



Province of Newfoundland

FORTY - FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND

Volume XLI

Second Session

Number 7

VERBATIM REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

The House met at 2:00 p.m.

MR. SPEAKER (Lush):

Order, please!

On behalf of hon. Members I would like to welcome to the galleries today twenty Level 111 students from Lumsden All Grade School and their two teachers Mr. Lloyd Matthews and Mr. Vincent Farr.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Also I would like to welcome to the galleries forty Grade X11 students with their teachers Mr. Kurt Goulding and Mr. Hubert Sparkes from the Glovertown High School.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I would just like to inform hon. Members that last evening at 6:31 p.m. Newfoundland time, which was 12:01 a.m. on March 21, Namibian time, Namibia became an independent country within the Commonwealth. To recognize March 21, 1990 as Namibian Independence Day we have had the Namibian Flag raised outside our Legislature and I intend as Speaker of this hon. House to send congratulations to the new Government of Namibia and its President Mr. Sam Nujoma as they begin their existence as a separate parliamentary democracy.

It is noteworthy that Mr. Walter Davis, a well-known local peace activist and founder of the "Children's Crusade for Peace" has acted as the co-ordinator of Namibian Independence Day activities in Newfoundland and Labrador at the request of His Hon. Lieutenant-Governor James

McGrath. It is equally noteworthy that eight Newfoundlanders participated in the Namibian independence process by performing vital roles in the elections held in Namibia from November 7 to November 11, 1989.

I intend to write these individuals and commend them for their efforts in the election process. The participants from our Province were: Mr. John Carter (Harbour Breton), Mr. Almon Dale (St. John's), Mrs. Elizabeth Hobbs (Bishop's Falls), Mr. Conrad Glasgow (Aquathuna), Mrs. Alida Vokey (Spandiard's), and Mr. Dermot Whelan (St. John's), who acted as election supervisors along with Mr. Frank Pierpoint (St. John's), and Mr. Gerard O'Brien (Mount Pearl), who assisted as fingerprint experts.

On behalf of all hon. Members, I extend congratulations and best wishes to the Government of Namibia and our thanks to the Newfoundlanders who assisted in the election process.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise simply to endorse Your Honour's congratulations to the people of Namibia, and to endorse also Your Honour's expression of appreciation to the Newfoundlanders who participated in that process. And at the same time it gives me an opportunity, because this is not a formal tabling of reports under our

normal procedure, but just to table in the House a copy of a report prepared by Mr. Dermot Whelan, who was one of the Newfoundlanders who participated, and as everybody knows he is our Chief Electoral Officer, and he has prepared a report of the activities by the group of Newfoundlanders that you mentioned and I wish to table it so that it can be made public for anybody who wishes it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, we would like to be associated as well with Your Honour's comments. It gives us all an opportunity, I suppose, to reflect upon the fact that we do enjoy living in a democracy ourselves and all too often we forget that, particularly when you are talking about a country as far away as Namibia.

The bit of knowledge I have of what transpired there is that the 1.5 million people of that country themselves have been fighting a pretty tough struggle since, I guess, around 1920 as I understand it. So it has been decades and decades. And we are pleased to be associated with your comments and extend our congratulations to - I do not know if I can pronounce it right, but I think it is President Samuel Nujoma, or something of that nature. The Governing Party is the Swapo Party, undoubtedly a Progressive Conservative leaning Government.

MR. SPEAKER:

I see the Member for Humber Valley. If he would, I would like to rule on a point of privilege so that we do not get a build up of

other points of privilege. The point of privilege was raised by the Opposition House Leader yesterday re: the elimination of the office of Ombudsman. The Opposition House Leader said, 'My specific charge is that the Minister of Finance announced the decision outside his authority and without proper regard to the privileges of the House of Assembly.' As hon. Members know, the Speaker's role is not to decide whether privileges have been breached, but to decide if a prima facie case can be established. That is whether the claim of breach of privilege conforms with the conditions which alone entitle it to the precedents over the normal routine business of the Order Paper for that particular day and does not extend to the question of substance, this is the job of the House. I am quoting from Beauchesne's paragraph 117 clauses one and two.

Now with respect to the Minister exceeding his authority, particularly the Minister of Finance on the presentation of a Budget. In this case the Minister of Finance's authority is very large and extensive. The Minister in this case is announcing Government's public policy plans, initiatives, and proposals for the ensuing year. This will invariably involve the creation and designing of new legislation, and by the same token rescinding and cancellation of unnecessary, unwanted and redundant legislation, always of course, with the approval or the outright rejection, condemnation or disapproval of the House. In this particular case the Minister was announcing the Government's intention with respect to the office of Ombudsman. As for the breaching of the privileges of the

House of Assembly, again, the Opposition House Leader stated the office of Ombudsman was created by the House of Assembly. The Minister in making the announcement said, and I quote from the Budget Speech, 'Mr. Speaker, Government will shortly be introducing legislation to repeal the Parliamentary Commissioner, or Ombudsman Act, so once again what the Minister was doing was announcing the Government's intent, which is normal procedure for either a Throne Speech or a Budget Speech. If the Minister of Finance was not allowed to announce what Government's intent or what its legislation might or might not be in a Budget Speech, one could expect there would be many, many points of privilege.

The Minister was simply announcing the Government's intention. It was going to come here to the House to be debated and hon. Members could reject it or approve it, in the same manner, I expect, that the office was established. Had the Minister cancelled the office of Ombudsman without any regard for the House, or bringing the debate to the House, quite obviously that would be a different matter, but the Minister was announcing the intention of Government to bring the matter to the House. In another presentation the hon. Member mentioned that it was said outside the House. Again, this has been a matter for debate in many Legislatures for many, many years, and I quote again Beauchesne, Paragraph 31, Clause 3, which says, "Statements made outside the House by a Member may not be used as the basis for a question of privilege." I expect what applies to a Member likewise applies to a Minister. Again, quoting

Beauchesne Page 108, Paragraph 352, "The option of a Minister to make a statement either in the House or outside it may be the subject of comment, but is not the subject of a question of privilege." So by way of summation: the Minister made a statement in the Budget Speech about the creation of legislation, or the rescinding of unwanted, unnecessary redundant legislation, and this would not be outside the authority of the Minister. With respect to breaching of the privileges of the House, again, the House will have an opportunity to either reject or approve Government's intention, if and when, they introduce the legislation.

It was also mentioned that the Opposition House Leader, I think, and I do not think he was using this as a point to support his point of privilege, but probably to emphasize and strengthen the point, alluded to the notion that the intended move by the Government might not be in compliance with the law. Again, Beauchesne, page 13, paragraph 31, clause 9 states that "The failure of the Government to comply with the law," if that were the case, "is not a matter for the Speaker, but should be decided by the courts."

I therefore rule that there is is no prima facie case of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I said yesterday, I gave notice that I would today bring in a point of privilege. I am always a

bit hesitant about anything when it comes to a point of privilege. I have not brought up any in the last five years, in fact, but in this case I think it is warranted. I personally think it is warranted, and I think that every Member in the House should take notice of what I have to say. I do not intend to be long. I intend to be brief and to the point, exactly to the point.

Tuesday of last week, I think it was March 13, I asked a question pertaining to the rates being charged by Newfoundland Hydro. It was intended for the Minister responsible for Energy but as he was not here at the time I had to put the question to the Minister responsible for Treasury Board. He promised me that afternoon he would get the information for me the next day. And he did. What I have to say has no bearing whatsoever on the Member himself, none. He is an honourable Member, I have known him for years and I have no intentions of passing any slurs or slanders in any way shape or form, but I do intend to say something about the other part of it which is where I got the information.

I called, in what I thought was in confidence as an MHA, to the Chairman of the Public Utilities Board, an independent quasi-judicial board in this Province appointed by Government, but responsible to no one but themselves. They are, as far as I am concerned, the judge and jury, so to speak, of anybody who comes before them.

But in answering the questions the next afternoon, on the 14th, the Minister responsible for Treasury Board alluded to the fact, in one of his answers, that I had already

known the answer, because I was briefed the day before by officials from Newfoundland Hydro. It was not Newfoundland Hydro, but he was dead on. I was briefed. In questioning, I did not intend to be devious in any way. I called to ask legitimate questions, which any MHA in this Chamber has the right to do. Nobody else knew I had called the Chairman of the Public Utilities Board, nobody. So when the Minister stood to answer my questions how did he know I had been briefed the day before. The official either called the Minister, or else, when the Minister called in good faith to get information, like I did, he mentioned the fact that the Member for Humber Valley called. My point is, when I call someone like that, it is different than calling a Government Department, different altogether. They are quasi-judicial like I said, they are supposed to be independent, so why did he give the Minister the answer? If he did, and as I said before, correct me if I am wrong, if he had given that information, or else he was asked for it. My point is, and I say it again, my privileges as an MHA, as a Member of the House of Assembly, as far as I am concerned, have been broken. I called in confidence, that is the point I want to make, the confidentiality. I called in confidence and I want to make it quite clear that when I got off the phone, I figured what I had asked would stay with him. I am not stopping the man from giving anybody else the information, but not the information for which I had asked for, personally. The name had to have been brought up, it had to be, that is the only person who knew about it. That is my point, Mr. Speaker. I will not belabour the point. If it is

ruled as a prima facie case, I would like to put it to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question of privilege is one we have dealt with a number of times in this House over the past few months. The key, I suppose, to what a question of privilege is: in Beauchesne, page 11, paragraph 24: 'Parliamentary privilege is the peculiar right enjoyed by the House and by the Members of the House individually, without which they could not discharge their functions'. This has been brought up a number of times throughout Beauchesne, throughout other books on Parliamentary Procedure. The valid claim of privilege as enunciated again by Beauchesne, Page 25, Paragraph 92: "A valid claim of privilege in respect to interference with a Member must relate to a Member's parliamentary duties", the duties in parliament, and, as I stated earlier, without which the Member cannot carry out these parliamentary duties. There has to be some interference in his being able to do his job in parliament.

Now in this case, if I remember correctly, the Member asked a question for which I said I would research the answer. It had to do with an increase Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro had put on. When I researched the incident, I discovered that this was common practice dating back to 1975 by an Order in Council, that when rate increases were granted to Newfoundland Light that impacted on the PDD, then increases would

be passed along by Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro as a matter of course. It was not something that had to be dealt with by the Public Utilities Board. I think that was the essence of the Member's question. Was this being done without the knowledge of the Public Utilities Board? And the answer quite obviously was, that it was not improper and that there was proper legislative permission dating back to 1975, given, for this to happen. I referred to the fact that the Member had been briefed by Hydro officials the day before, and I do not believe I commented beyond that.

I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, how this can be construed as interfering with the Member's ability to carry out his duties. Who he talks to outside the House or who I talk to outside the House or on the phone has nothing to do with the Member's parliamentary duties. It in no way interfered with his ability to ask questions or receive answers. It in no way interfered with his ability to carry on in the Legislature. What was conveyed to the Member was simply the truth and nothing but the truth. That is what we try to do.

Mr. Speaker, there is no interference with the Member's ability to carry out his parliamentary duties, so on that basis I would suggest there is no valid point of privilege.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

I would make a brief contribution

to the point raised by my colleague, the Member for Humber Valley.

I think what has to be remembered here, recognized and perhaps, emphasized, is the fact that this is a very serious matter and Members opposite seem to think otherwise, I notice, at least from their expressions.

The Member has the right to confidentiality. I think Your Honour will find, and probably knows it anyway, without having to research it in Beauchesne or any other parliamentary reference, a Member acting on behalf of his constituents has the right to confidentiality, particularly in this case, because of the fact that the body he was dealing with is a quasi-judicial body. It is not the Minister's office, the Minister's Department, or anything of that nature, it is a quasi-judicial body. If a Member were to call a judge, that would be most inappropriate and unacceptable, and I submit to you that the same kind of thinking should exist in this kind of a situation.

MR. FUREY:

He did not call a judge, did he?

MR. SIMMS:

No but perhaps the judge called the Minister of Treasury Board, that is the point. The hon. the Minister of Development, as usual, is missing the point, mostly because he is not listening.

