, but the quantity is not there any more now. We are down to the point now where it is hard to hold it.

But some interesting things were highlighted in the 1988 Throne

Speech, Mr. Speaker. The Meech Lake Accord: I am sure we have all heard of the Meech Lake Accord and what it has done to Canada. The Premier came back from - as the Member for Burin - Placentia West said yesterday - the three-hour meeting which, to them, had solved all the problems of Canada.

MR. TOBIN:

Three years.

MR. GILBERT:

Three-hour meeting, you said yesterday. This three-hour meeting on Meech Lake solved the problems of Canada. You see what it has done, Mr. Speaker, and fortunately, we came to power to rescue Canada from the mess inflicted upon her by that bunch of self-serving politicians who sat down at Meech Lake in 1988.

Another interesting thing in the Throne Speech of 1988 was a Free Trade Agreement. You notice the one thing that makes the Throne Speeches of the previous Government is repetition. That is about the only thing there. And you notice they went through this process on the Free Trade Agreement again.

Then, we come to the by now famous middle distance fleet. Now that was the year we were doubly blessed. The middle distance fleet: all of a sudden, our fishery was going to be saved by the middle distance fleet.

MR. TOBIN:

You supported it.

MR. GILBERT:

Nobody on our side supported it. We did not support it. The middle distance fleet was never supported on our side. We said it was a

waste of the taxpayers' money. Actually, we did not use the word 'Sprung' but, now, in retrospect, we can look at it, but that year, surprisingly enough, Mr. Speaker, the middle distance fleet was introduced the same time as Sprung. So in that Throne Speech of 1988, you had a couple of winners, you had the Meech Lake Accord, Free Trade, which had been introduced several Throne Speeches back, and now, the new middle distance fleet.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. GILBERT:

The middle distance fleet came in 1988. No doubt, they might be, but at what cost? Can we afford them? And if we have to subsidize them to the point we had to subsidize the middle distance fleet, no, we cannot afford them, Mr. Speaker. And that is where the problem was with the middle distance fleet. The problem is that it was another Sprung, but we did not have the word 'Sprung' in our dictionary, then. Now, we do. That is the difference.

Now, in that Throne Speech of 1988, we went on, and we have Sprung. I do not need to say anything else about Sprung. Sprung is another thing over which that Government that sat here in 1988 will forever have to hang their heads in shame because of what they did. And I am sure that as we go along, we might even hear a bit more about Sprung. Some of the Members over there might have a few red faces by the time we have heard a bit more about what is going to happen with Sprung. Let me tell you, there will be red faces.

MS VERGE:

(Inaudible) for it.

MR. GILBERT:

Let me tell you, Sprung knew. You were there, one of those who blindly went like sheep and followed your leader. I know about Sprung, and you know, and that is why you are concerned.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we get down to the quality. Here it is, the Throne Speech of 1990. It was here, Mr. Speaker, that we tried to correct all the ills inflicted on Newfoundland for the past seventeen years.

The past four or five years with those fellows, but it is seventeen years. I just go through those five or six Throne Speech just to show you really what was happening. Here it is, in the Throne Speech that came in we had to take some action. As I mentioned earlier in my address, we looked at all those Throne Speeches which were there before this, and finally this document which is going to lead Newfoundland out of this morass and the depression that was inflicted upon us by the seventeen years of the Members who are now over there where they rightly belong - they should be a lot further away. Now is the time we have to take some action to correct that, after a previous seventeen years of inaction. When I hear Members opposite get up to speak in this debate and they talk about the fisheries, Mr. Speaker, they talk about the fisheries.

Now I heard the Member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) get up yesterday, and he was talking about an interesting subject, he was talking about the fisheries and what he learned in going around the Province. He admitted

the Liberals had put out a Report on the Fishery back in 1985.

Now Mr. Speaker, I think this would be an interesting little document because this document, when I read it and note some of the points that are in it and put it into the records here this evening, some of the people are going to say, my God I heard that conversation coming from those fellows over there this year. They are saying the same things we said in 1985. But the problem was they did not take any action, and that is why the people of Newfoundland took action four years later, because there was a Government that did not take any action. The situation is the same as it was when we were talking about it when we were in opposition. So now we are here and we are going to have to try to do something about it.

