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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

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The House met at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on a point of privilege.

Today the news media have been reporting that last night I was the only Member present in the House of Assembly who refused to sign a letter written by the MHA for Eagle River to the Federal Minister of Employment and Immigration, concerning a request for extension of unemployment benefits for people involved in the fishery on the coast of Labrador. That is true.

The impression was given that I do not support the cause of people involved in the fishery on the coast of Labrador getting extended UI benefits until the ice clears and they can begin fishing. And that is not true. That is a wrong impression.

Unfortunately Mr. Dumaresque did not inform reporters, presumably, and reporters did not ask me exactly what transpired last night. I was acting Opposition House Leader. During the middle of the proceedings, when I was trying to concentrate on what was being said, the Member for Eagle River tapped me on the shoulder, thrust before me a letter on his letterhead over his signature, name and title, and asked me to add my signature to a whole list of signatures on a blank page. I told him that I could write my own letter to the Federal Minister of Employment and Immigration. Today I have done just that, and I faxed my personal letter to the Minister

in Ottawa.

With the indulgence of Your Honour I would like to read the letter I sent, it is a short letter, and then I will table it. It says, 'Dear Miss McDougall, Re: UI Benefits Extension. I am writing to express my support for the request of people engaged in the fishery on the coast of Labrador for an extension of their unemployment insurance benefits until the ice dissipates and they can start fishing.'

I agree with the representations made to you by the Provincial Legislature Members for the Labrador coast, Garfield Warren and Danny Dumaresque. Mr. Warren, who represents the north coast where the ice will delay the start of the fishing season until about 1 July, will be meeting with you in Ottawa on May 24. This is a perennial problem which Mr. Warren has been making representations about since 1979. Basically, the problem is that the unemployment insurance regulations are not attuned to the fishery in Labrador. The regulations do not distinguish among the different fishing seasons in the Province. I urge you to amend the regulations to correct this long-standing inequity.'

Mr. Speaker, I believe that my personal letter to the Federal Minister is far more effective than my signature on a blank piece of paper. As a matter of principle I do not give blank cheques, nor do I sign blank pieces of paper, which is what the Member for Eagle River put before me during the middle of proceedings in this House last night.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The Chair will study the point of privilege and make a ruling before the day is out, hopefully.

Before proceeding to other matters I would like to, on behalf of hon. Members, welcome to the Galleries today ten Grades X to XII students from the H L Strong Collegiate, Little Bay Islands, Green Bay, accompanied by their teachers Mr. Dave Dawe and Mr. Gary Boyd and also their driver Mr. Irving Wheaton. I am sure all hon. Members would like to extend a cordial welcome.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: I would also like to rule on, or comment upon, the point of privilege raised by the Opposition House Leader yesterday with respect to Hansard, specifically complaining about, or at least raising the point that Hansard was not being published for the night sessions. I think the hon. the Member for Grand Falls suggested that it might not be a point of privilege but at least it was a matter of concern to him that Hansard was not being published on a timely basis.

I have here a prepared three page statement. I am not going to read it. I will table it for the benefit of hon. Members. What it does suggest is that when the House gets into night sessions it does put a tremendous strain on the staff of the people of Hansard, and invariably we are not able to do it unless we bring in extra people. Sometimes we are into a couple of nights before we decide to do that, and invariably we get behind. Anyway, the staff is increased and, hopefully, we will catch up in the next day or so on the Hansards that are not

being done.

But I would like to say it is no fault of the staff, it is just that they work exceptionally hard to try and get the Hansard out. It is a matter of being understaffed during these times when the House is open nighttime. Also, that our equipment is probably not as effective as it ought to be. But we are getting new equipment when the new House opens so all of these matters should be addressed.

I will just table the report from the Director of Hansard for hon. Members.

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, just a point of comment or something. I just want to make it abundantly clear that in my raising the matter yesterday, in no way did I want to bear any reflection upon the people who work in Hansard. I support their efforts and always have. They are very hard working people. I just want to make it clear, to them in particular, if to nobody else, that was not the purpose of raising the matter. But, obviously, the matter was a valid one because Your Honour now has seen fit to correct it.

I thank Your Honour.

Statements by Ministers

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

Mr. Speaker and hon. Members of the House of Assembly, with your indulgence, I would like to welcome to the gallery today Mrs.

Regina McCarthy, who is the President of Hospitality Newfoundland and Labrador, and Mr. Joe Bennett, the Executive Director, who were kind enough to supply us with these carnations here today. On behalf of hon. Members, I thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Furey: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to announce that this week has been declared National Tourism Week. This national event celebrates the importance the tourism industry plays in our economy.

All too often, Mr. Speaker, we tend to underestimate the tourism industry because it is relatively invisible. There are no smokestacks visible from a distance. No factories where a large number of workers can be seen leaving at the end of the shift. Rather, the tourism industry is composed for the most part of small and medium-sized enterprises, that part of the economy which, as we all know, Mr. Speaker, is growing at the fastest rate. In Canada as a whole, tourism is the second largest industry, after automobiles and auto parts.

It generated \$21 billion into the Canadian economy last year and provided jobs for over 600,000 Canadians. In Newfoundland, the tourism industry ranks fourth after the fishery, forestry and mining. About 14,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are employed in the tourism industry, or one in every twenty-two employed persons. We calculate that for every 1,000 new tourists visiting our Province, fifteen new full-time jobs are created. Last year, Mr. Speaker,

the tourism industry injected some \$400 million into the Provincial economy. That's 5.4 per cent of all the money made in this Province.

So you see, Mr. Speaker, tourism is a significant player in the economic activity of our Province. Furthermore, the opportunities available for entrepreneurs in this industry are virtually limitless, and that is why as Minister responsible for tourism, I am very pleased to announce the week of May 14 to 20, as National Tourism Week. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Terra Nova.

Mr. Greening: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for a copy of his statement which I received at 1:59, on one of the most important industries in Newfoundland, in fact it ranks as No.4 - tourism. If we are going to promote tourism we must have good promotional policies. In fact, I heard the Minister this morning on open line, when he was promoting the theme aspect of tourism in the various parts of our Province. The previous Government had begun a signage policy, Mr. Speaker, and I hope to see this policy brought in. With regards to the signage policy, it is very inadequate on the Trans Canada Highway. I understand the Federal/Provincial agreement has not been signed, and I hope to see this agreement signed in the near future. I think there should be more emphasis placed on tourism as it pertains to the largest portion of our Province which actually is Labrador. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Before proceeding further, it might be an appropriate time to remind all hon. Members about a Clause in Beauchesne that from time to time hon. Members refer to, or that hon. Members may approach in terms of breaching that particular rule. The Chair doesn't want to sound pretentious in this matter, but the Chair's job, of course, is to enforce all the rules of the House, and I refer to Beauchesne, page 110, Paragraph 367 which is: Recognition of Distinguished Visitors.

'At appropriate times, the attention of the House may be drawn to the presence in the Speaker's Gallery of distinguished visitors. Such recognition is the exclusive prerogative of the Speaker, who is obliged to safeguard the value of this honour. Members who have attempted such introductions have been discouraged by the Speaker.' I bring that to the attention of all hon. Members.

Oral Questions

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Government continues to say publicly that one of the priority areas for funding with this Government is education. In the Budget brought down by the Minister of Finance, in March, school boards were led to believe that there would be additional funding for their education requirements this year. Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a

question to the Minister of Finance. Will the Minister of Finance, who, by the way, is quickly becoming known as the Minister of Apologies those days, will that Minister apologize to the school boards of this Province who are now phoning and publicly commenting on the decrease in funding for education this year despite the deceptiveness of the Minister's Budget, where they thought they would have additional and increased funding, Mr. Speaker?

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

Dr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As for all social services and government services, this year was a difficult year, Mr. Speaker, and the Government could not provide in this year all the funding that is necessary to provide greater equality of educational opportunity in this Province, and more health services, and more social services. But we did make a start, Mr. Speaker. If you were to look at the last two years, we have increased school tax equalization payments to school boards by more than double. In fact, a year ago we increased the school tax equalization grants from \$4.5 million to \$10 million. And we kept it at \$10 million this year. We increased the grants to school boards, the per student grants, by 4 per cent this year. I have explained in the House that because the numbers of students are going down, perhaps boards did not get a significant increase in that grant this year.

We have increased other grants. I might say with respect to the grant system, the Government is dissatisfied with the system; it is a system that is basically

flawed, and this year we hope to change the system so that we provide funding on the basis of need and cost rather than on the basis of per students.

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, my supplementary is to the Minister of Finance, the person who brought down this Budget. If everything the Minister of Education is saying in this House today and has said previously is true, will the Minister of Finance explain how it is that the Green Bay Integrated School Board, the Bay d'Espoir Integrated School Board, the Port au Port RC School Board, how is it all those school boards are saying that they have less money to spend for education this year than they had last year? Will the Minister explain that, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Dr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I have some data on the school board in Green Bay. I just want to illustrate what this Government has done in the past two years, in fact, in a little over a year, since this Government came into power. I mentioned earlier on the school tax equalization grants of last year. Last year the Government increased the capital grants from \$20 million to \$27 million in one year, and we are maintaining that this year.

As far as the Green Bay Integrated School Board is concerned, to illustrate what we have done for that board in the past year I might say that in 1986-87 that

board got \$85,000 from school tax equalization; in 1987-88 they got \$106,000, an increase of \$21,000; in 1988-89 the Green Bay Integrated School Board got \$175,000. That was the last year they were in power, Mr. Speaker, my hon. friends. That was an increase of \$69,000.

Now, let me tell you what happened last year.

An Hon. Member: How much is (inaudible)?