Mr. Speaker, the argument the Member puts forward is a valid argument and I think Your Honour would be well served and the Members well served if Your Honour took time to reflect on it, perhaps, and just have a look at

it. That is the only thing I would suggest. There are other references that the President of Treasury Board totally ignored and totally passed over in submitting some references to Your Honour for consideration, particularly Paragraph 92 in the Sixth Edition of Beauchesne, which does say, "A valid claim of privilege in respect to interference with a Member must relate to the Member's parliamentary duties". Certainly what he was doing related to the Member's parliamentary duties. He was seeking information on behalf of a constituency which he represents, either as a Member or as a critic, and that is a Member's parliamentary responsibility, surely.

The other reference I just want to pass to Your Honour, because I do not want to belabour the point at this stage, is Paragraph 96 which says - and it deals with the privacy which surrounds Members opposite, the privacy which surrounds Members opposite falls in this particular paragraph, refers also to the fact that it extends to computer-based data in equipment used by Members and so on - but here is the key sentence, 'That confidentiality must be respected.' And that is the point the Member for Humber Valley (Mr. Woodford) is trying to make and that is the point I am trying to make, Your Honour.

As I say Members opposite have a knack, when somebody is trying to make a valid and serious point on the floor of the House in terms of a matter that has come up that breaches the privileges of Members of the House, Members opposite try to influence whomever they can by laughing and all the other kinds of things. This is a serious matter. The President of Treasury

Board (Mr. Baker) may not think so, but we think so.

AN HON. MEMBER:

It is silly and stupid.

MR. SIMMS:

Well I mean you are all reflecting the Premier's comments when you say it is silly and stupid.

MR. BAKER:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Government House Leader.

MR. BAKER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I did not want to let the hon. Member's reference pass without comment. Paragraph 96 says 'The privacy which surrounds Members office files also extends to computer-based data in the equipment used by Members. That confidentiality must be respected. How he can twist this to somehow infer that somebody is getting into the Member's files or the Member's computer equipment is beyond me.

Mr. Speaker, it just goes to show the kinds of references that the hon. Members want to give at some point in time. I would like to point out to you, Your Honour, that in my answer I suggested the Member may have had a briefing by Newfoundland Hydro officials. This is the very first time that I have heard reference to the Public Utilities Board, and who the Member talked to. I did not know who the Member talked to. I did not talk to anybody on the Public Utilities Board. I simply made reference that the Member had some briefing by Hydro officials. And if the Member says he did not

receive a briefing from Hydro officials then this is simply a dispute between two hon. Members which does not constitute, according to Beauchesne, a matter of privilege. So, Mr. Speaker, this I submit is not a point of privilege at all.

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of privilege. This gives the Chair an opportunity to make a couple of points. (1) I do not rush into points of privilege, because points of privilege are matters of pretty heavy importance and significance to the House, and it should not be taken lightly, so I want a chance to study it. (2) It is a chance also to point out to hon. Members the antiquated procedures that we have in this House with respect to points of privilege. Most Houses in the British Commonwealth require that notice be given, a substantial notice be given so we are not flying by the seat of our pants and that we are making decisions that are substantiated by the authorities. So I am going to hold my decision on this, particularly since the Member did not ask that the matter be debated, but asked that it be referred to the Committee on Elections and Privileges, which indicates that the Speaker would not be delaying unnecessarily by taking some time to study it.

Statements by Ministers

MR. DICKS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader on a point of order.

MR. SIMMS:

According to the Standing Orders, on Wednesdays Question Period shall commence not later than 2:30 p.m., and we are gone beyond that.

Oral Questions

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage.

MR. LANGDON:

My question is to the Minister of Fisheries. On February 26 a delegation from the Connaigre Peninsula, made up of town and fisheries officials, met with the Premier, yourself, and officials from the Department regarding the crisis in the fixed gear winter cod fishery on the south coast of the Province in the NAFO 3PS zone. A letter was drafted to the Fisheries Minister, Mr. Valcourt, and on March 19 a letter was also Faxed to the Prime Minister. My question to the Minister of Fisheries is, would the Minister inform the House if Mr. Valcourt or the Prime Minister has responded to your Department regarding the request for compensation on behalf of those fishermen?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I received a copy of the letter as well, addressed to the hon. the

Prime Minister and signed by a number of fishermen from the hon. Member's District. I can only tell him, Mr. Speaker, that on several occasions now I have made representation to the Federal Minister, going back to when his predecessor, Mr. Siddon, was the Minister of Fisheries, when I took it upon myself to go to Ottawa and spend some time briefing him on the very serious situation that was developing on the south and southwest coasts.

Subsequently, Mr. Speaker, upon the appointment of the new Minister I wrote him on March 4 and again on March 9, and in both cases asked that immediate attention be given to the problem. Two weeks ago I had occasion to visit Ottawa and to have a meeting with the new Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Valcourt, and I spent, I would suggest, a third of my two and a half hour meeting with the Minister discussing that very problem. We are waiting on an answer from him. I am hoping it will be positive, because I, too, recognize the seriousness of the situation and I am hoping the Minister will recognize it as well.

MR. LANGDON:

Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fortune - Hermitage on a supplementary.

MR. LANGDON:

So there is no definite date for compensation for these fishermen. As you are aware, the small yielding catch plus stormy conditions, and lately ice conditions, have made it impossible for them to fish. So there is no definite date on the

compensation package?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER:

No, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the fact that time is running out and that the fishermen in that area, in a very short span of time now, will be in very desperate straits. While I am on my feet, I would like to table the copies of the two letters I sent to the Minister, my letter to him of March 4 and my most recent letter to him, March 9.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister responsible for Forestry and Agriculture. In view of the fact that the Appeal Tribunal set up by the Minister to look into an appeal by two dairy producers in the Province, and in view of the fact they ruled in favour of the dairy producers, would the Minister tell the House if he is satisfied with the ruling?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. Member for his question. I can say it is not for me to be satisfied or unsatisfied, with the ruling. I appointed an Appeals Tribunal to hear an appeal against a decision of the Milk Marketing Board, which I supported, and the Appeals Tribunal has recommended that the producers receive an

extra two cents over and above what was recommended by the Milk Marketing Board, and subsequently supported by me.

Mr. Speaker, I might say to the hon. Member that I received the Appeal Tribunal's ruling about noon yesterday and although I am aware of the major recommendations, it is a seventy page report. I have held meetings with the Milk Marketing Board. They are holding an annual meeting in Corner Brook to look at the ruling and the recommendation, and as soon as I am well enough briefed and totally aware of the total recommendations of the Tribunal and the implications flowing therefrom to the industry, then I will indicate what my position, or Government's position, is with regard to that recommendation.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Would the Minister tell the House if he agrees with the comments made by the Tribunal with regard to the Minister himself? That only took up one page, and I am sure the Minister had time to look at that one.

MR. TOBIN:

What is it?

MR. WOODFORD:

Well, it says, 'The Minister's influence on the Board was inappropriate and invalid in law. The Milk Board should have been left to exercise its discretion free from dictation by another person or body.'

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry

and Agriculture.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, I am aware of the comments in the report the Member refers to. I might also point out to the Member that having assumed the office of Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, within days I was informed by my officials that I could expect a request from the Milk Marketing Board to approve or to support an increase of eight and one half cents per litre for milk. I indicated to the extent I could that I would not be prepared to support that kind of a massive increase.

For the rest of the summer, meeting after meeting was held at the request of the Milk Marketing Board requesting my support of a proposed 8.5 cent increase, and I continued to suggest that I would not support that kind of an increase. They obviously felt they needed my approbation or my support, or they would not be coming to me. I simply continued to say, I will not support it, and I had the support of Cabinet and this side of the House on that.

I have no quarrel at this point in time with the recommendations or anything in the report, but how could it be considered interference on my part when the Milk Marketing Board was coming and requesting my support and I simply refused to give my support, up to a certain point? I do not know how that could be seen as interference.

But I want to say this to the Member before I sit down, Mr. Speaker. He is very selective in lifting out of the report things he wants to. Let me read a passage from the report: 'It must be strongly emphasized that the

Minister at all times was acting in good faith. He was actually attempting to keep the price of milk down for the benefit of the consumer.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, my final observation is this: If the general public were to hear the tenor of the questions coming from the hon. Member they may determine, or they may feel, that he is an advocate for the producers of this Province. I do not believe that, even though I know he is a major producer in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I will not take the time to get down in the gutter with the hon. Minister. If he wants to get down in the gutter, I will take him on any time, any where, any place, including here in the House of Assembly. If you want to debate agriculture, Mr. Minister, you just stand up and try it.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister stated in his first answer that he did not read the report. As soon as I quoted a section of the report, he stood up and started quoting other sections. What does that tell you? Misleading this House.

Mr. Speaker, ever since the Minister was appointed last year, every move made, and more specifically to the dairy industry, others I will not name because this is the one in question - I did not give the ruling, the Appeal Tribunal gave the ruling. I am not saying it. But already he is trying to revoke the powers of the Board.

MR. SPEAKER:
Order, please!

I have given the hon. Member a lot of leeway. I have been waiting for the question. I did not hear that the Minister was getting down in the gutter. If he did, I want to tell the Minister that that ought not to be the case. And, by the same token, Ministers should only answer questions as they are asked, and hon. Members ought to ask questions and not respond on the answer. So please get to the question.

The hon. the Member for Humber Valley.

MR. WOODFORD:

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the Minister another question. Last Fall he stated and I quote: "Any additional increases in the price of milk at either level before that time will not be acceptable, and appropriate action will be taken by Government to prohibit such increases." Would the Minister tell the House what that appropriate action will be?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Forestry.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, it is true, and I suspect that the hon. Member is reading from the statement I gave when I supported the 3.5 cent increase requested by the Milk Marketing Board in, I think, early December.

At that point in time, we, as a Government, or I, as a Minister had no reason to believe or to even consider that that decision, number one, would be repealed or, number two, what the outcome of the appeal would be, so, obviously, I could not have built

into my statement any consideration we would have with regard to something that we were not even aware might happen

I now tell the Member that I have to take the report of the Tribunal and its approving of the increase over and above what we had approved in the first instance, and see the implication for the industry, apprise the Cabinet of the situation, and determine exactly what we will do with regard to the industry and with regard to the recommendations of the Appeal Tribunal. As soon as that happens, Mr. Speaker, the House will obviously be informed as to what decisions we make flowing from the recommendations of the Appeal Tribunal.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance. Examination of the Estimates for recreation shows that the budget has been reduced from \$4.5 million to \$1.8 million. Will the Minister confirm for this House that this is indeed the case and that no new monies have been allocated for recreation this year, only ongoing projects that carry over from last year's budget, that there is no new money for recreation?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister for Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the Budget does, in fact, reflect a decrease in funding in one particular area, but that is due to the fact that

many programs that were started, mostly on five year phases, have been completed and the need for funding is not as great as it was in previous years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. WINSOR:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A question to the Minister of Finance. I have already asked the Minister of Municipal and Cultural Affairs on several occasions and he has refused to answer. Will the Minister of Finance now confirm for this House that this Administration has again cancelled the regional recreation complex program and that there is indeed no money in this Budget for stadiums in Bonavista North, the Connaigre Peninsula and Fogo?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister for Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, the recreational facilities program has been under review by Government since we took the time, last year, to put it under such review, and we have been reviewing the program ever since. That program, in fact, is not required to be a Budget item. In fact, any expenditure under the program would impact on a future Budget, possibly 1991, it could be as late as 1992, when projects are substantially complete. But on the program itself, Mr. Speaker, I hope to report to the House very shortly on Government's decision on revising and revitalizing and bringing back a program to this

House. That decision is about to be made.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

MR. WINSOR:

A supplementary to the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. The Minister has already given that same answer, I think, on three occasions. Will the Minister really tell the House what is going on with recreation? Is it not the wish of the Department to downgrade it? The Premier said to the delegation from Fogo last June, what is more important on Fogo Island, is it a stadium or is it water and sewer? Has recreation been shortchanged by this Government?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Provincial and Municipal Affairs.