I am just going to read a few extracts from the Liberal Caucus Report that was presented from August to October 1985. The first paragraph here; the substance of these various submissions to Opposition Members was that the inshore fishery at that date was precariously situated. That earnings were at a record low. That many were experiencing great difficulty in meeting their current obligations. That many foresaw their fall and winter sustenance in serious jeopardy because catches had not been sufficient to qualify for minimal unemployment insurance protection.

Finally, based on most of the summer's experience it was not likely that the remaining month or two of the fishing season would substantially alter their plight.

The impression given was bleak and

dismal, so much that it was warranted through investigation of any kind obtainable by direct encounter for a short time with as many inshore fishermen as possible.

Fishermen at Port Rexton were a worried group of men. The views that the Committee received at Port Rexton was that the crisis in the inshore fishery was a crisis now.

Just as we go through this now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to enlighten the people and let them know.

Summerfort; that afternoon's meeting was exactly the same, well attended by 250 people. The people were telling the same story that the fishery was a crisis, and they were not going to be able to live out the winter. So this is the situation that we find.

On Fogo Island, the Committee had one of its largest and liveliest hearings. It was not cold water, not slob ice, not dirty water, but the draggers that were the reason why there was no fish. This became the central message of all the hearings. Overfishing by foreign and Canadian draggers was rapidly leading to the despoliation of the stocks and the collapse of the inshore fishery.

Again the collective Committee's impression was that the fishery all over Newfoundland was worse than it had ever been. They were just not isolated pockets of a poor season, the fishery was bad everywhere. Talk about hypocrisy - and this Report was submitted to the Members Opposite when they were in Government. This year when the thing that we forewarned them about in 1985 really happened, that the fishing

industry was an abject failure, all of a sudden their answer to it was to accuse the Government of not taking any action, and then to go out and have a Committee go around and visit the fishermen who were affected by the serious crisis in the fishery.

I am glad they did not listen to the recommendations that we as Liberals put in the report that we presented to them in 1985 because maybe they would have been able to cling on by their fingernails. Maybe if the people has seen it they would have taken some reaction to the crisis that was in the fishery and maybe they would still be there, but I would have been prepared for that. I would have been prepared to stay in opposition another term if the fishermen of Newfoundland had been looked after, Mr. Speaker, but they did not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

Mr. Speaker, I have heard Members opposite talk about the inaction of this Provincial Government. For their information, and you have to tell them continually because they do not listen very well. That was the problem when they were in Government, they did not listen very well, and that is why they are in Opposition now, because they did not listen very well. When we came to power this year in May the first thing that the Provincial Minister of Fisheries did was to have a meeting with the Hon. Mr. Crosbie and Mr. McKay. They had a meeting and at that meeting they asked for a joint Federal response to the crisis in the fishery. That was in May of 1989. On May 5 we were sworn in, so you can see that here

was a Government that immediately when in power recognized the inaction that had been going on in this Province for the last seventeen years. We know for sure in the last five years because we, as a Liberal Opposition, presented a report to the Government telling them there was a serious problem in the inshore fishery in Newfoundland in 1985. The Leader of the Opposition was the Minister of Fisheries and, of course, it went on the shelf with ever other report because obviously they did not read it. As I said, they do not listen very well, and that is why they are where they are. In May of 1989 we also asked the Prime Minister if he would become personally involved in dealing with the foreign fishing and the overfishing on the Nose and Tail of the Grand Banks and the French overfishing in 3PS and 3PM. We could not do it much faster than that because we came here on May 5 and this was before the end of May. We then set up a Cabinet Committee for an emergency response so we were ready for December - we had some money to put in to keep the plants opened that FPI and National Sea were talking about closing. We had a decision made as to what we would do to keep those plants open. My colleague for St. John's South (Mr. Murphy) was pointing out today, the plants that were closed during that administration. We had a program to keep those plants open, the ones the companies were proposing to close. I ask the Members opposite where are their Tory buddies in Ottawa? Where is the response from them? They knew about it the same time we knew about it. Where is their response? That is what I ask and that is the question. We have done our work over here, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

They are not our buddies.