Dr. Warren: Let me tell you what happened last year, Mr. Speaker. The Green Bay Integrated School Board grant from school tax equalization increased from \$175,000 to \$420,000 last year, and we have maintained that figure this year. We have done a number of other things, Mr. Speaker, for school boards throughout the Province, and let me assure the Opposition that we are going to do many, many more things. Look what we have done in one year, and over the next decade we are going to do much more to improve education in this Province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simms: Well how come everybody is complaining?

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, again I will attempt to direct a question to the Minister of Finance whose Budget it is we are talking about here. If everything is so rosy with the school boards, how come every school board in the Province is saying they got less money to spend this year than last year? That is the question.

Now, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister of Finance increase the school board operating budgets this year, or is he forcing school boards to close classrooms, turn off the lights, turn off the heat and shut down the schools in rural Newfoundland? Is that what he is doing?

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

Dr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I will answer the question.

Mr. Warren: We did not ask you.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Dr. Warren: No, this Board will not be closing schools. We will be building new schools and expanding educational programs and expanding the curriculum. My hon. friend was not in the House the other day when I listed all the things we have done in one year to improve curriculum and to improve education in this Province. Let me assure you that we are in difficult times. I have explained in the House, and I did mention it earlier, that we are asking boards to be more efficient. We are asking boards to look at this whole question of school busing; we want to ensure that with all the needs of this Province in the future, we get the best return possible from school busing. We are going to ask the churches and the boards to meet with us and examine the whole question of denominational sharing. We are going to ensure that we get the best possible return for the limited dollars we have. On top of that, of course, in the future we are going to make more money available to education so that we provide the kind of equality and the kind of excellence we need in

education in this Province.

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

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Finance. When the Minister of Finance announced in his Budget Speech the Government's decision to eliminate the Ombudsman's Office he gave as the excuse, and I quote 'the fact that the Ombudsman and his staff do not warrant an office costing \$236,000 annually.' Mr. Speaker, since just four years ago, in 1986, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the Members of the House of Assembly, appointed the incumbent for a term of ten years, meaning there are six years left to run on his term of appointment. Is it not so that the Government is going to have to pay the salary of the incumbent, which will be about \$500,000, and thereafter pay his pension benefits as provided for by legislation? Therefore, is not the Budget decision to eliminate the Ombudsman's Office false economy?

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, the Office of Parliamentary Commissioner, there will be a Bill brought into this House to abolish that particular function. The House instituted the office and the House can abolish the office. It is not a decision that was made by Cabinet that we immediately abolish it and it is abolished. We stated our intention to bring a Bill to this Legislature to eliminate that particular office. I hesitate to comment on much of the rest of what the hon. Member

asked, except to say that I believe her conclusions are absolutely not correct. Any appointment that is made by the Legislature can be changed by the Legislature. I suppose in that circumstance there is recourse to the courts. I cannot predict what the courts will decide and I would not even pretend to tell them what they should decide, if that eventuality arises. The mechanism is there, the situation will be resolved, and the simple answer to her question is no, we are not obligated to pay for that office for the full ten years - no.

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

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My next question is to the Minister of Justice who, I would suggest, provides legal advice to the Cabinet on the Government's liability to the Ombudsman. Since the Office of the Ombudsman is now the only independent agency with the power or the resources to investigate complaints against the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, and since there have been increasing requests for an even better and more visible RNC complaints agency, or a Police Commission, is the Government not going to have to replace the Ombudsman's Office with a new independent agency to deal with complaints about the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary?

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

Mr. Dicks: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That question is something the Government will address in due course. It is something which will be considered in light of any recommendations

made by the Hughes Commission. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. A. Snow: My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Mines and Energy. Recent news reports have indicated that the Hope Brook gold mine is experiencing financial problems. Can the Minister tell this House and the people of the Province, and more specifically and more importantly the employees of Hope Brook, what the financial status and the future viability of this project is?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Dr. Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Gladly, Mr. Speaker. Yes, I acknowledge what has been in the news recently, and I think the public of Newfoundland are well aware of the problems Hope Brook has had in the last year, particularly some problems they have had with the treatment of the effluent from their mill. They have been addressing that problem, they have been determining a new area and a new process for treating the tailings, and I would expect that by this fall they should be using the new process and things should be turning around for Hope Brook. I think the rest of the year should see an improvement from the \$4 million loss we saw in the first quarter. I think things can still look good for Hope Brook, because they still have about 10 million tons of ore in the ground.

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

Mr. A. Snow: My supplementary

question, Mr. Speaker, is again to the Minister of Mines and Energy. In light of the fact that his colleague, the Minister of Finance, in this year's Budget has a payroll tax, the infamous payroll tax, and he has exempted all the other resource industries, such as the fishing, the forestry and the agriculture, will the Minister now agree that this particular tax does place an unnecessary burden on this particular mining company?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

Dr. Gibbons: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to agree that it places an unnecessary burden. I do not think the payroll tax is that much and that big in terms of the total salary and the total cost to that company. Obviously it is one of the costs, but it is certainly a small proportion of the cost, and I do not think it is the reason for what they have seen happen for the loss.

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

Mr. A. Snow: Spokespersons for the mining operation here suggested that \$200,000 was the amount they will be taxed this year by this infamous payroll tax, and that is, of course, a significant amount of money to any small mining operation.

My supplementary question to the Minister of Finance: Will he now admit that this so-called health and post-secondary education tax, more commonly called a payroll tax, was ill-conceived, poorly implemented, and detrimental to small businesses? And if he has finally recognized the obvious,

will he now instruct his officials to make the necessary changes in his Budget and not implement this discriminatory tax?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Dr. Kitchen: Mr. Speaker, we are quite comfortable with the payroll tax. Small businesses are exempted because there is no tax on payrolls less than \$300,000. The implementation of the tax is proceeding as anticipated. We will shortly be debating the Bill in the House, and Members can have their opportunity there. But we have no intention of changing the proposed payroll tax at this time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations a question we have been asking the Government for some time now but have not been able to get an answer on. I want to ask the Minister again what the level of consultation has been with both the union groups and the employer groups on Bill 59?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: I cannot give him, Mr. Speaker, the exact number of consultations, but there have been a variety. My hon. critic will recall that representatives of the unions did sit on the committee which made the decisions about what legislation should be put together in order to form new legislation on essential services, so they were involved in the very

basic, very early beginnings and had many, many meetings and an opportunity to consult with the Treasury Board representatives, Government, who were on that Committee, as well as those representing the employers.

Just prior to the legislation being taken to Cabinet, we did meet with each of those groups and gave them some sort of a view as to what was in the legislation, although it was inappropriate for me at that time to show them the exact legislation. After it passed through the Cabinet process, the groups were back in again one by one and saw the legislation, although we did not give them the chance to take the legislation away with them. But we did have a chat with them about it. They then went away and they do have an opportunity again, when it comes before the Legislative Review Committee.

I suppose there are always some people who feel they have not been consulted enough. We have certainly tried to consult as much as possible. And I get conflicting reports. Because recently I heard myself being praised for the consultation process by one organization and then, the next day, I read in the paper that they were not happy with me. So it is very difficult. Of course the Opposition wants to grab the negative one, so I do not know.

An Hon. Member: Who did you consult with?

Mr. Rideout: Surprise! Surprise! Ask your colleague, the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I understand the Member for Harbour Main is doing the questioning.

The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations has mentioned the employer groups. Because if all this consultation is taking place, then I would ask the Minister why the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Labour Relations Council Executive Director, Jim Pitcher, would mention publicly in the Evening Telegram last week that no level of consultation at all had taken place with the Department of Employment and Labour Relations, that he was very, very worried that the consultation would be after the fact? NAPE has said, as well, that really no level of consultation has taken place with the Department of Employment and Labour Relations. Now Government has said that all this consultation has taken place. How does the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations square the comments she is making today, and has made in the past, with the comments which have been made by the Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Labour Relations Council and the Union groups in this Province, that no level of consultation is taking place? How does she square these comments?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: My how we change when we change positions in the House. I recall, as President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, begging for

consultation with the other Government but never getting it.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: Way to go, Patt.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Ms Cowan: I remember having five letters that I waited six months for an answer to.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Ms Cowan: If my hon. critic had been listening to me, he would have heard me answer his question in the first question, when I said that at the dinner I attended at the Employers' Labour Relations Association, I was commended by the Chair of that dinner for consulting so readily with the group. I did read in the paper, as did the critic, that another gentleman from that group was not pleased, and I certainly would be quite happy to consult with him on that. But that was not my understanding.

I also find it extremely interesting how someone in Opposition reads the paper. The connotations on what he read were so different. All I saw was that the man was not happy, and I thought it was unfortunate because we had gone out of our way. But if he is not pleased, I will certainly be willing to consult with him again. He is a fine gentleman. I enjoy chatting with him.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Mr. Speaker, on a supplementary. The Minister is aware that the Legislative Review Committee is going to be holding

public hearings on Bill 59. I would like to ask the Minister if she has notified the unions to that effect, and the employers as well?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: All the unions and employee groups involved were told the day that I was going to announce the legislation in the House; they were all informed by a telephone call from one of my officials. It is not my responsibility to inform them of the deadline, it is the Chairperson of the Committee. It is out of my hands now. It is Government legislation that is now going through the Committee process, and it is not my role, Mr. Speaker, to be contacting the unions regarding it, or the employers.