MR. GULLAGE:

Mr. Speaker, all the hon. Member has to do is look at the various parts of the Budget as far as recreation, sport and fitness are concerned in all the various Headings. I think the only decrease in our Budget this year is the area he pinpointed and, as I explained, that is because we have finished the phases of programs that were started some years ago. There has been no decrease in funding as far as my Department is concerned in this particular area. The focus and the thrust of Government is very much as it was in the past, and we are continuing to place great importance on the area of sport, recreation and fitness.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I have questions for the Minister of Finance about the provisions in his Budget, the budget with the colour photograph of himself, for Memorial University of Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, Memorial University is a corporation. It is a large employer with a payroll in excess of \$110 million a year. 1.5 per cent of that payroll is about \$1.65 million a year, not an insignificant sum - I repeat, \$1.65 million. Will the Minister of Finance tell the House of Assembly, yes or no, whether his estimate of \$15 million to be raised in this budget year from his new employer payroll tax includes receipts from Memorial University?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to correct the Member's nomenclature on the tax.

The tax is the health and post-secondary education tax. It is a tax designed to replace federal money that is not forthcoming this year, and we are raising money to put into health and post-secondary education. As a result of that, Memorial University will be much better off under this Government than it has been under a previous Government.

I will come now to the specifics of the question the Member asked. Here is what I want to say: I announced yesterday that we will be making a firm statement as to the procedures by which this tax

would be implemented.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. KITCHEN:

I can see hon. Members are more interested in preventing the good things in this Budget from being known. Of all the good things in this Budget, tremendous things, they are over there yack, yack, yack, like a bunch of scared mice. I do not know what is wrong with them. Let the force flow. Let it flow. Enjoy it. You will never get a Budget like this again, perhaps.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. TOBIN:

And there will never be a Minister of Finance so stunned again.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, I enjoy these comments from Members opposite. I really enjoy them.

Let me say this, Mr. Speaker, with respect to why it is I wish to make a more definitive statement later on. The question about this particular tax, this health and post-secondary education tax, we are expecting the Federal Government to pay a fair amount of this tax. Now, according to the Constitution - I do not know very much about constitutions but I do know this, that in Section 125 of the British North America Act it states this, 'No lands or property belonging to Canada -

MS VERGE:

How about answering the question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, they ask the questions -

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible) to take the House on your back (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Chair is trying to listen to the answer, and as long as hon. Members keep interfering I cannot hear what the answer is. I would ask the hon. Minister to please try to speed up the answer.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, it is a fairly complex answer. But they have been persisting in asking the question, so I will try to answer it. According to Section 125 of the British North America Act 'No lands or property belonging to Canada or any province shall be liable to taxation.' Now this means, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government does not, by law, have to pay this tax.

MR. SIMMS:

You are abusing the privileges of the House.

DR. KITCHEN:

I am trying to tell you why it is that I am not going to answer this question at this moment.

MR. SIMMS:

Four minutes to answer a simple question. That is an absolute abuse.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

We have a reciprocal agreement, Mr. Speaker, between the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland by which we pay their manufactures tax, or their Federal sales tax, and they, in turn, pay our retail sales tax. I do not know what is going to happen when the Goods and Services Tax comes in, but it looks like there may not be a reciprocal arrangement there. We are not sure, but that is what it looks like. We also have in place reciprocal arrangements by which they buy driver's licences in this Province and pay for them, and on the gasoline tax. So there are a number of these reciprocal arrangements. The point I want to make is that we have to treat the Federal Government fairly. And that means -

MR. SIMMS:

On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, they can laugh all they wish over there, but Members on that side of the House perhaps do not appreciate how serious this abuse is. This Minister has taken nearly five minutes to answer a simple question: Does the payroll tax apply to Memorial University? He is doing nothing but abusing the privileges of Members of this House, particularly Members on this side of the House. Your Honour is expected to protect the minority in the House, and I would ask you to exercise that

responsibility.

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER WELLS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to address the point of privilege which I suggest is really not a point of privilege, but I have to comment on it. Now, Mr. Speaker, a question was asked and there was such a constant gaggle of noise from the other side that there is no way the Minister could answer it intelligently. If they wanted to remain quiet, they would get the answer. Now Mr. Speaker, -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the full answer to the question, is as the Minister is giving it. It is a technical, constitutional question, and what the Minister -

AN HON. MEMBER:

It has nothing to do with it. Yes or no is all you need.

PREMIER WELLS:

There is no yes or no, except for dumb people who do not know the difference.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

The Chair has said on many

occasions that during Question Period, in order for the Chair to decide when the answer is given, the Chair must have silence so the Chair can listen. I realize the question was a technical question, but I was asking the Minister to speed up the answer. I will just bear out the Premier to finish up on the point of Privilege, which is not a point of Privilege. But since I allowed the Opposition House Leader to raise it, I would ask the Premier to finish up very quickly.

PREMIER WELLS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

A simple explanation is this is a complex constitutional matter, as the Minister is saying.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER WELLS:

They do not want to hear truth. It is a complex constitutional question. One level of Government cannot directly tax another level of Government. Ontario, Quebec and Manitoba are collecting substantial revenues from the Government of Canada through means of a similar tax. What the Minister is trying to tell the people of this Province is the Federal Government cut some \$22 million out of the established program funding. We want to -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER WELLS:

The objective of this Government -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER WELLS:

Mr. Speaker, the objective of the Government, as the Minister is explaining, is to try and collect the tax in an appropriate way. All hon. Members Opposite are trying to do is further burden the people of this Province by making it difficult by these spurious points of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

There is no point of Privilege. The point of the matter is, if a question is a technical question, a Minister does not have to get into it, he does not have to answer the question. And if we keep the Question Period long, with long-drawn-out answers, then, of course, the Question Period is going to fall down, as it has now. I am going to now go to the questioner again, the hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

The truth of this matter is that the Government and the Minister of Finance have bungled the Budget and are trying to buy time to cover their tracks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I will ask the same question in another way. On page 183 of the Estimates document there is provision for a Government Grant in Aid - operating grant - to Memorial University of Newfoundland and it is over \$100 million. Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance tell the House of Assembly, yes or no, whether that figure includes provision for the university paying a 1.5 per cent payroll tax, which would be over a million dollars this year? Yes or no?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, I do not like objective questions, where you have to fill in the blanks, particularly when they do not apply, so I am not going to answer the question in the way the Member asked. I have no intention of saying yes or no. What I will do, Mr. Speaker, if Members are prepared to listen, is to continue with the explanation I started and the Premier continued. I will continue with this technical answer, with your permission, Sir. As the Premier added to my comments, the Federal Government in the past, when the tax is fair, they have paid it. Ontario levies a payroll tax, which is heavier than ours, and the Federal Government pays it. The Federal Government also pays it in Manitoba and in Quebec.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. KITCHEN:

Just a second now -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order please!

DR. KITCHEN:

We will now come to the other Sectors.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The Chair has no way of knowing whether what the Minister is saying is related to the answer until I can at least get what the Minister is saying, that he has to use this explanation, and the Minister has only been a minute on this answer. The Minister of Finance!

DR. KITCHEN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

We now come to the question of a number of Government emanations, including municipal councils, universities, schools, and things like that. And this is why I want to make a more definitive statement later on, so that these procedures are in place. Let me say that Memorial University has nothing to fear from this Government with respect to this tax.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

MS VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Minister of Finance ensure the House of Assembly and the people of the Province that his one big new revenue measure in this Budget, which is labelled for post-secondary education, will not end up costing post-secondary education?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. KITCHEN:

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this tax is to restore revenue which we expected but did not get from the Federal Government. It will be used, and it has already been announced - I spent an hour and ten minutes on my feet the other day reading off list after list of the ways we are going to spend money in student aid, in hospital beds, and all these things. This health and post-secondary tax will be used for that sector.

Let me also say this, Mr. Speaker, in this connection: Who benefits from good health? Employers benefit from good health, employers benefit from good post-secondary education, so it is

only appropriate for employers to help pay the cost of health and post-secondary education, since they are immense beneficiaries of the tax.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Question Period has expired.

MR. RIDEOUT:

A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MR. RIDEOUT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to raise a point of order having to do with the recognition first today, in Question Period, of the Member for Fortune - Hermitage, who is sitting as an independent down in this end of the House.

I would like to take Your Honour back to the rules and precedents of this Legislature. Having been here as long as I have been here, having sat in this House with independents sitting down in that corner before, and I specifically refer to the former Member for LaPoile, Mr. Neary, and I specifically refer to Mr. Smallwood and the Liberal Reform Group, when they sat in that corner, and Mr. Fenwick and the former Member for St. John's East, and I am sure Your Honour will want to research the records to look at this, Your Honour will recognize that the first question of Question Period on any given day, if the Leader of the Opposition is in his place and rises, is always to the Leader of the Opposition or, barring that,

the Leader of the Opposition may be in his or her place but designates another person in the Official Opposition to lead off Question Period, and that rule, Sir, to my knowledge, has always been adhered to and upheld in this Legislature.

Now we are not about, as an Official Opposition, to stand idly by and have the rights of the Official Opposition trampled on in any way because of the Member for Fortune - Hermitage. If he chose to sit where he is sitting, he chose that himself. Mr. Speaker, the rights, the privileges and the responsibilities of the Official Opposition rest with this group right here, and we are not about to stand idly by and see that derogated in any way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

In response to the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition makes a good point, that it is not without other factors that one considers Members from another Party or independent Members. I would agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition that it is practice in this House to recognize the Leader of the Official Opposition or the Member designated by the Leader of the Opposition. I ought to know it. I spent a dozen years over there asking questions.

But another rule is that when oral Question Period is called and the Speaker looks and there is nobody standing, then he recognizes the person standing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

When I looked, the Member for Fortune - Hermitage was standing, and just as I had introduced him, I noticed the Member for Humber Valley and I was not about to undo. But I will tell the Leader of the Opposition that I understand the rules. Naturally if someone is not standing, and the Leader of the Opposition will know very well, as well as I do, that when the person does not stand that at times interferes with the strategy and the Speaker is in an embarrassing position. The Speaker does not wait for a Member to stand, it is whoever is standing, and that is what happened today.

It being Wednesday, we go into Orders of the Day.

Orders of the Day

It is Private Member's Day, and I call on the appropriate Private Member to introduce his motion.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Bellevue.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a great pleasure for me to rise in the House today to introduce a resolution of utmost importance to this Province, particularly to women's groups in this Province.

This resolution I placed on the Order Paper on the opening of the House, and I will read the sections of this Private Member's resolution.

WHEREAS the seven Women's Centres

in Newfoundland and Labrador are a meeting place for women and a focal point for activities relating to reaching the goal of women's equality; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have brought to the public's attention issues such as wife/family violence, equal pay for work of equal value, child care, child sexual abuse, and provided the impetus for women to become actively involved in the economic development of their communities; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have contributed to the development of transition houses for battered women and their children; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres provide counselling and support to victims of sexual assault, single mothers on low income, women going through divorce or separation, and other women in crisis; and

WHEREAS Women's Centres have brought over \$2,235,519.00 to the Province since their inception, and created over 273 jobs and/or training spaces; and

WHEREAS provincial funding for women's issues has increased over the last ten years;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this House deplores the action of the Federal Government in attempting to deprive women of their centres, and recommends the immediate reinstatement of operational funding to the seven centres in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has once again implemented a budget that deprives Canadians of essential services, especially in areas where the need

has been identified.

The 1990 Federal Budget cut \$1.6 million from the Secretary of State's Women's Program. This cut included the total elimination of operational funding for Women's Centres across this country, as well as the withdrawal of funding for three Women's magazines. These Resource Centres and women's publications are two of the primary sources of communication for Canadian women and the groups which represent them.

These budget cuts, Mr. Speaker, are an outright attempt to silence the Women's Movement, as it has proven to be one of the most efficient, effective and vocal interest groups in our society. These Centres are most prevalent in British Columbia, Quebec and in Newfoundland.