MR. GILBERT:

Oh, you wear the same shirt and if you wear the same shirt you have to be on the same team somewhere. Do not try to weasel out from in under. I know they are bad but by God they are the same party that you fellows are supposed to be supporting. Where are your friends?

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) you got your Minister's job.

MR. GILBERT:

Nobody got me a Minister's job only good hard work. Let me tell you that. In 1985 I can remember hearing in the Throne Speech this great arrangement that you had with your buddies in Ottawa, a change of Government, and now all was peace and light in Newfoundland, onward into prosperity. We quoted Tennyson that year. Remember? Those were the two Brians. That is the Brian Mulroney you are talking about. Is it? Where is he now? What about the fishermen and the plant workers in Newfoundland? Where is he now? We have not seen much from him since this thing happened? He reminds me of one of those fellows, he was great at the weddings, but we do not see him around at the wakes, do we boy?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. GILBERT:

When you were in Government that is what you were, you were proud of him. Now nobody in Canada is proud of him, but you fellows have to wear him, he is your hair shirt. Not only that you are going to wear him for a while.

The concerns that were raised by the Opposition were ignored, Mr. Speaker, and they kowtowed to their Tory buddies in Ottawa and said that everything was all right. They were going to solve all the problems, the two Brians. Now I told you what happened since we came into power. We immediately got involved in a response program. We recognized the problem in the fishery, Mr. Speaker. Those people had been there for seventeen years, they did not recognize any problems in the fishery they went along with their friends in Ottawa. So where are they now?

MR. MURPHY:
Finding out in Opposition.

MR. GILBERT:
Now you are in Opposition. First of all they said we did not do anything. Then they have not done anything to try and ask their buddies in Ottawa to respond very quickly and get some money to help the inshore fisherman and the plant workers in Newfoundland. But their effort has been just this, Mr. Speaker, an all-plants-open-policy. They introduced useless, foolish, political resolutions into the House of Assembly, that meant nothing and really did not even say what they sent out in their propaganda which they sent out to the two or three good Tories they knew in every District, some of them gave them to me because they were sick. They could not imagine that an opposition could be so ineffective, one of them who is a Tory is - thank God he is one of the very few in that place but he is now converted. He saw the light when he got this, he saw the light. Here it is an all-plants-open policy.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
By leave! By leave!

MR. GILBERT:
I would just like to conclude, Mr. Speaker, and this resolution -

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please! Order!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Member for Humber East.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite and the Throne Speech containing their message, their chart for the year ahead, contains repeated references to recovery, renewal, revitalization. What irony! What gall!

Ever since this Government opposite took office last year we have seen nothing but decline. We have seen layoffs. We have seen closures. The economy has been in steady decline since last spring, yet they keep talking about recovery. Recovery from what?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS:

Do not be interrupting over there.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, since last spring we have seen the closure of the ERCO plant at Long Harbour.

MR. SIMMS:

Right on.

MR. DOYLE:

That is right.

MS VERGE:

We are seeing the closure of the St. John's Southside fish plant.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is gone.

MS VERGE:

We are seeing the closure of the Universal fish plants on the Avalon and the South Coast. Ferryland, Fermeuse, St. Mary's, Riverhead, Belleoram. We are seeing the closure of the FPI plants at Trepassey and at Grand Bank and at Gaultois. We are seeing the closure of the fish plant at Picadilly on the Port au Port Peninsula, and we hear now that the plant owned by Cliff Doyle at New Ferolle is in receivership.

Mr. Speaker, there have been hundreds of jobs lost at the paper mill in Grand Falls, and now the whole mill is down. Mr. Speaker, the other day on the radio we heard about layoffs at the Iron Ore mine in Labrador City.