Mr. Doyle: A final supplementary.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Mr. Speaker, on a final supplementary I would like to inform the Minister that I talked to NAPE yesterday, and CUPE, and the NTA, and the Nurses Union, and that is to name only a few, but they have informed us that they have not been made aware of any deadline for submissions. Is the Minister aware that just this week a notice appeared in The Evening Telegram - printed in The Evening Telegram by the Legislative Review Committee which establishes this Friday, May 18 - it only appeared in the paper this week - as the deadline for submissions? Now if the Bill is not coming before the House until next fall - I do not think it is

going to come during this sitting - why would a deadline of Friday coming be established for people to make submissions to the Legislative Review Committee? Is this another way of ramming the legislation down the throats of people?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There is something happening here that I suspect is either the result of a plan by the Opposition to deceive, or the result of their extreme ignorance.

An Hon. Member: One or the other.

Mr. Baker: One or the other, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Review Committees are a creature of the Legislature, not of any Government Department. Now, do you understand what that means? The Legislative Review Committees are not under a Minister. A Minister does not control what happens to the Legislative Review Committees, because they are creatures of the Legislature. And for that Member to get up and pretend that somehow there is something wrong with the Minister who does not control a Legislative Review Committee is shameful, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely shameful.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Baker: The Legislative Review Committee processes is functioning. Members of the

Opposition sit on the Legislative Review Committees, as do Members of Government, and they operate as arms of the Legislature. They hold hearings, and my understanding is that all groups who wish to make submissions on legislation that is important to specific groups will be heard, will be listened to. I think it is shameful that Members opposite would try to use the Legislative Review Committees as a political tool in this House, when they have the Committee structure of the House to use instead, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Rideout: What is wrong with you? Are you losing your marbles, or what?

Mr. Flight: You have lost yours.

Mr. Baker: Shameful!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I want to remind hon. Members again, on both sides of the House, that Question Period is a period to solicit and seek information and they ought not engage in debate or in any kind of argument - it is just to give information. I remind Ministers and all Members, as a matter of fact, of that fundamental and important rule that we have established for a long time with respect to Question Period.

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations. On Thursday last, May 10, I asked the Minister, since there was \$9 million budgeted in her estimates to fund the extended notice period to Fishery Products International, would she inform the House if any of this money had

been supplied or provided to Fishery Products International and the Minister said yes, she would make a statement in the House regarding that perhaps tomorrow or Monday. Now, this is Tuesday and we still have not heard a word from the Minister on that particular issue. I ask the Minister now, is she aware if any funding has been advanced to Fishery Products International, and can she inform the House accordingly? If not, what is she trying to cover up in this particular deal with Fishery Products International?

Some Hon. Members: Good question!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: I can assure the hon. gentleman that there is no attempt to cover up. On Thursday I rather forgot that Friday morning was going to be the House and it would slow down the procedure -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) Wednesday.

Ms Cowan: Thursday it was, excuse me. We have paid out two payments to National Sea workers, and the first is gone for FPI. Those are the monies to assist workers affected by the announced plant closures. The details of this will be forthcoming. My apologies, Mr. Speaker, to the House if they are not here yet. I have been checking daily with Finance, and they are now contacting the companies just to be sure, as the Premier indicated the other day, that there is no information in the contracts that we have drawn up with the companies they would not want to have released. Certainly any as

far as information on the public expenditure of money we would make available, but there may be information the company doesn't want spread about and officials in Finance are double checking that. I think you will recall that the Premier very generously said that if there was information there which could not be made public regarding the companies, then he would provide it to the Opposition Members.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The situation here is not what the Premier wants to give the people of the Province, it is what the people of the Province want to hear about this deal. Now, we have been trying since January 5, when this announcement was made by the Premier for the extended notice funding. I asked the Minister of Fisheries on March 12 for the conditions of the funding; the Minister of Employment and Labour, in whose Budget this money is, can't tell us today how much has been given to Fisheries Products International. Let me ask the Minister of Fisheries a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Fisheries now stand in his place and give us the conditions of funding to Fisheries Products International on the extended notice period and inform the House and the people if there has, indeed, been an agreement, a written agreement, signed by Fisheries Products International and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador?

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

Mr. Carter: I don't know what the

hon. Member is trying to prove, but if he is suggesting that we should pay out that money in advance, fine. But that is not the way we operate. I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. Member has promised to table the agreement when it is ready, and that promise will be kept.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question here, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Fisheries is under what authority has any funding been advanced to Fishery Products International? If you have not signed an agreement with that company and attached conditions to the funding, under what authority has money been advanced to Fishery Products International? That is the question.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: There has been an agreement signed, Mr. Speaker. I thought the Premier made us aware of that. I thought I made them aware. But then we said we are going to give it to the Opposition when we can. That is what I am doing now, having that agreement checked to see if we can make it public. I thought that is what we have been talking about the last two or three days.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier, a few days ago, wasn't sure if there was an agreement with Fishery Products International or not. He said right in this very Hansard of

Thursday, May 10, he did not know but he would check it out.

Now, a supplementary to the Minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister inform the House when the money was advanced to Fishery Products International? Was it before the end of March? Because if so, this has very serious implications for a company that brought down a financial statement with a modest profit for that quarter. Can the Minister inform the House if any money was advanced to Fishery Products International before the end of March?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: I find it very strange. You would think they would be so pleased that we were doing -

An Hon. Member: Yes or no.

Ms Cowan: I am not in court, I don't have to answer yes or no. Here we are making a gesture -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Ms Cowan: - that is going to help the workers in this particular plant and they are trying to make something out of it. I don't understand it. It boggles my mind! You will receive when the contracts come out, which I hope to be able to make available to you quite quickly, I am not trying to cover anything up, I am very proud of what our Government has done, why would I want to cover it up! You will see when the payouts were made. This is all very carefully, as you will notice when you read the contracts, sit down with people to audit and monitor

and so on, that all is aboveboard. It will come to you, Sir, in due course.

Mr. Simms: Did you (inaudible), that is the question.

Ms Cowan: I guess they are.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The only mind boggling going on here is by the Minister who can't give an answer as to how much money has been advanced from her Department. Even though she says some has been advanced, she cannot tell the House when!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Matthews: That is the mind boggling question here, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I have told all hon. Members before that we are not permitted to debate the answers. The hon. Member is into his third or fourth supplementary, and he has about a half a minute left.

The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Half a minute left of Question Period?

Mr. Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Matthews: A supplementary to the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Speaker. In his discussions with Mr. Demone over the last number of days, after it was confirmed that National Sea is indeed engaged in a deal to sell the Burgeo plant, the Minister said he would try to get an answer from Mr. Demone, if

this deal is not finalized and the plant not sold, as to whether or not National Sea intends to operate Burgeo in the future. Did the Minister of Fisheries get an answer from Mr. Demone on that point, that if the Burgeo plant is not sold, that National Sea will indeed continue to operate the Burgeo plant and the people of Burgeo will have a future in the fishing industry?

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

Mr. Carter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Getting back to his previous question, if the hon. Member is against what we are doing for the people of Grand Bank, let him say so. Let him say so! Mr. Speaker, if he is against it, then he should have the courage to get up and condemn Government for doing it, not make a sneaky attack on the Minister, questioning her as to when the payments were made.

Mr. Speaker, yes, I did speak to the principals of NatSea and I put that question to them. The directors of Natsea, Mr. Speaker, are unable now to predict what the allowable catch will be in 1991, what the management plan will be. If the total allowable catch remains as it is today, there is no doubt about it, whatever happens, whether they sell or not, the plant will continue to operate. But if the total allowable catch is reduced, as it might very well be next year, then who knows what will happen? Mr. Speaker, that was the essence of our discussion with the principals of that company yesterday morning.

Mr. Speaker: Question Period has expired.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Notices of Motion

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

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a Bill entitled "An Act To Amend The Child Welfare Act, 1972".

0 0 0

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair made a mistake. I jumped over an item.

Petitions

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

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

I have recognized the hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains with a petition. Before he proceeds, I want to ensure that he can carry on in an orderly fashion.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

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

I am sure I have enough petitions here to carry on until about 6:00

p.m. I have here a petition signed by 222 individuals from the community of Hopedale, in the District of Torngat Mountains. The prayer of this petition is the same as the prayer of ten or eleven other petitions I presented in this House concerning the Air Subsidy Program for the residents of Labrador.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I attended a general meeting of the Labrador Inuit Association in Postville. At that time, one of the questions put to me was, What is the Government doing about the Air Subsidy Program for the Labrador people?

Mr. Hogan: And you told them the truth (inaudible)?

Mr. Warren: To respond to my colleague from Placentia, yes, Mr. Speaker, I told them the truth. I told them they are doing nothing. I told them they had one-third of their Cabinet appointed to a committee to decide what they are going to do, which means they are doing nothing.

Mr. Speaker, one-third of the Cabinet could have decided within one half hour what to do with the Air Subsidy, which would be to reinstate it. They have had a month and-a-half already to decide - they could have done it in a half hour - and subsequently, they still have not made a decision.

I have a choice today, to present all my petitions today and get it over with, or continue to present a petition every day this House is open. What I am going to do, Mr. Speaker, is present a petition every day. I am going to make sure that day after day after day this Government is going to hear the concerns of the Labrador

people. Mr. Speaker, if I present all my petitions today, then the Government will say after tomorrow, 'Oh, there are no more petitions.'

An Hon. Member: That is (inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, my colleague from the Labrador West area will get up, and my colleague from Humber East. What my colleague did not sign yesterday had nothing to do with the Air Subsidy Program. What I am asking this Government to do is to reinstate that program.

An Hon. Member: She would not sign that petition, I bet you!

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, if you will allow me - I know I have another minute left - Mr. Speaker, could I ask my hon. colleague to ask the hon. Member for Humber East to sign this petition. I am sure she will. I bet she is going to sign it.