Newfoundland has currently seven Women's Centres located in St. John's, Gander, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Port aux Basques, Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and Labrador West, all receiving operational funding from the Secretary of State. The Centres receive funding of between \$30,000 and \$50,000 annually from the Women's Program of the Secretary of State Department. The total annual funding for the Centres was approximately \$240,000.

Mr. Speaker, these Centres are run and operated by women. They are a meeting place for women and a focal point for many activities related to reaching the goal of women's equality; they are a visible sign in the community of an organization devoted to the concerns and causes of women; they operate public education and advocacy programs that are directed towards positive social

and economic change for women.

The importance of these activities and the various programs offered by the Women's Centres can be identified when one assesses the issues they have spearheaded. Women's Centres have brought to the public's attention issues such as wife and family violence, equal pay for work of equal value, child care, child sexual abuse, and have provided the impetus for women to become actively involved in the economic development of their communities.

The Status of Women Councils, through their Centres, are very active in economic development activities in their communities. For example, Gateway Status of Women Council and the Labrador West Status of Women Council have representation under Community Futures Boards. Gateway is also represented on the Community Diversification Corporation, the Southwest Coast Tourism Association, and the Social Economic Committee of the Port aux Basques town Council. Other councils have representations on local advisory boards - Canada Employment and Immigration.

Mr. Speaker, federal cuts in funding for Women's Centres in Canada is a direct attack on the Women's Movement. Last year, the Federal Government cut financing for Women's Centres by 15 per cent, and this year they totally eliminated funding for the Women's Centres.

Are they afraid of women's ability to organize themselves and speak out against Government policies? Was that not one of the reasons for funding the Centres in the first place, advocacy? The Federal Government has shifted all

its support for advocacy from natives and women to its cause for bilingualism. There seems to be such emphasis on bilingualism by the Federal Government that all other minority groups are forgotten about. Dorothy Inglis, a very prominent person in our society, stated it is out of the Women's Centres that the fight for equality and dignity for women has happened. This is an outright attempt to silence women's communications. The Federal Government says Women's Centres can still get project funding, but it is almost meaningless if they do not have the basic operations to apply for funding.

Mr. Speaker, it is just not the \$240,000 the Federal Government is pulling out, it is the impetus to put proposals together. Now the Women's Movement will again have to rely entirely on volunteers. Being a person who was very heavily involved in an advocacy group and a national group that did advocacy work on part of the undereducated in this country, it is very difficult to keep an organization together based solely on volunteers.

You can have volunteers for this and volunteers for that, but people who generally volunteer in our society are very, very busy people. You can get a group of people together, have meetings and discuss proposals, but you need some paid staff to be able to put these ideas together. I remember putting more than one proposal together, to the Secretary of State and various other Government agencies, spending very many long hours, and, after all that, getting a form letter back saying you do not get any funding. You need people who are paid staff to do the lobbying and the follow-up,

to do the phone calls, and to be able to make connections and communications with the various Government Departments.

Mr. Speaker, only two days ago our famous Brian, the Prime Minister of Canada, rescinded a \$182 million loan to the Caribbean, of which \$92 million was a direct loan to the Island of Jamaica. He has forgiven the Caribbean \$182 million, yet he cannot find the funds to keep the Women's Centres open in our country.

Our Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, is acting like the international Easter bunny, bouncing around the world leaving Canadian eggs wherever he goes. And when he gets home the egg basket is empty, and it is people like the women of this country, and natives and other minority groups, who have to go without. Make no wonder they sang Happy Birthday to him yesterday. But there is not too many people in this Province singing Happy Birthday to the present Prime Minister.

AN HON. MEMBER:
Bye, bye Brian.

MR. BARRETT:
When Michael Wilson says the deficit has to be reduced and the people will have to feel pain, why should foreign countries reap the benefits of our tax dollars? Women's Centres in Canada will lose their infrastructure, the physical space, the phone, the lights, the heat and all the salaried people, and volunteers will have to carry the way. The Caribbean, Mr. Speaker, on the other hand, received a gift of \$182 million.

The Women Centres in this Province have been instrumental in

attracting funding for projects from a variety of federal and provincial sources. These projects provide employment and training in the seven regions which the Centres serve, and over the past fourteen years the Centres have brought about \$2,236,000 to the Province, with 275 jobs in our training spaces being created, representing approximately thirty-four person years of work.

Without the Women Centres to work for many of these employment opportunities, they would not have existed. The Advisory Council on the Status of Women has always focused on the need to create employment opportunities. Women's Centres have also contributed to the development of transition houses for battered women and their children. Centres have often provided counselling to women who are victims of sexual assault or wife battering, and single mothers on low income and women going through divorce or separation. An example of this is the Rape Crisis Volunteer Service in St. John's and Happy Valley. In providing these services to women, the need for transition houses became imperative. The Status of Women Councils lobbied for the transition houses and now these shelters receive operational funding from the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, steps taken by the Women's Centres in this Province in effectively lobbying for, researching, maintaining liaisons with Governments, union, employer/employee groups and promoting issues, are all crucial to addressing women's needs, and, indeed, the needs of our society as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be a misconception by the Federal Government that Women's Centres are for women alone. Issues brought to the public's attention through women's groups are important issues, of particular concern to men and women alike.

Mr. Speaker, maybe these cuts in Federal Government funding would not have occurred if women were more a part of the political decision-making process.

MS COWAN:

Hear, hear!

MR. BARRETT:

This, however, is a problem which shows itself as we approach each election, that there is a need for more women candidates to seek public office.

At a Women in Politics Conference in Gander, January 1989, Jim Russell, a P.C. Member, the then Minister of Environment, a very honourable man, admitted that he felt the P.C. Party had not done all it could do to encourage women to become more actively involved in the party. Russell said his party has to change its strategy, and I am sure all of us who sit in this House have to change our strategy.

MS VERGE:

We have done better than you have, so far, but neither one of us has done very well.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party, which took power soon after that statement was made, has moved to make that ideal a reality. Our internal party policies and Government policies reflect that reality.

The Liberal Party has formed the Helena Squires Fund. This program raises funds to be provided to women candidates in future elections. This will make political opportunity more available and attractive to the women of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, our Government is firmly committed to improving the economic and social well-being of women. Without women standing up and speaking for what they believe in, the issues do not become issues. Our Government has listened to the women's groups and will continue to do so. Our Budget for 1990 ensures our commitment to acknowledging the importance of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget has provided \$6.3 million to support pay equity in the health care sector. Operating funding of \$100,000 will be provided for a new transition house in Gander. Without the women's movement within this Province, transition houses might not yet have been in place.

Eligibility criteria have been modified to enable more single parent families to obtain subsidized day care through our Minister of Social Services.

Changes in the Student Aid Program will provide single parents and married students additional funding, estimated to reach \$500,000, compliments of our great Minister of Education.

MR. SIMMS:

Compliments of the taxpayers.

MR. BARRETT:

No. The Minister of Education is the one who put it in the Budget. The taxpayers pay the bill.

I should tell the hon. the Member for Grand Falls that probably one of the reasons it is in the Budget this year is because just after I was elected I received a call from one of his constituents in Grand Falls, a single parent attending university, who was having problems making ends meet. I immediately called the Minister of Education and said, 'As a great Liberal Government, we are going to have to do something about the inequality that exists in student aid for single parents.' As a result, when I sat here last week and listened to the Budget, it was announced. That is what you call a great Minister!

AN HON. MEMBER:
That is action!

MR. BARRETT:
That is action!

Funding of \$300,000 is being continued for the Newfoundland and Labrador Advisory Council on the Status of Women, and for the Interagency Committee on Violence Against Women.

We have also created fifty front-line positions for social workers and child welfare services. These positions were created to address child abuse problems, which women's groups have been a key player in bringing to our attention. We have responded! We have responded, have we not?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MR. BARRETT:
Half a million dollars has been allocated to a very successful program, a program called Women in Successful Employment, a program of flexible learning, counselling

and other self-employment assistance. It has had great success in getting women back into the labour force. These are the initiatives of this Government.

Our Easter bunny Prime Minister has been going around the Caribbean giving out money, and he cannot come up with \$240,000 for the Women's Centres in this Province.

I will have a chance to speak later in this debate, but I would expect that this House today will completely endorse this present resolution and send a message directly to the Federal Government that we want the funding reinstated for the Women's Centres in this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:
Mr. Speaker.

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

MS VERGE:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

On behalf of the Official Opposition I would like to begin my speech by thanking the Member for Bellevue (Mr. Barrett) for making this motion, and by congratulating him for his speech.

Off the top let me say on behalf of the Official Opposition that we will be supporting his motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:
Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

I hope that at the end of this afternoon every single Member of this House of Assembly will rise, signifying support of the resolution. The resolution deplores the action of the Federal Government respecting funding for Women's Centers in our Province, and recommends immediate reinstatement of operational funding for the seven Women's Centers in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Perhaps a message from this House of Assembly supported by Members on both sides, Members of the Liberal Party and Members of the PC Party, will make an impact on the Federal Government and, along with the many representations being made by women and men throughout our Province, will move them to reverse their decision.

Mr. Speaker, I can say that I agree with just about everything the Member for Bellevue said in his speech. His presentation indicated care, and it indicated the results of quite a bit of research. There are a couple of points with which I would like to take issue very briefly.

I disagree with his begrudging the Federal Government aid to Caribbean nations. I do not think that is a good comparison. The amount of money at stake here immediately is only \$250,000, and that amount can be found very easily within domestic spending by the Federal Government. One example cited by the President of our Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women is the amount the Federal Government is embarking on spending to rent an office in Halifax for Federal Ministers visiting Halifax, in case they happen to need an office.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

It would be far better for the Federal Government to scrap that plan and reinstate that amount of money to keep going our seven Women's Centers.

I would like to acknowledge the presence in our visitors gallery of the President of our Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Wendy Williams.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, I am a PC Member of this Provincial Legislature, and I am speaking for an Official Opposition which is made up of PC Members. The Government which we are condemning here this afternoon is made up of the Federal PC Party. We both carry the same banner although the parties are different - one is Provincial and the other Federal. We have some common objectives, but those of us who are Provincial Members, sitting in this legislature, have a role to represent our constituents and to advocate social and economic advancement and justice for our constituents. In this particular instance, we believe we have to part company with the PC Government in Ottawa.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

We will not hesitate to differ with the PC Government in Ottawa when the actions of the Federal Government are against the best interests of the people we are serving in this Assembly. When it comes to women's issues, when it

comes to the fishery, when it comes to any other issue, Mr. Speaker, we will evaluate the issue, we will look at the situation being experienced by our constituents, and then we will take a stand based on what we believe to be in the best interests of the people we represent, whether that stand is the same as the position taken by the Federal Government or not.

Mr. Speaker, the action which is the subject of this debate is partly budgetary and partly philosophical. The Federal Secretary of State's Department has been providing funding for the operation and staffing of Women's Centres in Newfoundland and Labrador for over fifteen years now. The St. John's Women's Centre, on Military Road, which has been running with poor funding from the Secretary of State, is actually the longest continuously operated Women's Centre in all of Canada. That centre was established in the early 1970's.

The Corner Brook Women's Centre, with which I was actively associated before I was elected, opened in 1975. The Corner Brook Status of Women Council, which operates that Centre, was formed in 1974, and I am proud to say that I was a founding member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS VERGE:

For less than a year we met in borrowed rooms, we met in school class rooms or members' living rooms, but after a year or so we were successful in getting a small grant from the Secretary of State which enabled us to rent some space. So in 1975, which was International Women's Year,

declared by the UN, we opened the Corner Brook Women's Centre above a pizza place, on West Street, in Corner Brook. It was not until five years later that the Secretary of State funding was increased to allow the Status of Women Council to employ staff, and from about 1980 on the Corner Brook Council has had at least two staff in the Women's Centre, so that the Women's Centre could be opened weekdays from 9 to 5, as well as available for meetings of volunteers and the public evenings and weekends.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Bellevue has spoken quite well, I think, about the function of Women's Centres and about the tremendous value they have given women and men in this Province.