On the Burin Peninsula, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most devastated part of our Province, not only is the fishing industry in crisis and the Grand Bank plant doomed to close, at least if this Government has its way, but in one of its first acts on assuming

office, the Government participated in the jeopardizing of the future of the Marystown Shipyard. Evidently the Government has realized the error of that course and has now announced measures to try to quote 'again revitalize the Marystown Shipyard'. The Government, in the last Budget Speech announced the closure of the hospitals at St. Lawrence and Grand Bank. Now in its latest move, in the Education White Paper, it is announcing the removal of the community college headquarters from Burin, just after that office was set up. Talk about kicking them when they are down! In the last year, since this Government took office, there has been a steady stream of bad economic news, lay offs, job losses, more people than ever moving to the mainland. The economy has been in steady decline, but, Mr. Speaker, worse than the economic losses of the last several months, has been the change of attitude and thinking of the people of our Province. From travelling around the Province anyone is confronted with pessimism with an evident loss of faith in the future. This Government is failing to provide economic leadership, it is also failing to provide moral leadership. It is abdicating its role in giving inspiration to the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador. There is a linkage between psychology and economic development. If people in this Province are demoralized as they are now, if they are suffering from a malaise, if they are giving up, then, Mr. Speaker, they are not going to be inclined to stay around and pitch in and help revitalize this Province. We went through a similarly rocky time in Corner Brook in the early 80's. Perhaps what Corner Brook went

through in the early 80's is a microcosm of what this whole Province is up against now. Some citizens of Corner Brook with options left, they bailed out and moved away. The present Premier was one of them, but some others of us hung around and pitched in, provided leadership and revitalized Corner Brook. Corner Brook is suffering indirectly from the effect of the economic decline of the whole of Newfoundland and Labrador over the last year, although it is somewhat insulated from it. But wholesalers and retailers have suffered a sharp drop in sales, but nevertheless, we still have the economic anchor of the Pulp and Paper Mill. We have a large public sector presence with the hospital and regional and local Government offices and we have Marble Mountain, as the Minister of Development is reminding me. Marble Mountain which became the Peckford Administration Tourism Centrepiece. The Members for the Humber Districts gave tremendous boost and support to Marble Mountain, which is now being led capably by a Development Corporation set up by the Peckford Government. Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech not only does not lay out a plan for leading the Province through the economic and social improvements that we need, a plan to meet the challenges that we are facing today. This document does not even show a grasp of the problems besetting the Province. One of the most appalling parts of this document is the section on child abuse which appears on page 8, I quote: "My Ministers are also sensitive to the revelations made during the work of the Commission respecting" that is referring to the Hughes Commission, "the extent of the child abuse problem which it would

appear may exist in our Province." Mr. Speaker, what an appalling statement to be found in a Throne Speech. Do not the Ministers opposite and the Premier who wrote this speech for His Honour, monitor the reports made to the child welfare authorities of the Department of Social Services? Do not the Ministers Opposite and the Premier who wrote this speech for His Honour monitor the report made to the child welfare authorities of the Department of Social Service? Do they not monitor the numbers of prosecutions of child abuse and gross indecency? Do they not listen to the news? Do they not follow the proceedings of the Hughes Inquiry? The Hughes Inquiry is focusing on the criminal justice system, mainly so far, on what happened at Mount Cashel for a period in the 1970's. Mr. Speaker, that is a very small part of the overall picture of what is happening and has happened to children in our Province. Mr. Speaker, what has the Government done to respond to the endemic problems of child abuse. All I know is they made a patronage appointment of a defeated Liberal candidate, Beaton Tulk, with no social work qualifications, to an executive position in the Department of Social Services which has responsibility for child welfare. Mr. Speaker, I reacted to that news in shock. I commented publicly that that appointment was immoral, and furthermore that it makes a mockery of the Premier's holier than thou promises of fairness and balance. The Premier, in retaliation, issued a prepared written news release accusing me of hysterical fearmongering, not just any kind of fearmongering, but hysterical fearmongering. Mr. Speaker, what

hypocrisy. Where is an announcement of specific measures to deal with the problems of child abuse? I will be waiting for specifics in the Budget Speech. The Budget Speech will tell the tale. We will see if the Government is serious about recognizing and dealing with problems of child abuse in our Province, we will see what is provided for the Department of Justice, we will see what is provided for Social Services and Health and Education.