Ms Verge: It is not a blank sheet of paper?

Mr. Warren: I am sure my hon. colleague is going to sign that petition. I would just like you to know, Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague, when given a proper petition, a proper letter, she will sign the petition, and this just shows that she has signed the petition. Now, I want to say to my hon. colleagues opposite that this petition is signed by 222 voters in the community of Hopedale. In fact it is now 224 because I signed it and the hon. Member for Humber East signed it. It is calling upon the Government to reinstate the air subsidy program. I know I only have one minute left but I heard through

the grapevine, now I do not know if this is true or not, and I just came back from Labrador yesterday and I heard, and I hope it is not true -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: So do we, Mr. Speaker, we do also. We heard they are going to reinstate the \$100,000 for sports and recreation. In fact in the District of Naskaupi I heard loud and clear that they are going to reinstate the \$100,000 in the sports and recreation budget but the President of Treasury Board is going to say we are going to cancel the air subsidy program.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. gentleman's time is up.

Mr. Warren: By leave, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: No leave.

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

Mr. A. Snow: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am pleased to have the opportunity to speak this afternoon in support of the hon. Member for Torngat to the prayer of his petition presented on behalf of the 222 people of Hopedale, and the one for Humber East. I am sure that the hon. Member for Exploits will not be against the Labrador air travel subsidy program after we finish speaking on this. I am sure, being a former educator, he would not be against the support of the youth of our Province attending athletic and cultural events, and participating with other schools in this Province. He would not

necessarily be against that now, just because he is elected to the House of Assembly and aspires to be in the Cabinet. He would not want to impair and impede the full complete education of the youth that he is associated with in his District, and of course the people in the four Districts of Labrador. We know the real reason for the cancellation of the Labrador Air Passenger Subsidy Program was stated by the Minister of Finance, when he suggested the reason for cancelling it was because there was a tax benefit conferred upon the residents of Labrador through the federal income tax. This is a northern tax benefit package that the Federal Government has suggested is in place for residents of Labrador.

This is really a claw-back of tax benefits that some residents of Labrador derive through the Income Tax Act in the federal system. It was not really, as some other Cabinet Ministers have suggested, a budgetary reason in that sense, and it was not because of the administrative cost, as the hon. Minister of Public Works and Services has suggested. The real reason was what the Minister of Finance suggested, that it was a claw-back of benefits conferred upon the residents of Labrador by another level of Government.

I am disappointed, and so are the residents of Labrador, that the special cabinet committee struck by the Premier has been meeting undoubtedly every day for the last six weeks, and have not yet devised a method of reinstating this particular program. I recognize there is very little else on the go in the Province and they do not have to have meetings every day about the new programs

they are implementing throughout other areas of this Province, but I know they would be meeting every day about this big problem they have. I am disappointed they have not yet been able to reach a favourable conclusion and recommendation for the residents of Labrador. I would suggest to the Committee, and to the hon. Member for Gander, that when they do have their deliberations, they would consider that the subsidy that would be recommended by their Committee should be a similar type of subsidy that they have with their policy with regard to transportation in this Province.

When one lives on an island and travels from the so-called mainland island, that is the island of Newfoundland to a smaller island such as Fogo Island, this Province has a subsidy program to bring that cost of travel down to what it would be if there were a land connection. So in that case, they should use a similar policy for anybody travelling to Labrador. They should be able to bring that subsidy in line so that it would be the same cost as it would be if you were able to drive to the portion, this Island of Labrador. I am sure that the people who are on the Committee are going to be able to look at that and make that recommendation, which would be of terrific benefit to all the residents of Labrador. Of course, if it is a benefit to Labrador, it will be a benefit to all the residents of this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is always nice to be an Opposition Member, Mr. Speaker. I remember not too long ago when I was sitting there. Things come easy, Mr. Speaker. We would like to provide all residents of this Province with everything they need. We would really love to do it. However, Mr. Speaker, we are faced with certain realities. As an Opposition Member, if I were sitting over there now, I suppose, I would find it easy to get up and say that we should do this, that, and something else, that there are hundreds of things that I would suggest that Government should do to make life easier for citizens all throughout this Province, hundreds, thousands of things, Mr. Speaker. However, it is rather strange, Mr. Speaker, in proposing that position, Members in Opposition then turn around and say - but you cannot raise any taxes. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is an easy position to take. That we should do everything for everybody in this Province, but we should not raise any taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that this is not a perfect world but how can anybody expect that job can be accomplished under those conditions. They do not want any taxes. Yet, they want everything. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the luxury of the Opposition Member. They believe that money appears by magic, out of nowhere, therefore, we can provide everything for everybody in this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having pointed out the luxury of their position and the ridiculousness of the kinds of things that come from them - I would like to say with regard to this particular petition

that I would like to get specific and address it.

Mr. Speaker, we have been considering the problems raised by the two Members for Labrador. It has taken a bit longer than perhaps it should, simply because there are many other things to deal with. However, I would like to inform the Members opposite that I believe I will be able to make a statement before the end of this week on the situation. At that point in time, Members will be informed of the decision, not only of the Committee, but the decision of Cabinet.

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

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

I think I will present one more petition today. Mr. Speaker, this is from employees - Oh, Mr. Speaker, I can present another dozen, if you want me to, but I will just present one today anyhow - this is from employees in the Labrador Community College in Goose Bay.

Mr. Speaker, the same prayer of the petition, and I was waiting to hear the Minister's comments before I was going to present my second petition. Mr. Speaker, I want to say something perfectly clear, and my colleague from our westernmost section of our Province alluded to it just now, the iron ore companies in Western Labrador are going to pay enough in extra payroll tax this year alone to offset the Labrador air subsidy for the next five years. So the hon. gentleman opposite should realize that just the Iron Ore Company alone, because of this Government's action, will be

forced to pay a payroll tax that will offset the Labrador air subsidy for the next five years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, before I go any further I want to make one thing perfectly clear. This is the fourth time I have been speaking that the hon. Minister of Social Services has made unusual sounds, and I am not going to stand for it any longer, Mr. Speaker. This is the fourth time. He kissed a pig and he sounds like a pig. And I will say it time and time again, Mr. Speaker, until that gentleman stops it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The Chair is not aware of any sounds that were made by the Minister of Social Services. But I would say this: if the hon. Minister of Social Services made sounds, then we would ask that he refrain from making them. By the same token, I would ask the hon. Member for Torngat Mountains to withdraw his unparliamentary language.

An Hon. Member: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Just a moment, I want to address the Member for Torngat Mountains.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem withdrawing my comments, if the hon. gentleman stops acting like a pig.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Withdrawals must be made without qualification. The Chair does not want any qualification. I will ask the hon. Member to withdraw, please, without any qualification.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I withdraw that, Mr. Speaker. But I, at the same time, hope the hon. Minister of Social Services will withdraw from making pig remarks.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Again I will say to the hon. Member - and the Chair does not intend to play around - the Chair will deal with the hon. the Minister of Social Services. I am now dealing with the Member for Torngat Mountains, and I want him to withdraw the statement unequivocally.

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Of course, I will withdraw my comments. I will continue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair now wants to hear the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Efford: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have to rise on a point of order to try to get some understanding of what is going on. I have absolutely no knowledge of it. I was talking to my colleague here on a couple of matters. I never made any sounds, not to my knowledge, unless I did it unawares. But absolutely nothing. I want to make it clear to the hon. House of Assembly and to the hon. Speaker that I have no need to apologize because I did not make any sounds whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair is ready to make a ruling, but I will take one more submission from the hon. Opposition House Leader.

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I think for the benefit of the hon. the Minister of Social

Services, perhaps I can help him somewhat understand what the Member for Torngat Mountains is referring to. I am not sure if it occurred in this instance, but I do know, and I think every Member of the House knows, that from time to time the Minister of Social Services, when he is in a jocular mood, will sometimes yawn very loudly.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Matthews: Yawn, yawn, no doubt about that.

Mr. Simms: So I say to the Minister, just so he is familiar with what it is the Member is talking about, I believe that is the kind of remark he is talking about. And I think, Your Honour, that is what it was. So it may be a difference of opinion between hon. gentlemen, but I am sure it is very difficult to be interrupted by that kind of a sound. Because I think I may have done it myself on one occasion. And I think that is what it is all about.

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

Mr. Warren: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will withdraw my petition for today.

Orders of the Day

Mr. Baker: Order 2, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: It is moved and seconded that I do leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole on Supply.

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

Committee of the Whole on Supply

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. The Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure how much time we have left. Perhaps the Clerk could tell me while I'm standing. Does she have the time allocation? Perhaps she can tell me at some point in time.

Mr. Chairman: The time left is 4 hours and 52 minutes.

Mr. Simms: Four hours, so just about five hours remaining. Today we will have an hour, or I am not quite sure yet - the Government House Leader has not gotten back to me on that earlier matter. But anyway, we will have an hour or two today, we will have an hour or two on Thursday, so we will be sitting Thursday night presumably.

An Hon. Member: We are sitting on Thursday morning.

Mr. Simms: Oh, Thursday morning. We are going to sit Thursday morning?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Yes, but we will not get five hours in between now and Thursday afternoon. That is the reason I asked if we are going to sit Thursday night. Five hours left.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Okay.

So we have successfully spent nineteen hours, I guess - because I think we had twenty-four at the beginning - to start off in scrutinizing the estimates of the Executive Council, which includes just about every Department of Government obviously, because of the Premier's position, being the Leader of the Government, and responsible for all Government operations. So that leaves us with five hours.