At the time of the Federal Budget, the amount of Secretary of State funding being provided to Women's Centres in our Province averaged only \$40,000 a Centre. It is amazing to think of what value was received by citizens for that small investment of taxpayers' dollars. With poor funding, of only \$40,000 a year, space was rented, in the case of the St. John's Centre the mortgage paid, staff were employed, obviously at very low salaries, resource centres were provided to the public, sympathetic ears were there for women in crisis, information was given out to women of all backgrounds, with all kinds of needs, and there was a place to base political action, to pressure Governments at every level for improvements needed to achieve anything like true equality for women and men in our Province.

When I first heard, Mr. Speaker, about the Federal Government discontinuing funding for Women's

Centres, quite honestly I could not believe my ears. My immediate reaction was, 'How could they be so stupid, considering the small amount of money and realizing the tremendous return generated by such a small contribution? When I inquired, Mr. Speaker, I found out what had happened was as I mentioned before, partly a Budget decision and partly a philosophical decision. The Secretary of State's Department has embarked on a multi-year plan of decreasing funding for the Women's Program. The Women's Program is used to provide grants to Women's Centres, and also to provide grants for a whole variety of projects. So, as I say, part of the problem was a decrease in the Women's Programs budget, according to a plan started a year or so ago. Under that plan the total budget for the whole country was to be decreased by about 15 per cent a year.

Mr. Speaker, that is bad, but to make matters much, much worse for our Province, this year the Secretary of State, taking everyone by surprise, put new restrictions on how the Women's Program budget could be spent, saying that it could no longer be spent for core funding for operating Women's Centres.

So, Mr. Speaker, this year the Secretary of State dealt women's groups a double whammy. And because a disproportionate amount of Secretary of State funding for Women's Programs coming into this Province was used to operate Women Centres, the impact of those two Federal Government decisions is much, much worse on Newfoundland and Labrador than on any other province. The excuse given by Secretary of State officials to the new restrictions is

constitutional or philosophical. They say that Women's Centres provide services that are within Provincial jurisdiction and, therefore, such operations should be funded by provinces instead of the Federal Government.

In some other provinces Provincial Governments are contributing to the operation of Women Centres. Such has never been the case in our Province. And, to the best of my knowledge, the Federal Government has never before suggested to either women's groups or the Provincial Government that women's groups should be looking to the Provincial Government to help support Women's Centre operations. So this decision was a complete shock. Women's groups were braced for the possibly of a budget decrease, but the restriction preventing funding of Women's Centre operations was something totally unexpected.

Mr. Speaker, what I have been doing to counter these decisions is lobby to the best of my ability, pressure to the best of my ability to try to get the Federal Government to reinstate funding to make possible continued operation of our Women Centres.

Ross Reid, the P.C. Member for St. John's East, has been active in this crusade. Although he is a Federal Government Member, he was not a part of the decision; he is not a Member of the Cabinet and he was not even aware of the Secretary of State moves until after they had become public knowledge. Ross Reid has been fighting within the Federal system in Ottawa, and, Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that his fight will be successful.

In my lobbying, Mr. Speaker, I

have had frequent discussions with Mr. Reid, and I have also been dealing with officials in the Secretary of State Department and the Prime Minister's Office.

MR. SIMMS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

With no success.

MR. SIMMS:

Oh, we will see. We will see.

MS VERGE:

Mr. Speaker, even if there is success in making possible continued Federal funding for the operation of Women's Centres in the Province, there is a larger problem which will remain, at least for this year, and that is the decrease in the global national Women's Program budget. So, no matter what the result of the immediate crisis facing Women's Centres, all of us must remain vigilant and must continue to lobby the Federal Government to give the support needed for women's groups in the country.

Mr. Speaker, the Member's motion recites the contributions made by Women's Centres, one of which is providing a base for efforts that have succeeded in getting major reforms and improvements for people in our Province. He cited bringing to the public's attention issues such as wife and family violence, equal pay for work of equal value, child care, child sexual abuse. He might have added family law reform and the establishment of a support enforcement agency.

He goes on to state that Provincial funding for women's issues has increased over the last ten years. It has, Mr. Speaker,

and some of us over here were associated with the Government in office, for most of that period, which carried out some improvements. Among them were the establishment of a Status of Women portfolio; the designation of a Minister responsible for The Status of Women; the establishment by legislation of a Provincial Advisory Council on The Status of Women and the appointment to that Council of feminists, women who are committed first and foremost to serving women, to improving the lot of women; the establishment of the Women's Policy Office which is part of the permanent public service, and the locating of that office in Executive Council - a central agency; the establishment of three transition houses for battered women and children, those in St. John's, Corner Brook and Happy Valley - Goose Bay, and a pledge for the establishment of a transition house in Gander for central Newfoundland, which we are glad the new Government is moving on now; and the setting up of the Support Enforcement Agency.

But, Mr. Speaker, let us not kid ourselves. Much remains to be done. I will cite a few statistics: Women in the paid work force, on average, earn only about 60 per cent of what men earn. Recently, the President of Treasury Board sent us a document of the Newfoundland Statistics Agency which gives figures for each of the electoral districts. It shows the average income in each of our districts, and then the average for men and the average for women, and the gap is quite startling. All a person has to do is flip through the document, and page after page what jumps off the page is that men are earning twice what women are earning.

Those are the people in the paid work force. But what about women who are not in the paid work force, women who are labouring in the household, managing households and raising children? What kind of income security do they have now, or what protection do they have for their old age?

In our Province, Mr. Speaker, two-thirds of people earning the minimum wage are women. And what is the minimum wage? Eighty per cent of lone parent families are headed by mothers, and every day women and children are abused and battered. So, while we can pat ourselves on the backs and say we have done this or we have done that, it still falls far short of achieving the objective, the end goal of having a society where women and men are truly free, where women can pursue whatever their interests may be with encouragement and support, or where women have the same opportunities for income earning and respect in employment and in the larger society.

Mr. Speaker, I am told I only have three minutes left.

MR. SIMMS:

By leave! By leave!

MS VERGE:

While it is easy for all of us to condemn the Federal Government - that is easy - what is harder is to take responsibility for what we, ourselves, can control. So, while thanking the Member for Bellevue and while stating the intention of the Official Opposition to vote with him on this motion, I would like to urge the Member for Bellevue and his colleagues, especially those in the Cabinet, especially the Minister responsible for The

Status of Women, to introduce the pay equity legislation which he and his colleagues promised when they were campaigning last spring. They promised to bring in legislation enshrining the principle of equal pay for work of equal value in the public sector, which the P.C. Government had pledged and were introducing through the collective bargaining process. But the Liberal Party campaigning last spring, and the P.C. Party, when we were campaigning last spring, both promised to enshrine that pay equity principle in legislation and, furthermore, Mr. Speaker, to extend that principle to the private sector.

Now, here we are in the second Session of the Legislature since the election, and where is the pay equity legislation?

Mr. Speaker, in the Estimates we see that the budget for the Women's Policy Office is frozen - no increase in these Estimates for the Women's Policy Office. Now, Mr. Speaker, what Members opposite condemned the Federal Government for doing on EPF, they are doing for the Women's Policy Office.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, what are Members opposite going to do for the Memorial University day care centre? Is the Government going to address the request of the CSU at Memorial to provide sufficient funding for the Memorial day care centre? These are a few questions I will leave with the Member for Bellevue, which, perhaps, he may comment on when he speaks to close the debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS COWAN:
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:
The hon. the Minister of
Employment and Labour Relations.

MS COWAN:
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can remember 15 years ago, as a school teacher in Conception Bay South, I was afraid to talk about women's issues in the classroom or at a staff meeting for the fact that I would be laughed at or derided by my colleagues. It is interesting to note that in that 15 year period we have come to the place where we can discuss these issues openly and frankly in this public forum, and I am very, very grateful for that and pleased to have been elected to be able to take part in this debate today. I might add that there are still some things that my strongest supporters say I should not advocate on women's issues, because it could work against me, so we still have some way to go.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I think it is worthy of note that this is the second time in the last six months that this House has chosen to send a message to Ottawa of disapproval about their approach to fiscal responsibility. First, this hon. House, some months ago, rose in unison to decry the proposed Bill on U.I. reform. Now, today, we rise again, unanimously, to plead with the Federal Government and to decry the action they have taken in cutting their funding to Women's Centres. Many, many people are being left vulnerable: women and children, men, boys, girls, by both these heartless measures that are called responsible fiscal restraint. I think there is a very, very clear

message here to the Prime Minister of Canada, when twice in a six month period two Parties, who would normally take different approaches, have to rise as one body and send a collective message to Ottawa on some policy put in place by the Federal Government.

The two speakers before me, Mr. Speaker, have spoken eloquently of the way Women's Centres have contributed to the betterment of society. Women's Centres were the first to draw our collective attention to the inequities in our society, and, indeed, to the indecencies perpetrated against women, and boys and girls. Many of the latter had been well hidden secrets. Wife battering, child abuse and rape come to mind immediately. We are still, as a society, struggling to accept emotionally and intellectually that such conditions exist, let alone do something to rectify the problem. But Women's Centres have been the catalysts, the catalysts enforcing us to face these issues, to acknowledge them, not just as random scattered acts against women and children, but as commonplace, every day events, events that many scholars say are part and parcel of our culture.

As a society, we are beginning to address the needs of the victims of rape, wife abuse and other abuses, but we have yet to identify or to rectify the root causes of these crimes against women and children.

But there are very many other aspects of life and the skills that are needed to address life, Mr. Speaker, that have been the focus of Women's Centres. Let me list a few: Day care, political action, financial management, parenting skills, assertiveness

training, women in leadership, women in traditional all-male fields of work, schooling, sexist curriculum, sexist practices, the historical contribution of women, women as catalysts for change, sexual harrassment of women in the workplace, women in crisis, the medical needs of women and pay equity. And that list can go on and on. I forget, for example, when I was putting this list together last night, to mention some of the ones that the Member for Humber East mentioned. So the list really is all-encompassing in society, and there are so many things there that we just take for granted.

Perhaps even more important, Mr. Speaker, and I really want to emphasize this today, is the role of Women's Centres in empowering women. Women's Centres were and are the incubators of most women in leadership roles today. I speak for myself, and I am sure for the Member for Humber East and the Member for St. John's East, when I say this. It was through a Women's Centre that I first saw myself as a person restricted by tradition, where I learned that my contribution to society as a woman was invaluable, and that I should nurture and develop skills to further my contribution to society. I would not have become the President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, nor would I be standing here today, if it had not been for the profound impact that a Women's Centre, the one in St. John's, had on my life in the mid-1970s, nor, I believe, would the vast majority of women now entering or in politics already across Canada.

It was Women's Centres that encouraged women to go into medicine, science, mathematics,

engineering and law. It is Women's Centres today that are working to get women into the traditionally male skilled trades. And it is Women's Centres that have continued to remind us that the women we have in all these employment fields I have just mentioned are still few and far between. They are aberrations, Mr. Speaker, not indications of equality or acceptance of women in their chosen field of endeavour. We have much work yet to do.

I do believe that this role of empowering women is one that is extremely important. And when I think of that I think of the women in the Successful Employment Program, and we have three people from that particular program with us here today, sitting in the balcony - we had three, now we have one, Helen King, who is the co-ordinator from that particular program, Women Interested In Successful Employment, and that employment program certainly got its impetus from the type of work that is done by Women's Centres.

One of the key components of the WISE Program is encouraging to women to see themselves as contributing, useful individuals, women with a healthy self-concept. And it is very interesting to visit that particular program and talk to some of the women involved, or to the bus driver who brings the women there. Because she indicated to us that when she first started picking up these women and bringing them to the Centre they valued themselves very, very little, and by the end of the program they are just bursting with enthusiasm, ready to go out and take on the world.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS COWAN:

It is somewhere in the high 90s, I cannot remember the exact percentage of women, who have gone on from that program to either successful employment or to further their education. That is an outstanding record for any group involved in getting people employed and back into the workplace. That type of program also sprung from Women's Centres.

Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if somehow or other the Federal Government is labouring under the notion that we do not need Women's Centres in our society any longer, and would not that be a grand day if it were the case. It would be a day for celebration, Mr. Speaker, if we could acknowledge that the work of Women's Centres was done, that we now lived in a society where we believe in equality and reflect that belief in every home and in every institution, in every law and in every custom.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, that day is far from dawning. We only have to take a casual glance about this hon. House to see that equal representation of men and women in the governing of the Province is far away. The same can be said of every other Provincial Legislature in Canada, and of our Federal House of Commons, as well. I read several years ago that at the present rate of women becoming Federal MP's, it will take 500 years for men and women to be equally represented in Ottawa.

The list of inequities that still exist and will exist until we have the collective will to address them is endless. I am afraid that

without the focus, impetus and pressure provided by Women's Centres, we may lose sight of these societal ills and drift into a complacency about women and children and the quality of their lives, complacency that marked, for example, the 1940's and 1950's.

Mr. Speaker, the work of Women's centres is far from being done. Fourteen young women died in Montreal this year because a man, whose crazed mind became obsessive about women who seek to enter a traditionally male dominated field of work, chose to kill those individuals. That is a view, by the way, held by many men, but certainly not overtly expressed. Ninety-seven women died in domestic violence in Canada last year. As the Minister of Social Services told us yesterday, 7,000 children in this Province are in need of assistance in coping with various types of child abuse levelled against them.

For every dollar made by a man, a woman in Canada earns somewhere between sixty and sixty-five cents. Thousands of Canadian children are in need of day care. Single parent families, with female heads, with few exceptions, live in poverty, dependent on the State for survival and that number grows annually. I could continue, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that list clearly shows that we are not a society which can afford to lose one of its most significant forces for change.

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in condemning the actions of the Federal Government and in praising my Government for its awareness and recognition of the particular needs of women in this Province, an awareness that, I should add, does not reflect itself in fine

speeches and lip service, but in the concrete, by providing dollars to support and promote the cause of women and, in so doing, strengthens the social fabric of this Province. I heartily support this motion and I congratulate my colleague, the Member for Bellevue, for bringing it before this hon. House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MS DUFF:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

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

MS DUFF:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. Member for Bellevue, who initiated this Resolution, is not in the House at the moment. I hope he is listening on the speaker phone, because I would like to congratulate him, not only for laying down this resolution as a Private Member, one which I have every intention of supporting very strongly, but for the conviction and the eloquence and the sincerity with which he addressed the resolution as the first speaker. It is a pleasure, although it does not happen very often, to be able to support resolutions brought forth by the other side. It often happens that you are busy looking for reasons not to, or reasons to amend it, but in this particular instance I have every intention of strongly supporting it, as, in fact, I have already done by way of letters to the Ministers and public support in opposition to the withdrawal of funding for the Women's Centres.

I certainly would welcome all

support. I think the hon. Member for Conception Bay South has already indicated that this kind of support coming from two parties in a Provincial House of Assembly can be very important in pushing the Government, perhaps, over the edge to reinstate that funding. I am actually optimistic that something will happen that will, in fact, allow the Women's Centres in Newfoundland to stay open.

Unfortunately, we have not reached that point yet, but ever since this decision was first made, and I am sure we are not the only Members in the House who have done so, but the hon. the Member for Humber East and myself have been in fairly constant contact with our Members in the Federal Parliament, and are pushing them onward, and they are working on our behalf as well.

The Women's Centres, I think, have played a particularly important role in Newfoundland, and perhaps part of the reason that the Federal Government cut this funding is the role they play in different provinces has been somewhat different. In some other areas there may be other agencies or other programs which make them less essential, but that is certainly not the case here. As the previous speakers have all said, they have had a role that has been catalytic, they have had a role that has been incredibly important in making other things happen, beyond what they do themselves. They have represented the focus, the centre, the place where women could come together. And that was very, very important, particularly in the earlier days of the modern Women's Movement, where women, themselves, were not particularly confident and often times not particularly aware of

many of the inequalities, of many of the barriers that existed, of many of the attitudes that needed to be changed. These Centres offered a haven where women could get together, where resources could be pooled, where literature could be placed as a resource library and where political action could be mounted; political action, not to forget, is extremely important in making change.

More than that, and particularly I speak from my experience with the Centre in St. John's East, which happens to be in my district - I am not as intimately involved with Centres in other parts of the country or the Province, although I do know a little about some of the others in Newfoundland - in St. John's East, because it is in a downtown area which has many social problems, it offered a safe haven, a place of first resort for many women who were experiencing family violence, who were victims of rape, who were victims of wife battering and who did not know where to go. I do not wish to be critical of the justice system, but I think the fact of the matter is that the justice system had a lot to learn about this kind of problem, and women in crisis very often found it both discriminatory and intimidating, whereas if you could go to a Women's Centre with your first line of problem, first of all you found that there were people who were on your side; they immediately gave you a safe place, they immediately could plug you into the right approaches to the right agencies and give ongoing counselling, which helped many, many women over these hurdles which otherwise they may have kept to themselves to the great detriment of their own physical and social well-being and that of

their families.

This Centre in St. John's East was the incubator, if you like, for the development of the Rape Crisis Centre which has helped countless women in what has to be one of the worst crisis a woman can experience. It was also the incubator for Transition House, which was the first home for battered women in the Province of Newfoundland. The fact that the funding will be cut, although the work no doubt will go on with the same kind of volunteer dedication that started the Women's Centres in the first place, this loss of focus, this loss of place, this having to deflect some of your energies onto just paying the rent and scrambling around constantly to find a few dollars to pay a co-ordinator, will result in a tremendous loss of momentum at a time when we do not need that.

One of the speakers, I think it was the hon. the Member for Bellevue, referred to this cut as a direct attack on women because the voice of women was becoming too strong. I have heard that said; I have heard women say that. I am not sure that is true. I hope it is not. I will not write it out completely, but I am inclined to think that this cut resulted more from two things, one, an underestimation of how much is still needed to be done and, secondly, the lack of understanding of the important role the Women's Centres were playing. But there is no excuse for it, whatever the reason, and I think our combined efforts to reinstate that funding are very welcome and hopefully will be successful.

Now, I date the modern Women's Movement to 1975, The

International Year of Women. There were women's activities going on long before that, and many courageous women who made many breakthroughs in improving the status of women. But the Federal Government designated that year as International Year of the Status of Women, and many women had an opportunity for the first time to come together and to begin to focus on some of the very real barriers, attitudinal as well as structural barriers, that were in the way of women's equality.

Back in that decade, in the late 1970s, I can remember very well the attitude that many people had about the feminists, women who were the active leaders in this movement. It was during that period that I first entered politics myself, granted at the municipal level, with a woman who was one of the very well-known and very active feminists in St. John's, Fran Innes.

Sorry to say, she was given an extremely hard time. Neither of us was given a very easy time, but particularly she was picked on by some of the men on Council and some of the staff on Council, because she was a feminist; there was constant Ms jokes, constant Women's Lib jokes, and people thought it was funny when you raised certain issues. I do not think people think it is funny any more when you talk about wife battering. That used to be a constant subject of jokes. You know, what about husband battering? - and this sort of thing. I do not think anybody thinks it is funny any more. I think there is a tremendous recognition of the problems of violence against women, a tremendous recognition of something else that is very

important, and that is the fact that women have not been fighting for themselves. The issues women have been fighting for are the issues of family, the issues of children, issues that affect men, in fact, issues that affect the betterment of our whole society. I think we have gradually gotten to the recognition that it is a movement of women but it is not a women's movement, it is a movement for society. And it is important that we maintain that momentum.

There is one particular clause in this resolution that I would like to mention and that is where it says, 'WHEREAS Provincial funding for women's issues has increased over the last ten years.' I want to mention that because I think it does recognize, and I thank the hon. the Member for Bellevue for this, the fact of the previous Government - and I give a lot of credit for this to my colleague, the Member for Humber East, and to the Opposition House Leader in his role as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women - increasing programs, taking new initiatives for bringing the issue of the special needs of women to the fore.

Many of the programs, and I think they have already been largely enumerated, that are reflected in today's Budget, and I am very happy to see the funding in the Budget this week, were initiatives which were started by the previous Government.

MR. SIMMS:

Equal pay is ours.

MS DUFF:

Pay equity, work integration, the programs to accelerate women through management, more assistance for day care,

particularly for social assistance recipients, the Women's Policy Office itself and, most importantly, which has not been mentioned yet, the matrimonial property legislation, which was a tremendous breakthrough for women, particularly in view of the fact that now one in three marriages end in divorce and women are often the family member given the responsibility for the care of children.

Now, you know, lest the picture be painted as too rosy, I think we have to be deeply concerned about the fact that although we recognize violence against women and children and are beginning to put into place some of the programs to deal with it, this violence is not decreasing and it requires continuous vigilance.

Another issue, I think, that needs to be focused on is the increasing feminization of poverty, and that is a reality of today's world.

AN. HON. MEMBER:

What does feminization of poverty mean?

MS. DUFF:

Feminization of poverty simply means that more and more of the people who are poor are women and that is happening for a number of reasons. The number of women in the work force is certainly increasing, and I think 65 per cent of women in their child bearing years are in the work force. The whole question of two incomes today is not by any means a luxury, because the reality is that our sureness about having a job, whether we are men or women, is just not there. The chances of being laid-off, of being ill, or for some reason being out of a job are very real. Now these women

are not working as an add-on income to buy the second car, they are not working because they are bored at home and have nothing better to do, they are working out of absolute economic necessity and making a tremendous contribution to the economic health of their community.

Oftentimes what happens is - the layoff or the illness happens to the husband - and the working partner is likely to be a woman, but she is very likely to be receiving only 60 per cent of the income of a man in a similar position. The number of mother-lead families is increasing tremendously, and this has a number of causes, one being the divorce statistics, another being the appalling rate of young teenage pregnancies. Where you have young girls at a very early age opt to keep their children, sometimes dropping out of school, sometimes opting out of the work force for periods on welfare. And the importance of having programs to allow these young women to get back into the education system and to integrate into the work force and to be able to have, you know, economically secure lives, is extremely important. I am looking at the Minister of Education across the way, and I know that he understands the importance of starting right at the kindergarten level in terms of the attitudes that young women must have in order to prepare themselves properly for the work force, just to face the reality that they are going to face.

On the other end of the scale you have increasing numbers of women who are widowed without adequate pension income living, oftentimes, just below the poverty line. So I think we have to be constantly

aware of the totally pervasive structures in our society that militate against women. And it is not just in the Department of Social Services or Women's Policy Office that this has to be watched, it has to go right through the piece with every area of our life.

I know there are other people here who wish to speak so I really do not want to take up too much time.

AN HON. MEMBER:

By leave.

MS DUFF:

No I think there are, seriously, other people and I want to hear what other people have to say.

I would just like to conclude by saying to the Members who have spoken and Members who have not, that this effort to re-instate the funding for the Women's Centres will not end today with this resolution. It is an ongoing effort, and that this Thursday at the Legion in Pleasantville at 8:00 there will be a meeting of all friends of the Women's Centres, and I am sure that includes many Members of this House. And I would like to invite you all to continue your support, to continue your lobbying efforts by joining the hon. the Member for Humber East and myself at this meeting on Thursday night in support of this very important issue. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would

like to go on record in the beginning before I get into the body of the speech in congratulating the Member for Bellevue on putting this resolution on the Order Paper. I think we can safely say by the Members who have already spoken on this particular resolution that it is one of the most important and one of the most topical resolutions that could come before the House of Assembly. Now when you get both Parties on either side of the House of Assembly agreeing in a manner in which they have today on this particular resolution, it shows the seriousness, the importance, and that nobody is taking any part of this particular resolution very lightly.

As Minister of Social Services, I want to offer a special thanks to my colleague from Stephenville because he had intended to rise and to speak on this particular Bill. In my position as Minister of Social Services I felt I should go on record too as saying and putting forth the concerns that I have as Minister and that I have experienced over the few short months that I have been there. I must say too, before I go any further, that I am the only Minister in the Government to have a woman as Deputy Minister, Ms. Elizabeth Marshall. I must say I do not know what the rest of the Ministers can say about their Deputy Ministers, but I am very pleased, and I can stand in the House of Assembly and brag about the ability, credibility and the qualifications of the Deputy Minister that I inherited in the Department of Social Services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

In fact, I might go on to say that she has a very difficult job to keep me in line.