Mr. Speaker, on the next page, 'lip service is paid to the problems faced by women in our Province.' This whole speech, of course, is a catalogue of issues with platitudes and vague generalities. But, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the most anti-rhetoric in the document is the statement on page 9 dealing with women. A separate paragraph, Mr. Speaker. "My Government remains committed to addressing the particular needs and problems confronting the women and youth of our Province. Specific measures will be introduced over the course of my Government's mandate." Bid deal! Mr. Speaker, what about the promises of the Members opposite during the election campaign of bringing in pay equity legislation? Why was there not a specific statement in this document, that in this session, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women will bring in the promised pay equity legislation? Where is the pay equity legislation? Why is it not mentioned in the Throne Speech? The Minister is telling me that they are doing it but surely, Mr. Speaker, if the Government was ready with the legislation promised a year ago when they were campaigning it would have been

mentioned in the Throne Speech. The only provision of this Throne Speech that has been rated newsworthy is, of course, the Premier's ultimatum on Meech Lake. Mr. Speaker, since taking office last spring the Premier has been conducting a one-man crusade against the Meech Lake Accord. We have not heard anything from any of the other Members opposite. The Member for St. John's West (Dr. Gibbons) and the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island (Mr. Walsh) are both supporting Paul Martin for the Federal Liberal Leadership and of course Paul Martin is an out-front supporter of the Meech Lake Accord. And, Mr. Speaker, the Accord is shaping up to be the major Federal Liberal Leadership issue so, obviously, there is a division in the Government caucus on the issue of the Meech Lake Accord.

MR. WALSH:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. WALSH:

Mr. Speaker, I am not afraid of any heat, I am not afraid of any comments that may be truth or (inaudible). All Members on this side support the Premier totally in his stand on Meech Lake and we will be willing to do it in any forum, any time, and any place, including this Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

There is no point of order.

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that Members opposite on the backbenches aspiring to Cabinet positions are publicly supporting the Premier, but methinks it strange that the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island, if he is so ardent in his support of the Premier on Meech Lake, has chosen to get behind Paul Martin for the Federal Liberal leadership.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

Pro-Meech Lake. Very pro. A good point.

MS VERGE:

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Premier is way out in front on the national stage knocking the Meech Lake Accord. The stakes are very, very high. Where will the Premier be and where will our Province be when the Meech Lake Accord issue is settled? Either the Meech Lake Accord will go through, will form part of the Constitution of Canada despite Clyde Wells, and then where will he be? He will be over in a corner sulking, having lost credibility, not only for himself as Premier, but, by extension for the time that he is Premier of this Province, having inflicted a loss of credibility on our Province. If, on the other hand, the Meech Lake Accord fails, where will he be and where will we be?

We have seen, in the last week, the results of two reports of respected financial houses, Merrill Lynch of the U.S. and the Bank of Montreal, indicating that it is quite feasible and viable economically for Quebec to go it alone. Mr. Speaker, I quote from today's Evening Telegram: 'Last

week Merrill Lynch and Company, one of the largest investment houses in the U.S., published a report which said Quebec separation would not have a disastrous effect on Quebec's economy and should not discourage Americans from investing in the Province.'

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, there was news of another report, a report drawn up for the Bank of Montreal which says; 'Quebec's independence movement is no longer being led by students and labour leaders, but by the mainstream "business, the middle-class and capitalists."' It goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, 'The non-event of Norway's separation from Sweden in 1903 is perhaps the appropriate historic analogy for any legal separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Opposition Leader questioned the Premier yesterday about his stand on the Meech Lake Accord and his latest ultimatum, the Opposition Leader asked the Premier whether he has commissioned for our Government and our Province a study on the fallout for Newfoundland and Labrador of Quebec's separating from Canada. And Merrill Lynch and the Bank of Montreal have examined the situation and have concluded that it is now feasible for Quebec to separate, and, furthermore, the momentum for separation is growing within the Province of Quebec. Has our Premier looked at the ramifications of Quebec separating for Newfoundland and Labrador, Labrador which has such a large shared boundary with Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador which is looking to Quebec for development of Lower Churchill Hydro Power? What was the Premier's answer? It

was to dismiss the question, belittle the question, and write off the Merrill Lunch Report as an off-the-top-of-his-head opinion from New York.