Now, throughout the course of the last nineteen hours, I think we have addressed some pretty important issues. I recall throughout the process we spent four or five hours debating the fisheries issue alone - one afternoon and one night. Quite a considerable debate, quite a good debate, quite a lively debate.

In addition to that I have asked detailed questions, specific detailed questions of my friend, the President of Treasury Board, to which I am still waiting for answers. He keeps saying, 'I will get the answers for you.' But I am getting a bit nervous now because there is only four hours and fifty-two minutes left, and the number of questions that -

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Oh yes I have, I say to the Minister of Finance. I would not expect him to know, but I have asked all kinds of questions. The President of the Treasury Board, who is a very responsible Minister, knows that I have asked him, and has acknowledged the fact that I have asked him. In fact, if he likes,

I can repeat them all, because I have them all written down right here. But I do expect -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Yes, I do expect some answers to those detailed questions from the President of Treasury Board sometime fairly soon, because the answers may prompt further questions. And I say to him, it would be cooperative of him if he were to provide the answers as quickly as possible to those detailed questions.

In addition to that, we have raised the issue of Sunday hunting. While it may not be the most earth shattering issue in the Province, the fact that the Minister of Environment himself has a petition with over 30,000 names on it, it obviously is a very important item.

An Hon. Member: It is not a small issue.

Mr. Simms: It is not a small issue by any means. It is an important issue to many, many people in this Province. People who hunt, people who are interested in the outdoors, people who have outdoor attractions in the tourism industry.

An Hon. Member: Are you in favor of it?

Mr. Simms: I have stated unequivocally, that I am in support of Sunday hunting, yes. I have said that without question.

Your colleague, the Member for Bellevue, says he stands with his constituents. He did a poll in his District, the poll results were 50 per cent in favor, and 50

per cent against, so the Member from Bellevue is going to stand solidly with his constituents on the matter, he says, which is one way out of it.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, we have also raised a number of other -

An Hon. Member: He is for it.

Mr. Simms: Pardon?

An Hon. Member: He is now for it.

Mr. Simms: He is now for it. So he did a quick recount of his poll, and it was 51 per cent for and 49 against. So now the Member for Bellevue supports it, the Member for Lewisporte supports it, the Member for St. George's supports it 100 per cent. I am not sure but the Member for Placentia is against it, I believe, is he not? He might change his mind again. And the Member for the Ramsay Accord, the Member for LaPoile, made the most significant contribution to that particular debate when he said, there is a compromise to solve this issue, there is a compromise. 'What is it,' we said. He said, 'after mass, twelve o'clock on Sunday there would be hunting, but before twelve o'clock there would be no hunting.' And somebody over here said, 'well what would you do? Hang clocks around the necks of the moose and set the alarms for twelve o'clock so they would know.' So it was quite an interesting debate.

We had some good conversation with the Minister of Environment related to that issue and some other environmental issues that were raised by my friend from Torngat Mountains. We had some interventions from the Minister of

Social Services on issues that he is interested in, which is, I suppose, any issue.

An Hon. Member: Which one?

Mr. Simms: I forget now. That is how much the contribution was, I really cannot remember what it was he said, but I do know he was up three or four times speaking in debate.

An Hon. Member: On the fishery.

Mr. Simms: The Minister of Mines and Energy, who has been away from the House, and I do not mean this in a negative way, or unparliamentary way, he was gone for five days, he says, to the offshore show in Houston, Texas. We asked him last night, upon his return, if he would rush to his feet and tell us exactly what went on down in Houston and how things went, and he did give us a brief report, but I asked him about eight other questions.

I asked him if his friend the Whip, the party Whip, the Member for Stephenville - the only veteran returned in the last election on the Liberal side who did not get into the Cabinet - if he gave him the questions and he said, yes. But if he did not, let me remind him what the questions are so he can get up again - aside from the oil show, the interest of Hibernia in the oil show, and all the rest of that stuff which he told us about last night. The Hibernia update - because the old deadline date - I am not sure, but was it 18 June at one time?

Dr. Gibbons: No, it was the thirtieth. You were not listening because I said that last night.

Mr. Simms: It was not

satisfactory to me. I did not get enough information and that is the reason I am raising it again. It was not satisfactory. If the Minister will recall I came at 9:30 last night.

An Hon. Member: You were here when he spoke.

Mr. Simms: I was here when he spoke. I realize that. I tried to listen to what he had to say but it did not make much sense and I did not get enough information from him. Did he give us an update on the Quebec negotiations?

Dr. Gibbons: I did.

Mr. Simms: He did all of this, and the oil show review in ten minutes?

An Hon. Member: Yes, he did.

Mr. Simms: Well, obviously, I guess, I rest my case. Obviously, he could not provide much information in that time. The gold find in King's Point, he told us all about that. The mining potential in central Newfoundland, all the mining potential in central Newfoundland. He told us about the Labrador west situation. He alluded to the Labrador west situation.

An Hon. Member: He did not.

Mr. Simms: Aha! I knew he might have missed one. That was the question of the labour situation up there with respect to the Quebec railway and the potential for -

Ms Cowan: That would be essentially questions for Question Period. Why not keep them for then?

Mr. Simms: Because you cannot get any answers, I say to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations. There is certainly no point in asking her any questions because she does not give any answers. The Minister of Mines is much more responsible, intelligent, and co-operative and will probably provide a reasonable answer. He is very competent and he can address all of those questions.

An Hon. Member: The answers start on L34 of Hansard.

Mr. Simms: About the Labrador west situation and so on? The Labrador west situation is on L34?

An Hon. Member: Not Labrador West.

Mr. Simms: Well, all my answers were not on L34, and that is exactly my point. Last night I asked the Member for Stephenville to make a note of the Hope Brook situation which my colleague - Pardon!

An Hon. Member: That was not (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: No, that was not, so you see he did not answer all my questions, but I can assure you it was my question. In the meantime the Member for Menihek today asked the Minister in Question Period for an update on the Hope Brook situation, but he may wish to elaborate on it in any event, but I certainly would be interested in a more in-depth response to the question pertaining to the mining potential in central Newfoundland. I think there is a lot more to it in central Newfoundland which he is not disclosing. He wiggles his finger at me now as if to say, now, now, do not try to force me into saying

stuff that I should not be saying yet.

I think there is a bit more mining potential in certain parts of central Newfoundland. He might allude to that and tell us about the concern there is in the mining industry with respect to high interest rates and so on. I understand there is some concern in the mining industry because of the high interest rates with respect to exploration and so on. The Minister is more knowledgeable about that than any of us so perhaps he could take ten minutes to tell us a little bit about those kind of things.

I want to throw out today, as I have tried to do every day when I stood up to begin the debate on the estimates, some topics for consideration. I want to throw out a few more today for Members opposite who may speak in this debate, if they so wish. I want to throw out the topic of employment, and particularly the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations might wish to address that whole question, because we have heard some startling figures released over the last little while with respect to unemployment rate increases.

Just last month the figures came out and I think they were up 1.7 per cent for last month, April, over April of 1989, and that is rather startling because of the fact it is in April that the unemployment statistics generally go down because of construction and all those other kinds of activities that would begin in the spring of the year, but what we see is an increase in the unemployment rate

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! The

hon. Member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Simms: Oh, already! I can carry on if nobody else is going to get up. I guess nobody is going to get up.

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

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will just carry on with some of the topics that I am throwing out for discussion -

An Hon. Member: Why don't you take a rest?

Mr. Simms: No, I don't need a rest, not just yet, ten minutes yes. So I am hoping that the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations will address this whole question of employment and the question of unemployment, because of the fact we have seen these increases occurring on a fairly constant basis over the last year. Unemployment rate increases: what really bothers me about it all is the fact that this particular Government, having eliminated the previous Administration's Employment Generation Program, which they didn't think was doing much, substituted it with their own program which I understand has done far, far less even. But the problem with it now is, there are oodles and oodles of applications on file from small businesses who want to employ one or two people to work for sixty weeks as per their program rules, but they have been told the applications are put on hold, pending, and we do not understand what it means 'pending' because we were told not long ago by the Minister in this House during Question Period, that there was no money left and some of the money apparently has been spent in

advance for the next fiscal year. So we would like the Minister to take the opportunity in these debates perhaps to elaborate and explain a little bit more clearly for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly for the business community, how it is she is going to address these hundreds of applications which her Department has on file to create new jobs.

She has no money now and I am sure that if the Cabinet was to approve some additional funding for her they might very well be able to create some additional jobs. I have no idea - we don't know because we can't get the information, but we do know there are hundreds of applications on file in her Department. Already in May, one month after the fiscal year, and no money remaining in the Budget for a job creation program, which is rather startling when you consider the unemployment rates that have been increasing over the past year or so.

An Hon. Member: Increasing?

Mr. Simms: Yes, increasing, startling! This past month, 1.7 per cent over last April, this year almost 2 per cent increase.

Mr. Decker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: I say to the Minister of Health, I do hope that you straighten it up because if you don't, this Province is in for some pretty tough years for the next number of years under this Administration. If they do not adopt some proactive measures as opposed to sitting back and cutting and not addressing the major issues that are facing the Province today that is precisely what is going to happen. We are

going to be in for some tough times and I would like my friend the Minister of Municipal Affairs, sometime, if he gets a chance to stand up in this debate for five minutes or ten minutes, I would like him to give me a bit of a report, if he wouldn't mind. A Minister shouldn't get mad like that.

I was fortunate enough to be a judge at a speaking contest over at the east end with four or five schools, and one of my co-judges was one of your great campaign workers and supporters, and we talked about what a nice fellow you were, and I want him to know he can check with him that I echoed his comments, I said you were a nice fellow, so don't be nasty with me. A chap by the name of White, by the way, he is a teacher at St. John Bosco, do you know of whom I am talking about? I guess, you do. Anyway he was a good judge.