AN HON. MEMBER:

How did she manage with Mr. Tobin.

MR. EFFORD:

Well, yes she had Tobin, but I had to put that in there.

Yesterday in the House of Assembly when it was mostly the male side of the House of Assembly debating there was a lot of back and forth and throwing of words, but today when the three female MHAs in the House of Assembly spoke, you could see the class and the credibility in which they debated on a very, very, important issue. So I would like to go on record as making that comment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

I might say it was good, Mr. Speaker, for all -

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I just want to remind the strangers, the people in the gallery, that there is supposed to be no reaction to any comments from the floor. I would just like to remind them of that and we will excuse them for the first time around.

The hon. the Minister for Social Services.

MR. EFFORD:

I am sure Mr. Speaker did not intend to take away the little bit of applause that I do receive once in a while, but it is the rule of the House of Assembly.

Having been in the position and having the advantage or the disadvantage, I should say, of recognizing the number of problems that I have witnessed over the past several months as Minister of Social Services, Child abuse, family crisis, wife abuse, wife battering, wife neglect - physically, mentally, financially, sexually, and all other means that you can think about and all other terminology that you can give - I have witnessed each and every day since I became Minister of Social Services. Even before the Federal Government thought about cutting back on any financial aid to the Women's Centers in Newfoundland we were so far behind in the needs and the sense of what should be provided in this Province we could use the terminology that we were in the dark ages. Even with the set-up we had before we had any cutback, there was no way that anybody in this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador could say that we were even on a catch-up basis, because we were not. There was absolutely no way that we could even say it in the urban centers. You go outside the urban centers of the Province, outside of St. John's, and outside of Corner Brook or Gander and you go to rural Newfoundland and it is completely nonexistent. There is absolutely none in rural Newfoundland.

I am supposed to be from one of the fastest growing rural centers around the Island economically, in industry and small business growth, and there is absolutely no evidence of any place out there where any individual, male or female or children or anyone could go for any sort of family crisis counselling or whatever.

Newfoundland and Labrador is

certainly far, far behind the rest of the country, and its own aspirations have gone down. Now for the Federal Government - we are not talking about political stripes and that has been proven here today - but for anybody, any Minister in any Government, and we are talking now specifically about the Federal Government, to take the attitude, recognizing that it is not just a Provincial problem in Newfoundland and Labrador but it is a problem right across Canada.

I am sure as the population increases in each province, the problems, the wife battering and neglect and all the cases will rise and grow with it, but for any Minister to sit in his or her office and around the Cabinet table, all of them joining together to make a decision that we are going to save money.

Every Government has to save money, every Government has to put its priorities in the right place, no one is disputing that. But when they sit around the Cabinet table, and it is done, not individually but by consensus, and say that yes, we are going to save money, we are going to cut back on the Women's Centres. We are going to cut back on the services we give, to try to give back to people some dignity, some self-respect, some credibility and some pride, and to have a new start in life or a new beginning. If that is the way that any Government would save money, I think it is deplorable, it is disgusting and there is no political terminology which can be used. It is no wonder that the former Minister of Justice, the Member for Humber East, said that she has been in constant contact, either by telephone or by writing

or by verbal contact or whatever, with the representatives in Ottawa, and I guess our own representative in the Federal Government, Mr. Crosbie, and probably Mr. Reid here in St. John's, Newfoundland. But the problem is very, very clear, you can make all the representation you like, it is not going to change their minds, that is the discouraging, disgusting part about it. Just a few short couple of years ago, prior to the last Federal election, they introduced a Day Care Strategy Program. We are the worst Province in Canada in providing day care services. We do not have the resources here in our treasury. It is the same all across Canada. But they introduced the program, and what happened? Immediately after the election, the complete program was scrapped, the complete program.

Now we are talking about giving women an opportunity to get out into the work force. Giving them the opportunity to upgrade their education in Memorial University, the Trade School or whatever. When you take away the Day Care Strategy Program, that puts a stumbling block in their way. They can no longer do that. That is the attitude that the Federal Government have towards all women across Canada. They cancelled such an important thing as the Day Care Strategy Program. We have continually, not only me as Minister of Social Services and the Newfoundland and Labrador Government, but right across Canada, every Minister right across Canada in the Provinces and the Territories have made personal representation to the Minister of Health and Welfare about the concerns that we have in cancelling the Day Care Strategy Program. The only promise, the

only thing that we received, and it was right across the table just a few short months ago, it was not by letter, it was not by telephone, the only thing that he did say: 'Before the next election-' and I am not making political cracks, I am quoting: 'Before the next election, we will introduce another Day Care Strategy Program'. My answer to him was, 'After the next election, you will cancel it again'. But then I thought for a second, you will not be there after the next election, and that is not political, that is fact. Just think about it, cancelling the Day Care, that is not being political, nobody, and nobody in this Province, including the Member for St. John's East, is going to vote or going to replace a Government which has an attitude about our own philosophy towards the children of the country which this Government has displayed.

And now it is the second time, we saw the recent cut, the Day Care Strategy Program which put up a major stumbling block, now we just saw the recent cut in the recent Budget, and to top that off, the \$100 million that they had left in the Day Care Strategy Program for new initiatives, I found out just recently that they have now cut that in the recent Budget. No announcement was made, no announcement was made whatsoever. It was done very carefully, very secretly, but they have also made a cut in that. How can you trust a Government which has an attitude like that. How can anybody, the children, how can the female population expect to get equal representation, gain equal opportunities in a country where you have a Federal Leadership, a Federal Prime Minister and Federal Ministers in the Cabinet to go

around displaying attitudes like that. It is not political, it is factual.

The Minister of Education, Provincially, saw the need, saw the disadvantaged in talking to the single parents, 6,000 plus single parents in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador who are crying out for help, who are crying out for an opportunity to get into the workforce. First of all they need to get some upgrading in education, they need to get back into the trade school, they need to get back into Memorial University or not only get back, but to get their for the first time to get equal opportunity.

Out of his goodness, in the preparation of his Budget, to provide \$500,000 in a student aid package to assist single parents and low income married people to have an opportunity. We know it is not enough, but it is a step in the right direction. It shows that a Government and the Minister has his head in the right place and he can place his priorities in the right place and recognize the need.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. EFFORD:

But how can you do that and how can you hope to make any gain when you witness what is taking place Federally. Because no Provincial Government, even the larger provinces, because the larger province got a large population, so they have the larger resources, the larger tax base, but they have the larger population, you need the support of the Federal Government. So while you are trying to make some small gains in

the Province it has been a drawback, the drawback is coming from the Federal Government and that is the disappointing factor to it.

I never thought, and I suppose I am about as political as anybody can possibly be that ever stood in the House of Assembly or will ever stand again, and I will make no bones about it and no excuses, but I never thought in my wildest imagination that any Government could justify cutting back on day care, cutting back on women's centres, in cutting back on opportunity for women to get out and get into the workforce, you are going back to the stone ages. The attitude of the Federal Health and Welfare Minister (Mr. Beatty) was the attitude of the male population some 500 or 600 years ago. It is the same mentality. Why should anybody this day and age be looked upon as not having an equal opportunity. My belief is that whatever race, colour, or creed, we are all equal, everybody should have an equal opportunity.

Why should anybody have to get up and beg for an opportunity, beg for a right to do something. We are Canadians, we belong to a free country, we belong to an equal opportunity. But here we have our Federal leadership, our Federal people, the leaders of the Government of Canada, the people who make all the final decisions, they are the people who are drawing back. They are the people who have the attitude, close the doors, do not provide equal opportunity, do not give people some dignity, do not give people the respect that they deserve. And it just does not stop at the Women's Centres, because even if the money had to be provided, no cutbacks, that is still not

enough. You need to increase, you need to triple and even then it would not be enough. You need to provide monies for the day care, you need to provide money for more centres, you need to provide money for more training, for more counselling, for the complete organization of a solid program that is just not going to be here for the short term, but for the long term because these problems are never going to go away.

It has to start with a system where the Federal people are willing to accept responsibility and where the Provincial Treasury and where the Provincial Departments of Education, and the Departments of Social Services and the Departments of Health and Welfare can have some input. That will also be there and that will continue, but you cannot do it without the Federal people accepting the responsibility financially for education and everything else. They must put in enough money to make sure that all of those centres and all those areas are taken care of.

Mr. Speaker, I said to my colleague in the hallway that I would only speak half the time. I had a number of other things that I wanted to clue up with but I did promise and I will give you the opportunity to have five or ten minutes.

There are a lot of things. We can go on and on and I am sure every Minister and every MHA on either side of the House could stand to his or her feet today and they could make a lot of different points and emphasize the seriousness of what has happened. The only thing I hope that through this short debate today, this couple of hours this afternoon,

and boy did not my colleague for Bellevue (Mr. Barrett) ably present the resolution, that we can make a stronger emphasis on our Federal counterparts in realizing the mistake.

Anybody can make a mistake, correcting that mistake shows where your intentions are and where your credibility lies. Nobody can be discredited for making a mistake. The point is that you admit you have made a mistake and you are willing to do something about it. But we have to get the message through. I am sure every individual organization, every person, and every Member in this House of Assembly will continue to do that. I only hope it does not fall on deaf ears as it did when we presented such a strong case to every Minister and every Deputy Minister across Canada, about the Day Care Strategy Program. I hope, this time, we can change the attitude of the Minister of Health and Welfare, the Minister of Finance and all the other Ministers in the Federal Cabinet, so we can do something to improve the situation for Women's Centres, and for counselling throughout the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker, because of the time constraints, of course, I only have ten minutes to make my remarks, but I do appreciate my colleague from St. John's East (Ms

Duff), as well as the Minister, for cutting back on their time a few minutes, at least, to give me a chance to make a few comments.

I think it is only fair that we have equal speakers, if we can, because the Member for Bellevue, (Mr. Barrett) of course, has the right to close the debate in just ten short minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened with great interest to the debate, and the contribution made by all Members. I must say, I found it to be enlightening and, as always, interesting. And I say that as a former Minister responsible for The Status of Women, for a period of time, I had many occasions during that period - I guess it was a year or more - to learn an awful lot, an awful lot, about the issues that concern women in our society today, particularly here in this Province.

I also had occasion to work closely with some very capable people in the Women's Policy Office, who always provided me with a great deal of advice and guidance. I must admit that, in the beginning, I had to listen - unlike a lot of Ministers. Ministers do not always listen to the advice of their bureaucrats, their senior advisors or their officials. In this case, I freely admit, I had to listen, because I was a learning Minister on this particular issue.

I might just point out, by the way, for those of you who recollect - and my colleague from Humber East (Ms Verge) will correct me - but I believe that after the establishment of The Status of Women Portfolio in the Peckford Administration, which was the first time there was one

established, the Premier held the portfolio and then, I believe, the Member for Ferryland, then, I believe, the Member for Grand Bank and then, the Member for Grand Falls. So it is a bit interesting, because all four Ministers responsible for The Status of Women were not women. And they all got re-elected, by the way. But, the point is, they were not women, they were men.

Now I have a feeling that Mr. Peckford, in his wisdom, made those appointments deliberately. I have a feeling he made those appointments deliberately, and I mean it sincerely.

AN HON. MEMBER:

He wanted to show you.

MR. SIMMS:

Exactly, to give men in this male-dominated forum a better opportunity to understand and learn, and maybe, do their bit to improve the lot of women.

The Minister mentioned his own Deputy Minister, who is absolutely and certainly of the highest order, a fine worker, an excellent advisor, and the fact that she is a woman, I mean, I do not think that should even enter into the question. She is a very capable person.