Mr. Speaker, this is scary stuff. Where will we be if the Meech lake Accord fails and if Quebec does pull out of Canada? Where will we be if the Meech Lake Accord fails? The Premier is refusing to address that question. It is high time that we in the House and the people of the Province pressed him on it. It is time to get real,, to get serious about what is happening in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, when I asked the Premier yesterday whether he believes this Province has the right to alone block the Meech Lake Accord, his answer was, 'Technically, legally, yes.' That was his answer. He went on to say, 'Politically and morally, no.' He indicated that if events unfold in such a way that Newfoundland and Labrador is the only Province holding out, not that he would capitulate and join the other jurisdictions, no, not that, but that he would call on the Prime Minister to have a national referendum. Imagine! Imagine what kind of an ego this man has. Now, this is a man who did not deal with the Canadian Constitution or the Meech Lake Accord when he was campaigning for election last Spring. I challenged him on that yesterday; I pointed out there was not one mention of the Meech Lake Accord in the Liberal Party campaign literature in the election campaign last Spring. Not one mention, Mr. Speaker.

I have a file called Liberal propoganda, which I review from time to time. It contains the

Liberal election material from last Spring. Not one mention of the Meech Lake Accord.

The Premier's rebuttal was that he did discuss his position on the Accord in a few interviews with reporters last spring. The only evidence he could produce was a front page story in the Corner Brook Western Star, dated April 19th, which of course came out on the day before the election. Mr. Speaker, it so happens the Premier was defeated in Humber East. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the PC Party got more of the popular vote throughout the Province than the Liberal Party. So much for democracy, so much for involving the people, so much for consulting the people. Here is the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador calling on the Prime Minister of Canada to have a national referendum, because, he, Clyde Wells, wants one.

MR. SPEAKER:

I am having great difficulty hearing the hon. Member so could we give her the courtesy of quietness, please.

MS VERGE:

Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I have to say though, I was enjoying the reactions.

MR. SPEAKER:

Were you? Oh, fine.

MS VERGE:

Thank you. Here we have a Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, with the audacity to call on the Prime Minister of Canada to have a national referendum, because he wants one to make up his mind, when he has not even involved the citizens of his own Province in a meaningful way in any discussion about the Meech Lake Accord. The

Premier acknowledges that the vast majority of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador do not understand what the Meech Lake Accord is all about. They understand less what his alternative is all about. They understand less that his alternative is centralizing more power in Ottawa, is kissing goodbye a chance to gain more management over the fisheries, is rejecting the chance for a say on Supreme Court of Canada appointments. People do not realize that his alternative does not address the Quebec sign language law question, people do not realize that. What has the Premier done to inform people of the Province about the constitutional issues being debated. Has he struck a committee of this House of Assembly to hold public hearings? No. To his credit and to the Government's credit they set up House Legislative Review Committees and the ones chaired by the Member for Bonavista South, has travelled around and held hearings on Bill 53, The Crown Lands Bill and now renumbered Bill 25. Mr. Speaker, just about every citizen of Newfoundland and Labrador understand Bill 53, they heard Premier Wells when he did a news conference laying out an alternative to Clause 7.2, they understand that and they know the Premier is wrong on that. Now, if they could find out about the Meech Lake Accord, and even more what the Premier's alternative to the Accord is, they would catch him out on that as well. Why is the Premier refusing to have any meaningful public education process on The Meech Lake Accord. Why is he afraid to set up a House Committee involving Members on both sides, some of the capable backbench Members and some of us

over here to go around and talk to people about the Meech Lake Accord, Mr. Speaker.

Another example on one of the few other initiatives of this Government is amalgamation. What is going on with amalgamation? It has been a fiasco from start to finish. Mr. Speaker, there are public hearings being held on amalgamation even in communities where overwhelming opposition was documented last summer. The Government is wasting money and wasting time of civil servants and citizens of those communities having these public hearings. I went to one in the Bay of Islands District two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, and now the Minister tells us today that the Government is working up to changing the Municipal financing, the Government is going to change the rules in mid-stream. Mr. Speaker, the hearing in the Bay of Islands I attended began with a funeral procession. The procession was conducted by the Mayors of the five communities under the gun pointed by this Government. The procession went to the front of a Hall with a coffin, the coffin was lowered and the Mayor of Summerside said he was officiating over the demise of the five communities naming them one by one, and concluded by saying that in the next election they would preside over the demise of this Government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I adjourn the debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

The hon. Member should agree to stop the clock.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Private Member's Day, and Thursday is budget day. I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 14, 1990, at 2:00 p.m.