Anyway I would like him to sometime rise in the debate, if he would, and tell me if he clarified for the benefit of the people of Central Newfoundland, particularly Grand Falls and Windsor, when he spoke to the Chamber of Commerce last night, did he clarify for the people out there and to the satisfaction of the councillors and others in the area, the mess, did he straighten out the mess that had been created just a few days before by his colleague, the Ministry of Forestry, when he went out and sort of made a farce and a sham out of the public process that the Minister had adopted for amalgamation by saying: 'Oh, this is a fait accompli, it is all over with now.' So, I would like to know if he feels that he satisfactorily got through to the audience and if the public and the

press felt that they were satisfied with his answers and if he clarified that in fact there is no fait accompli, this thing still has a process to go through and it is still up to the Commissioners. It is not up to the Minister of Forestry alone; as much as he wants to join Grand Falls with the Town of Windsor; as much as he is hoping that there may be a political boundary change, provincially speaking, so that Grand Falls and Windsor becomes one District; as much as he would like to run against me in this new political District of Grand Falls - Windsor or Windsor - Grand Falls. I would like him to know that the Minister has told me privately that what the Minister of Forestry said was wrong. You cannot go around saying this is a fait accompli and that amalgamation will happen. You cannot say that because it makes a farce of the whole process.

An Hon. Member: He just said it was a fact.

Mr. Simms: Pardon?

An Hon. Member: He just said it was a fact.

Mr. Simms: He says it again and now it is a fact. After what the Premier said yesterday. He chastised him yesterday. He got his colleague, the Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs, in hot water. He got his colleague, the Minister of Education, in hot water. I say to the Member for Windsor - Buchans, the Minister of Forestry, why does he not be very careful about what he says. Drafts of your speeches you should run by your colleague, the Minister of Finance, who is not known for putting his foot into his mouth,

or anything, and could give you very good advice.

Certainly, his seatmate - geographically speaking - the Member for Exploits, could give him a great deal of advice. But the Government House Leader is the person he should talk to before he makes these kinds of public statements. So I would like some comments on that.

I think it is appropriate that this week is Tourism Week. It is unfortunate that the Minister of Tourism has left but the President of Treasury Board might want to make some comments on it. A very important industry to our Province, without question, employs an awful lot of people in Newfoundland and Labrador, the tourism industry. I do not know if the Government has any alternate plans, but the President of Treasury Board, would be aware, I guess, of some concerns about the potential for a strike among ferryboat workers who would be coming across the Gulf and delivering tourists to our Province during the summer months. There is a lot of concern about a potential for a strike.

If that were to happen, obviously it would be devastating for the tourism industry. I wonder what kind of alternate plans they have, if any, or have they given any thought to it. I am sure they must have discussed it because it would be very disastrous for the economy of the Province, and the Government would have to be concerned about that and have some worries about it. So, he might want to talk about tourism, since this is Tourism Week.

In addition to that, the school trustees at their annual meeting

in Gander over the last couple of days, as the Leader of the Opposition mentioned this morning, or this afternoon, in Question Period, raised some questions about public statements that the school trustees have been making, as well as the school board superintendents. There are two different groups. Both have been saying the same. Basically, they have been saying that what was perceived to have been in that Budget of the Minister of Finance's, six or eight weeks ago or whenever it was now, what was perceived by the public in the way that it was presented, that there was lots of money for education, this was their big priority, much more money for education that was what was perceived in the Budget. Now, it appears, at least if you listen to the people who are in the business, the School Trustees Association, the School Board Superintendents Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, two very large associations, the ones who are mostly, directly associated with education, certainly below the post-secondary level, have all been saying that there is not as much money in the Budget as everybody thought at the beginning.

In fact, there is less in the Budget for schools, particularly those below the post-secondary level. So I would like the President of Treasury Board or somebody to comment on those charges, those allegations by those groups. You cannot just sit there and let the allegations roll off your back, you must defend, you must explain. Now not in the way the Minister of Education did today in Question Period, because we asked a simple question. Well if everything is so hunky-dory and he did such a great job, how come

they are complaining so much.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

At the present time, I am concerned about a number of things that are going on in the House. I am concerned that we have opened the House to the public through the medium of radio. That maybe sometime in the future we will be opening up the House to the television medium as well.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker: I am concerned about a practice that the Opposition seems to have fallen into as typified by the Opposition House Leader. I sat and listened now for about I guess, close to twenty minutes to what he had to say.

An Hon. Member: He said nothing.

Mr. Baker: And I suppose, Mr. Chairman, somebody listening outside, who did not really know what has been going on here for the last while and is not quite following some of the issues mentioned, might be tempted to lend some credence to some of the things that the Opposition House Leader had said. And he makes statements, as the Opposition tends to do sometimes, he makes statements that - all I can say, Mr. Chairman, is because they say them that does not mean that that is the way it is. Let me very

kindly, Mr. Chairman, put it that way. I could give you a lot of examples. In that twenty minutes, I suppose, there must have been dozens and dozens of statements that were made in a matter of fact way by the Opposition House Leader, that were simply not correct. Made in such a way that people listening might assume that they were correct. Now, Mr. Chairman, it would take all of our time on this side and it would take months and months of House sittings to try to straighten out some of the statements.

One statement that I notice they have been making time after time, as if it were a fact, is the unemployment rate keeps going up in this Province. They keep saying that. Now, Mr. Chairman, that is easy to say.

Mr. Simms: We do not keep saying that.

Mr. Baker: A Member of the Opposition can say that, but I wish they would realize that there is the possibility of them being heard by people in the Province. And I would wish that they would realize that they would be then misleading the people in the Province if they were to believe that.

Mr. Chairman, that is not the trend in the Province. It is as simple as that. I know that it is good politics to say that the unemployment rate is going up, and up, and up and it is all your fault. And it is good politics for me to get up here and say when the unemployment rate goes down, well, boy the unemployment rate went down and we want to take credit for it. That is politics. But what are the facts?

An Hon. Member: What are the facts?

Mr. Baker: What are the facts? If you look at the figures for the end of March, all right. Just look at the figures up to the end of March.

Mr. Simms: That is in one month.

Mr. Baker: No, no, I am looking at figures up to the end of March now. Let us compare March 1990 with March 1989, a year ago. That is a logical comparison.

Mr. Baker: The labour force went up by 1.3 per cent.

Mr. Simms: What is the unemployment rate?

Mr. Baker: I will get to that. This is the point. I believe in giving the whole truth here in this particular instance I am talking about, and I am not posturing, and like I say I am not playing politics with it. I am actually stating what happened. The labour force went up by 1.3 per cent in Newfoundland from \$223,000 to \$226,000, okay, 1.3 per cent. The number of people employed in the Province went from 181,000 in March 1989 to 186,000 in March 1990. It is an increase of 5,000, an increase of 2.8 per cent.

The unemployed in March 1989 there were 42,000, in March 1990 there were 41,000 for a drop of 2.4 per cent. Now these are the numbers from Stats Canada Labour Force Survey. These are the numbers. And they indicate from March to March, which is a twelve month period, that in actual fact the unemployment rate had gone down, that there were more people employed. There were actually

fewer people looking for work or unemployed March this year than March last year. Now, Mr. Chairman, I am not saying that I am responsible for that. I am not saying that I, personally, put an extra 5,000 people to work. I am not even saying that Government collectively were responsible for putting these 5,000 people to work. What I am simply saying is that these are the facts; this is the situation, and that is irrefutable. Yet, Opposition Members get up and say all the time, oh, the unemployment rate is going up and up and up. They like to hear themselves talk, I suppose, but a comment like that bears no relation to the facts. Now, Mr. Chairman, that is, again, a charitable and parliamentary way of saying it, it bears no relation to the facts. I suppose one could assume that they have their own facts. Well, Mr. Chairman, that is, I believe, a problem.

Mr. Simms: Our unemployment expert (inaudible) will respond to all of that.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please! Order, please!

The Chair has difficulty hearing what the hon. Member is saying.

Mr. Baker: That, I believe, is a problem. The problem is that statements are made with no foundation in fact, simply as political statements.

Mr. Tobin: Tell us about your cars.

Mr. Simms: All the newcasts carried it, and everything.

Mr. Baker: The Opposition House Leader says all the newcasts carried it. That is the object of

the game.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible).

Mr. Baker: Okay then. If the Opposition House Leader did not mean that, then what he means is that he listens to the radio and then gets into the House and says it without even checking with the sources. We have provided them with more research capabilities than any Opposition in this Province has ever had before, and they can not even dig up the facts. They can not even call Stats Canada and find out. They do not do their research.

Mr. Simms: Oh, you are going to get the real facts.

Mr. Baker: Or, if they do do their research, then the conclusion, Mr. Chairman, is a worse one. So I would prefer to go back and say they just don't do their research, and they prefer to make political statements.

Mr. Chairman, I could go on and on for hours, giving you examples like that. The Opposition House Leader says, for instance, that in the last 19 hours he has asked a lot of questions about Executive Council. I agree. Yes, he did. No problem at all. I will agree he asked dozens and dozens of questions relating to Executive Council and Treasury Board. That is correct. But, then, Mr. Chairman, he goes on to say there were no answers. Now, I will interpret what he means, but my concern is that this is going out over the airwaves, and people are taking it literally. What he actually means is the answers given were not, in his opinion, satisfactory. That is really what he means, but what he says is, 'there were no answers.' Mr.