I might say, the senior person in the Women's Policy Office now - I am not sure - it is an ADM level position. There used to be some discussion about it being a Deputy Minister level. In fact maybe the Government might give that some consideration now - a great challenge for the Government. There was one time when we were debating the question of appointing the senior advisor, the senior official of the Women's

Policy Office to the position of a Deputy Minister. I think the position now is an Assistant Deputy Minister position. That was something that The Status of Women Council provincially strongly advocated, and I suspect they will continue to do just that.

But it certainly would be a great challenge for the Government to do that in the next few days. And you can do it just like that. Mind you, we did not do it and do not mind admitting it, but we did establish the office, we did create an Assistant Deputy Minister position and I have no doubt if we had remained in office we probably would have done it in due course.

But there are a lot of other women who have made their marks in Newfoundland and Labrador, and a lot of others that we have probably forgotten about now because it is not equal, there is no question of that but there has been some progress, slow, but there has been some progress. I think about the President of the Cabot Institute, for example, Dr. Inkpen. The administrators of St. Clare's and the Health Sciences Centre, two of the largest hospitals in the Province. Also the Deputy Mayor of the largest city in the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

The Deputy Mayor of Mount Pearl, one of the other largest cities in the Province. The Deputy Mayor of Gander another large community in the Province. Anyway, I am not going to go through all those. The administrator of the hospital at Salt Pond is a woman. The Clerk of the House of Assembly.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS:

There are all kinds of mayors. The Assistant Clerk of the House of Assembly, not to be overlooked of course, is a woman. In the last decade, or thereabouts, we had the first woman Cabinet Minister in Newfoundland and Labrador, Hazel Newhook. We had the Province's first ever Minister of Justice who was a woman. I do not know about Ethel Cochrane but she may be the first woman senator from Newfoundland and Labrador. My whole point is, of course, that there has been progress, slow progress, in that particular category. Now I am not suggesting in all areas there was a lot of progress because there is still a lot of work that has to be done but I wanted to make those points in response to the comments made by members opposite.

I also notice that the Minister of Social Services really has a hard time staying on the highroad. He finds it easy, I think, to stray a little bit on the political side of it. He was not too bad. When he started to make comments about trusting a Government that cuts back and all that I kind of thought back to last year's Provincial Budget when his own Government, as I recall, eliminated the Women's Employment Program, for example, which was a program designed to help women enter male dominated and male traditionally dominated job areas. That was a program that was working and making some progress. Hopefully, their own new program will have some success.

Mr. Speaker, let me just say there has been progress, as I said. Over the last decade, the decade

leading up to 1988-89, let us use those areas and those times. My colleagues have referred to some of the initiatives at the Provincial level, the establishment of the Women's Policy Office, the Council of the Status of Women, the Matrimonial Property Legislation, all these other major reforms, because they were reforms, all occurred in the last decade or so. But what has been, I think, forgotten and overlooked in all of this and what has not really been mentioned, and I chastise my colleagues for not really emphasizing and mentioning it, is that the reason there has been progress, as slow as it has been, is not because of the PCs, not because of the Liberals, or certainly not because of the NDP as political parties, although we have all done our bit, it has been because of the efforts of women's groups, women's organizations, such as Women's Centres.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

That is my overall point. So when my friend from St. John's East (Ms Duff) wrote this letter to Mr. Weener - Gerry Weiner? I am sorry I thought it was Mr. Gerry Weener. I have to confess I am at the stage in life now - actually I was at it years ago - but I have only decided now to wear glasses.

I have one minute to conclude and I will conclude with our official Caucus position on this issue, lest there be any doubts about whether we were afraid to attack or criticize the Federal Government because it happens to be P.C. Just listen to excerpts from this letter. I will not read it all, Mr. Speaker. It was the letter written by the Member for St. John's East. And it says

among other things, 'it expressed shock and disappointment on the Government's decision to discontinue the operational funding to the Women's Centres.' She points out there have been many dedicated volunteers working in those Centres and the women have made significant gains because of a lot of their efforts.

It has taken years and years to raise the level of consciousness in our society concerning the serious barriers which exist for women. A lot of positive changes are taking place. More are needed, and she would not want to see the momentum diminished for the sake of \$1.6 million. Without having a place to provide the focus required to do all of those things that these organizations do it will be very difficult to provide the profile required and undertake all those projects that are necessary. She makes reference to the Women's Centre in St. John's which she is quite familiar with, I guess. It was instrumental in setting up the Province's first transition house, and the first rape crisis centre, and also in developing special training programs for volunteers. But here, lest there be any question and any doubt of our position, here is our position as expressed by my colleague the Member for St. John's East. 'I find your decision impossible to defend. It is not only politically unpopular, it is incredibly stupid.

So Mr. Speaker, at a time when the Federal Government through one of its main agencies, ACOA, provided funding only quite recently to the Status of Women Council who applied for the funding to establish the enterprise centre at the same time that that Government

through it's ACOA agency is providing the funds for that. On the other hand they are withdrawing funds, of course, for the Women's Centres which just does not make any sense at all, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for the time and for allowing me a chance to speak on this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Member for Bellevue.

MR. BARRETT:

Mr. Speaker, it was with great pleasure that I introduced this particular resolution, and it gives me even more pleasure to close the debate on this particular resolution. I had anticipated that Members on both sides of the House would completely endorse this particular resolution. I know that the hon. Member for St. John's East and the hon. Member for Humber East have great influence over there, so if there was anyone wavering they would have brought them in line. So I am sure that they had great influence.

Also, the hon. Member for Grand Falls and the Opposition House Leader, I guess. I had intended to recognize a couple of people in the gallery, and I think he already did it but I would re-enforce it. Two people who work in the Provincial Civil Service that I have known for a long, long time, the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Women's Policy Office, Luanne Leamon, and Dorothy Robbins who is the Director within the Women's Policy Office. And I worked side by side with these two individuals for a number of years, and I guess we

became instant friends, or had something in common right from the start, in that these two women were advocates for programs for women in the Province, and not only for women but for all people within society. I was involved in adult education, and as an advocate tried to advocate for the disadvantaged and the undereducated in this Province. Sometimes it is very difficult, when you are fighting the bureaucracy and when you are fighting the system, to try to get your point across and your message across. It is not easy, and sometimes it is refreshing to join with other individuals within the organization who have similar objectives and goals, and as a result I would really like to pay tribute to these two individuals.

Over the years, I was very heavily involved in adult education and adult learning. I guess with the prompting of the two individuals I just mentioned, and from the Women's Centers and from women in the Province, there were very many successful programs over the years that provided training opportunities and programs for women. At the Avalon Community College and the Division of Adult Education, we operated Career Exploration for Women, and I take great pleasure, when I go around this city and I walk into some of the department stores, in seeing some of the graduates of these particular programs not only working in the stores in the city and in offices but women who are in management positions. And it all happened because of programs like Career Exploration for Women, Training for Tomorrow, which was a program solely for sole support parents. Then, of course, we had the Onto Program, which was orientation into nontraditional

trades for women, and from these particular programs we now have some women in the Province who are journeypersons in their particular trades. But there is not enough of that kind of programming going on and we need more of it.

I would like to put politics aside and say that there is probably one individual within the Federal Government, one I worked very closely with in my role as a Director of Continuing Education with the Avalon Community College, and that is the hon. MP for St. John's East (Ross Reid), a man I have compared to David Crombie, a person I met many, many years ago.

When I was involved in the literacy movement across Canada, I had the pleasure to meet David Crombie and got to know him. He has left politics, but he is a man who had a great social conscience and who was often referred to as the 'Red Tory' within the Federal Government.

And, of course, I speak of Ross Reid, the MP for St. John's East, and I cannot wait for the day when that individual, at least for the next three or four years, will be representing this Province in the Federal Cabinet. I like to give credit where credit is due, and I think this individual has been a great advocate and a great supporter of women's programs, training programs, and anything that was initiated by this Province. I have learned within the last ten months that in politics you do not get credit very often, and whenever you can get it you take it.

There are two avenues, I guess, or two dichotomies. When you talk about advocacy, it is great to advocate programs but you need to

have money to be able to put the programs in place. I think the Women's Centres have done a great job of advocating. I accept the comments made by hon. Members in the House this afternoon about the initiatives that are needed. I realize, for example, as I think the hon. the Member for St. John's East so eloquently said, that one of the areas in which there really is discrimination is in the whole area of pensions. If the male member of the family happens to die and the woman had not left the home to go out to support the family, she ends up with 50 per cent of a pension the husband would normally have gotten. We are making the assumption, of course, that because one person in the family has gone, the other person can live on the 50 per cent. I have people in my own family who are in that particular situation. They are suffering financially and are below the poverty line. Only by the support of other family members are they able to survive. I think this is one of the issues we, on both sides of the House, need to address in the future.

Another area is the area of part-time employment. I think that whole area has been abused. A lot of women are now going to part-time employment as a matter of convenience, but, at the same time, I think they are being abused in terms of not getting some of the benefits people get who are employed full-time. This applies equally to men as well as to women, but it is mostly to women.

One other very big initiative, one I support wholeheartedly and I would like to think I have been part of, is the whole reorganization of the

post-secondary education system in the Province, which is also a great tribute to women.

One of the problems has always been that women have to travel great distances from home to be able to avail of training opportunities. For example, technical programs were only offered in St. John's and in Corner Brook. The new White Paper on the reorganization of post-secondary education means that technical programs, and all the various programs, will be offered throughout the Province, which will give women much more accessibility to post-secondary education in this Province.

I know we can get into all kinds of arguments and debates about where headquarters of colleges should go, and all of us as MHAs would love to have fifteen or twenty headquarters in every community within our Districts, but I think the whole gist of the post-secondary education reorganization, and the White Paper, will provide more training opportunities for women in this Province.

As an adult educator, I guess one of the things I really came across in dealing with people is the number of young women who go through high school and have been counselled into programs that do not prepare them for technology programs. It was only a month and a half ago that I interviewed a young woman, in my District, who had gone through high school, was channelled into the general program, and then, when she applied to university or to the Cabot Institute, she could not get into a technology program because she did not have the prerequisites to get into that program.

I think we need to provide more counselling at the school level to make sure that your daughters and my daughter will not be channelled into a program so that when they finish high school they do not have the prerequisites to be able to get into technology and university programs.

I would like to close the debate. I must say I was very pleased with the level of debate. Probably it was because three women spoke, but there are other reasons too. I must say it was probably one of the best debates I have heard since I have been elected to the House, and I think I will probably introduce a resolution pretty soon on adult education, to see if we can get the same unanimity.

This particular quote was written by a graduate from the WISE Program, and I think it is probably a good way to end what we have been talking about in this House. It says and I quote: 'I came into the Program with an empty life and a lot of dreams of being independent. They worked with me and helped to find me a career I was suited for and I could really enjoy.'

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Is the House ready for the question?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Ready.

On motion, the resolution was carried unanimously.

MR. SIMMS:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

MR. SIMMS:

For the record, it might be appropriate to have a division, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Call in the Members.

Division

MR. SPEAKER:

All those in favour of the motion, please rise:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Carter), the hon. the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Efford), the hon. the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation (Mr. Gilbert), Mr. Hogan, Mr. Ramsay, Mr. Crane, the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. Decker), Mr. Walsh, Mr. Noel, Mr. Gover, Mr. Penney, Mr. Barrett, Mr. L. Snow, the hon. the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture (Mr. Flight), the hon. the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs (Mr. Gullage), the hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. Dicks), Mr. Grimes, the hon. the Minister of Finance (Mr. Kitchen), the hon. the Minister of Education (Dr. Warren), the hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations (Ms Cowan), the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Dr. Gibbons), Mr. K. Aylward, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Dumaresque, Mr. Short, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Rideout), Mr. Hearn, Mr. Doyle, Mrs. Verge, Mr. Simms, Mr. R. Aylward, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Woodford, Mr. A. Snow, Mr. S. Winsor, Mrs. Duff, Mr. Parsons, Mr. Warren, Mr. Power, Mr. Langdon.

MR. SPEAKER:

Those against the motion, please
rise.

MADAM CLERK:

Mr. Speaker, forty for, zero
against.

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare the motion carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I declare this House adjourned
until tomorrow, Thursday, at 2:00
p.m.