Chairman, I just want to go on record as agreeing with the Opposition House Leader, that there were dozens and dozens of questions asked about Executive Council and that there were dozens and dozens of answers given about Executive Council.

Mr. Simms: No, there are many outstanding.

Mr. Baker: They may not have been satisfactory to the Opposition House Leader, but that is the name of the game, I suppose.

Mr. Simms: You would agree there were many outstanding, weren't there?

Mr. Baker: There are a couple outstanding that I have taken note of, and I will answer in due course. There are a couple.

Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to make that point, that I believe we have to be more conscious of the kinds of statements we make in the House -

An Hon. Member: Oh, come on now!

Mr. Baker: - especially now that it is all being recorded and could go out over the air.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible) good little boys and girls and try to do better.

Mr. Baker: It is not a matter of being good little girls and boys. I am sorry if I sounded like I was lecturing to Opposition Members. I am sorry. I apologize. I did not mean to.. I am just reminding Members opposite that sometimes it is difficult for somebody listening to disassociate themselves from the games that are being played here, and assume that

the games of politics in the House of Assembly are, in fact, reality, when we all know, Mr. Chairman, after having sat here for a number of years, that the games are not necessarily reality, and that from time to time we have to come back to the facts, the whole truth, the absolute truth, and nothing but the truth. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chairman: The hon. The Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Mr. Chairman, it is really, really difficult to believe that a senior Minister in the Government would stand in his place today and make the statements he has made with respect to the unemployment situation in this Province, the devastating unemployment situation in the Province, and accuse the Opposition of playing games with this very sensitive issue, one of the most important issues ever to hit the Province of Newfoundland, the unemployment situation. And for the Member, a senior Minister in the Government, to stand here today and accuse the Opposition of playing games, when in reality we are doing our duty in trying to impress upon Government how delinquent they have been in job creation in this Province over the last twelve month period, since they took office.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let us talk about reality. The President of Treasury Board says what we are saying has no foundation in fact. Well, I questioned the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations yesterday on the unemployment situation. I asked her if she was aware of the fact that the unemployment rate has risen in the Province 1.7 per cent over the

same time period last year, and that is not only for this month, the month of May - that was for the month of April I believe - it is not only for the month of April, but I have here the unemployment stats almost for the last one year period. Now let's compare. Let's compare the unemployment rate for September of 1988 to September of 1989. For that particular month, the unemployment rate was up 0.9 percentage points. It is not a great deal, but I believe it established a trend right from there. September of 1988 to September of 1989, the unemployment rate rose by 0.9 per cent; October of 1988 to October of 1989, the unemployment rate went up 1.2 percentage points; October of 1988 to October of 1989, it went up 1.2 percentage points; November of 1988 to November of 1989, we are seeing a steady climb in the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate from November of 1988 to November of 1989 still increased, up 1.7 percentage points. Now let's look at December of 1988 to December of 1989. It is hard to believe the jump it took at that particular point in time. December of 1988 to December of 1989, it went up 3.4 percentage points. The Government should be ashamed of itself to have to preside over statistics like this.

In January of 1989 to January of 1990, the unemployment rate went up 1.5 percentage points. In February of 1989 to February of 1990, it went up 1.4. Now March. March is the only relief the Government can look at. That is the only month the Government can look at and say there was some relief from the unemployment rate; it actually went down. It never went down 1 percentage point, but

it went down 0.8 of a percentage point - down in March of 1989 as compared to March of 1990. But again in April, at a time of the year when traditionally we see construction activity pick up in the Province, we see a lot of employers get on the go and start various projects in the Province, one would expect the unemployment rate to go down at that point. But it doesn't, Mr. Chairman, it actually goes up again. It goes up 1.7 percentage points at a time when it should be dropping, when you have construction companies and fish companies and so many companies in the Province starting their activities for that year, when we should see a decrease in the unemployment rate, we actually see an increase in the unemployment rate.

On top of that, Mr. Chairman, as I have mentioned on numerous occasions, the Budget is not doing anything to address the problems that we have. The unemployment rate we have is a horrendous situation, and as a result we are seeing the economy getting worse every single day; we see the number of bankruptcies in the Province increasing every single day. As a matter of fact, I think bankruptcies have gone up by about 140 per cent over the last one year period. Bankruptcies have gone up about 140 per cent, and the economy is in a devastating state in the Province. And that is not just the opinion of the Opposition, that is the opinion of a number of qualified businesspeople in the Province, it is the opinion of the Board of Trade.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: The Minister of Finance is saying no, that is

really not the case. Well, I would refer him, if I could get his attention for just a minute, I would refer him to this little document right here. This is the Economic Outlook of Newfoundland and Labrador, and it was published about six months ago, here in the Province. Let me tell the Minister what the Investment Dealers Association of Canada say about Newfoundland. They issued this about six months ago, in October of 1989, and it was for the previous year. Let me tell the Minister of Finance what the Investment Dealers Association of Canada, which is one of the economic watchdogs of the economy in Canada, had to say for the previous year. They said 'The provincial economy grew by 3.8 per cent in real terms last year, underpinned by a good performance in mining, forestry, construction and the fishing industry.' Now, that was one statement. Listen to the second statement the Investment Dealers Association made: 'New job creation over the past three years produced steady reductions in the unemployment rate for more than 20 per cent in 1985, to 16.4 per cent last year,' which was 1988.

So, Mr. Chairman, what the President of Treasury Board is saying is absolutely false. He is saying that we -

Mr. Matthews: He is a false Member.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Are you telling me that is false?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Well, I am talking about the actual unemployment rate

in Newfoundland and Labrador, and what the increase in unemployment has been over the last one year period. I do not believe the Minister was in the House, but over the last year it has increased steadily. Every single month the unemployment rate has gone up in Newfoundland and Labrador, except for one month. The only bit of relief the Government can point to is the fact that it went down in March of 1990 by 0.8 per cent. The Government, as I have indicated to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, should hang its head in shame, not that the unemployment rate has gone up in Newfoundland, but that they have been one of the main contributors to the unemployment rate going up. The fact that the Government would come in with an employment program worth \$2.9 million and slash an employment program that was worth \$7 million or \$8 million, which had the effect of producing about 3,500 jobs per year in the Province, to come in and slash that program, get rid of it completely, and come in with an employment program that is worth only \$2.9 million, that creates about 500 jobs to 600 jobs per year, the Government, and the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations in particular, should hang their heads in shame to say that they have been one of the main contributors to the unemployment problems we have here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Mr. Chairman, what the President of Treasury Board is saying with regard to the Opposition playing games with unemployment is absolutely and totally false. We have a duty and an obligation to point out to the Government that they have been seriously neglectful; they have been

delinquent in introducing new employment programs. The Budget does virtually nothing to address the unemployment problem.

Mr. Baker: I dealt with your unemployment program one day, do you remember?

Mr. Doyle: Yes.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) that you fellows brought in.

Mr. Matthews: It was much better than what you brought in, because you brought in (inaudible).

Mr. Hewlett: These people could avail of a seasonal economy.

Mr. Doyle: Well, I can assure the Minister that we are doing an in-depth analysis on the Minister's employment program as well. Her \$2.9 million employment program, we are in the process of doing an in-depth analysis on that, and the Minister can expect some very harsh criticism on that when we get through looking at the various people who have been awarded projects under that particular program. So the Minister can expect some criticism on that. But for the Government to say that the Opposition is playing games with this very, very important issue when you have people, incidentally, leaving the Province in droves - I asked the Minister yesterday if she was aware of the out-migration in Newfoundland. I do not know if the Minister has any concern about out-migration or if she considers it to be a real problem.

Mr. Hewlett: Mobility.

Mr. Doyle: I asked her yesterday -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time has elapsed.

Mr. Doyle: - and she was not even aware that there was any out-migration over the last number of months.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations.

Ms Cowan: Thank you very much, Chairperson. I would like to talk for a few minutes about reality, and I would like to talk about reality with a bit of history tied to it - the last seventeen years. That is the reality I am dealing with today.

For seventeen years, the past Government developed an attitude towards employment in this Province that was immoral, as far as I am concerned. They did not care what they did as long as they got people working for ten or fourteen weeks so they could get them off the Social Service registers and get them onto the UI. That is the plain fact of it. They did it for seventeen years. They did nothing to build the economy, they took people and put them into degrading jobs; they did not care what the person did as long as they were working; there was no training aspect to it. You could just do anything. It did not matter how it affected your self-concept. There was the odd person who went out and quite enjoyed what they were doing and did blossom, but what happened at the end of the ten or fourteen week period? Kerplunk! they were left back sitting in their homes without anything to do but draw UI. And they lived with that, smiled upon it and want us to continue it. Well, let me tell you right now that that is not the plan of this Government.

We have vision over here. We do not go on this day by day. The statistics change, and, oh my, we are so pleased because it was our wonderful program. What we are interested in is developing an economy which will support workers, into which workers can go find long-term employment and can have some sense of dignity and respect when they come out of it.

An Hon. Member: Yes? Where? Toronto?

Ms Cowan: It is not something that is done overnight.

An Hon. Member: In Ontario somewhere.

Ms Cowan: Listen, people have gone to Ontario under your Government. Is that something you have just discovered today?

An Hon. Member: Not as many as are going now, and you are (inaudible).

Ms Cowan: Amazing! Not only were they shortsighted when they were in Government, they did not even realize what was going on. They suddenly have realized that people are leaving this Province and seeking work in other parts of Canada. I am amazed. Absolutely amazed! They had a total disrespect for the people of this Province. And when we do bring in a program where we try to assist workers affected by the announced layoffs, for example in Grand Bank, who gets up and asks all sorts of questions but the Member for Grand Bank.

An Hon. Member: Are you afraid of questions, or what?

Ms Cowan: I guess what we have to do, Chairperson, is look after the

people in his District, because he is not prepared to look after them himself. He is questioning whether or not they should even get the money. I don't know, I cannot figure out the attitude on employment at all over there. They want it, they don't want it - strange. Really, really unusual.

And they are talking over there about duty and obligation - duty and obligation as an Opposition. Oh my, how moralistic! How high-sounding. What was their duty and obligation when they were in power? Was it to put people out in degrading jobs, make them feel that they had nothing to offer to society, take them off those jobs at the end of the time, put them on UI, send them home and say, 'We will see you again in a couple of years when you need it again?' Statistics is what they were, not people with human faces. No understanding of what it means to provide employment for people. You have to have a strong, sound economy, and that eventually leads to employment for all your population.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Cowan: Pardon?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Cowan: I am enjoying myself.

I am amazed at what they call reality. Reality is taking a page of statistics, statistics that you can torture to tell you anything, statistics which are affected by all kinds of things which have nothing to do with our Government. It comes to me as a great surprise that they cannot understand that what our Government is doing will, down the road, lead to long-term employment

for people in Newfoundland and Labrador. They want short-term measures that will pop up the statistics, then in a few months they will go down again, and they will want to know why.

An Hon. Member: Then they can look at the other stuff.

Ms Cowan: I have been trying to get clear in my mind, ever since I came into the House and sat here, what their idea of employment is. It certainly is not our idea of what employment is. Perhaps, Chairperson, that is why we are in Government now and they are sitting in the Opposition.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Member for Grand Bank.

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry to interrupt you there. You were deep in thought and I would just like to say to you that the Chairman's reaction tells everything about the speech just given by the Minister of Unemployment and Labour Relations. Let me just say to her that what she has done since she became Minister of Employment, this Government, there is no question, has a deliberate plan and a deliberate plot to get thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians out of this Province, so that the only ones left here will be those with jobs.

Then in four or five years they will go out and say, look at the unemployment rate - but we will have 100,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians working somewhere else in Canada. Let me say to this Minister of Employment and Labour Relations that the statistics read out by the Member for Harbour Main this afternoon: the source is the Statistics

Canada Labour Force Survey, and I say to her again, Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey shows the unemployment rate for the last twelve months increasing all but for one month, and this past month it has gone up 1.7 per cent, and she is the Minister and does not know it. That is not all she does not know.

Let me just say to her about Grand Bank, about taking care of Grand Bank. The people of Grand Bank have seen how this Government is taking care of them. They shut down their cottage hospital and laid off twenty-plus people. They have concurred with the closure of their fish plant which is going to throw 350 people out of work. That is what this Government has done for Grand Bank. The people in Grand Bank know very well how this Government is looking after their interests. I asked her a question today about funding Fishery Products International and she does not know how much money was given to Fishery Products International or when it was given. Now she said there was money given to Fishery Products International. Yes, Mr. Chairman, there was money given. Now the next logical question for a Minister to ask the official who gave her that information was, how much did you give Fishery Products International and when did you give it to them? But she does not know that, because you know what I think, there was a sweetheart deal cooked up between the Premier and Vic Young of Fishery Products International the day that Grand Bank backed him the elevator. That is what happened, a sweetheart deal, announced on 5 January, and this Government does not have any conditions attached to that funding yet, May 15, five months later.

I have asked the Premier, I have asked the Minister of Fisheries, I have asked the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, and neither one of them can tell us about the conditions of funding, or if there was an agreement. Now my information tells me as well that it was Mr. Young who suggested to the Premier that they put the funding in. Mr. Young came over and said, we will take you out of the fat now, Premier.

An Hon. Member: You are against this now, are you?

Mr. Matthews: What I am against, as I said this afternoon, is this Government giving a cent to Fishery Products International if they turned a profit the first quarter of this year. That is what I am against.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Matthews: If they turned a profit the first quarter of this year -

An Hon. Member: We will let the people of Grand Bank know.

Mr. Matthews: The people of Grand Bank know all too well and they do not want you giving FPI any money either if it is for profit.

An Hon. Member: How much was the profit?

Mr. Matthews: One hundred and something thousand dollars, a modest profit.

An Hon. Member: How much did Grand Bank get?

Mr. Matthews: How much did Grand Bank get in their deal? Perhaps the Minister of Finance can tell

us. Was it advanced through the Department of Finance? Did they issue the cheques to the workers in Grand Bank, or was it advanced through the payroll of Fishery Products International? No one in Grand Bank has received cheques from the Department of Finance. Their cheques have consistently come through Fishery Products International which means that this Government advanced money to FPI which should show up somewhere in the records of Fishery Products International. Should it not?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: You can let Grand Bank know what you want. The people of Grand Bank want to know because that is why I am asking the question. The workers want to know.

Dr. Kitchen: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: The Minister of Finance should shut up. He should be quiet. Mr. Chairman, what is going to happen to the unemployment stats for Newfoundland and Labrador once Clyde brings the 30,000 home that he promised last spring? What is going to happen to the unemployment rate in this Province, once Clyde's 30,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians come home? It went up 1.7 per cent last month. Can you imagine when all 30,000 strikes home what is going to happen to them without a job? Where is it going to go then?

The President of Treasury Board tried to beat around that the unemployment rate in this Province did not increase by 1.7 per cent last year.

Mr. Baker: That is not true.

Mr. Matthews: You agree that the interest rate is going up. You get up every day and you talk about it. Every day he says, the interest rate is going up. But at the same time you should agree that the unemployment rate is going up. And the biggest reason the unemployment rate in this Province is going up is because the last two Budgets that this Minister of Finance brought down, and the last one particularly, we have seen an increase in bankruptcies in this Province of 145 per cent since last year, tied directly to this Minister's Budget. And bankruptcies mean people going out of business, and people being thrown out, people thrown out of business and people unemployed. That is the big problem. And this Government has to take the responsibility.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations: it is about time that she read the mandate of her Department, because she does not know yet what the mandate of that Department is. And let me tell her about her Employment Generation Program. She went about this Province, she advertised for The Employment Generation Program, and while she was doing that, before the program was actually supposed to start, this Minister had far more applications in her Department than she had money to pay for; \$2.9 million. There was not one application funded after the program was suppose to kick in because - and you got up the other day and you confessed in this House that there were really no new money spent this fiscal year.

An Hon. Member: Why advertise?

Mr. Matthews: So you advertised, you spent money. And you have

thousands of applications over there that you will never fund, \$2.9 million. A program that used to be \$7.5 million, with \$7.5 million from the private sector, was a \$15 million program. It is a sham. And as the Member for Harbour Main said, we will have more to say about that some other time. So don't go getting up here and try to defend your unemployment rate in this Province, because it is horrendous, it is going to get worse.

Mr. Tobin: It is their fault.

Mr. Matthews: You will not assist small fish companies in this Province. Plants are not going to open this summer. Peoples UI is going to run out. You are going to have other unemployment stats on your doorstep, and you stand up in here and talk about everyone else in Canada except yourself.

An Hon. Member: Even Allan MacEachen.

Mr. Matthews: Yes, she had the face yesterday to get up here and talk about the fourteen week requirement for unemployment insurance.

An Hon. Member: Shameful Minister.

Mr. Matthews: Like I said to her she should call Allan MacEachen that is who got the thing held up in the Senate, it is nobody else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Matthews: The Liberal dominated Senate. That is who got the UI Bill hung up.

An Hon. Member: It is a good Senate.

Mr. Matthews: Yes, it is a good Senate. That is why you want Senate reform, is it? You should talk to your Premier then, he is so hung up about Senate reform, see if he thinks it is a good Senate.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An Hon. Member: So you agree with fourteen weeks do you?

Mr. Matthews: No, I do not agree with it. I told her to call Allan MacEachen and put it to the Senate and then we will be back to ten.

Mr. Decker: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: We will be back to ten I am going to tell the Minister of Health.

Mr. Simms: You do not even know what it is all about.

Mr. Matthews: Now let me just say, Mr. Chairman, in concluding, to that Minister of Employment; who has caused more unemployment in Newfoundland and Labrador than any other Minister of Employment in the history of this Province, this Minister.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Matthews: She has only been in office, what? thirteen or fourteen months. She does not know her programs. She does not know what bills she pays out of her Department. She does not know a thing. And then she made reference today about the Newfoundland Teachers' Association.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Now let me just say to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations that she is going

to find out all about the Newfoundland Teachers' Association and about her being the past President, as well as the Member for Exploits. They will wish they were never presidents of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association within the next six months, Mr. Chairman. They will wish they never heard tell of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. Because again, you see, what we see stems from the Premier all the way down through this Government, where they made promises they could not keep, they did not know how much they were going to cost.

An Hon. Member: School tax.

Mr. Matthews: School tax. Big raises for teachers. Now what is happening? Roger and Pat, what are they doing? Deserting their NTA friends now, they have enough. That is what we have.

Mr. Simms: Income tax.

Mr. Matthews: Everything else.

Mr. Simms: School tuition.

Mr. Matthews: Everything. Whatever there is negative can happen, that is what is going to happen. Knocking the insides out of the school boards. Letter after letter coming in to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Education, 'We cannot carry on as we carried on for the last five or six years because the money you have given us is insufficient.'

An Hon. Member: We are finishing at five o'clock.

Mr. Matthews: Are we finishing at five o'clock?

Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

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

Mr. Barrett:

Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole have considered the matters to them referred, have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion, report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

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

Mr. Baker: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow, and that the House do now adjourn.

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