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Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

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The House met at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker (Lush): Order, please!

Oral Questions

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hospitals and nursing homes were asked by the Minister of Health to submit documentation to his Department by the end of October advising the Department of the implications for their particular institutions of a freeze on their budgets for next year. I wonder if the Minister could tell the House when the Government is going to be in a position to make final decisions and advise the hospital and nursing home boards in this Province of what the final decisions are, in view of the fact that the Government keeps saying no final decisions are yet made?

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

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is quite correct, the hospital boards were asked to make submissions to the Department by the last of October, I think it was, and I am pleased to report that all of them have. They have made some suggestions and shown a sincere effort to contain their budgets for the following year. All of these submissions are now being reviewed by the Department, and myself, and hopefully in the not too distant future we will be prepared to have a presentation to take to Government as to what action we will have to take.

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

Mr. Rideout: Can I ask the Minister if it is his intention to provide this House with the appropriate information and the final decisions on whatever cutbacks may take place, assuming that this House, and I assume it will, will still be in session at that time?

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

Mr. Decker: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the case. It will be done during the Budget Speech, when the Minister of Finance presents the Budget.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, in other words the Minister is saying that those final decisions will not be made known to the public, to this House, to the people of this Province until maybe February or March of the coming fiscal year, or the coming year 1991, when the Budget is brought down? Is that the Government's plan at the moment?

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

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, it would be difficult for me to make the announcements otherwise. We have to work through a budgetary process and final decisions cannot be made until the Budget for the next fiscal year is announced. I can speculate, I can suggest, as hon. members of the Opposition have been doing, but the truth and the facts will not be revealed until the Budget is brought down in March.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that the administration of a number of hospitals and nursing homes in this Province are indicating to their employees that notices of layoffs will have to be given by the 31 December because those institutions have been instructed by his officials to absorb into their 1990-91 budget the cost of severance and other costs associated with layoffs?

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

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, I tabled in this House some time ago the letter which I had written to the hospital administrations and board chairpeople. Basically, the letter was referring to what will happen in the next fiscal year's budget, however, in that letter we did say that if the hospital boards could take some actions which would not have any affect on the delivery of health care to the patients - we were talking in minor terms, something we were doing - then the hospital boards have the privilege of doing that, however, they have been instructed that if they are to make any changes which in any way interferes with the delivery of health to the patient, they cannot do that until they have prior approval from the Department of Health. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition might be a bit confused in some actions which I understand are taken of a very minor nature, of things, which in the judgement of the hospital boards and the judgement of the administrators is not really interfering with the health of the people. And they

most likely would have done them even if we had not been going through this particular exercise which we are going through, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rideout: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, is the Minister really saying to this House now that if there are to be significant cuts in the health care system of this Province in terms of employed personnel that those cuts will not take place - no major layoffs in the health care system of this Province - at least not in any public way until the next Budget is brought before this House? Is that what the Minister is really telling us?

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

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, we are working through a process now, and as I explained to hon. members of the Opposition before, if the Department of Health was like the Department of Transportation or any other department we would not have to involve boards and other people throughout the Province. But when the Department of Health has to make any changes in its budget we do the courtesy to board members in going to them and explaining what we intend to do, what we would like to do, or what we are forced into doing. We are working through that process right now and we are getting extreme co-operation from hospital boards and nursing home boards throughout the Province, Mr. Speaker, and we are working through a process. It is difficult to get up on any one day and say 3:00 tomorrow evening

we are going to do this or do that. We are simply working through a process, and the final absolute total decision cannot be made until the budget is brought down next year.

Now, between now and the time that the Budget is brought down hospital boards might identify some source of saving which in their opinion we could proceed with in this year. So, I would not want to tie their hands totally, Mr. Speaker. If some board comes up with a suggestion, which in the opinion of the Department of Health and of their own opinion, would not be detrimental to the health care system then, of course, we would proceed with it. But I do not see any wholesale major layoffs taking place, even if there are going to be any, and I doubt very much that it is going to be as extensive as the Opposition would have you believe. But if there are any layoffs, I would not see them happening until the new Budget, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Speaker, I must say to the Minister, it is not what this Opposition would have anybody believe, it is the numbers being worked up by the Hospital and Nursing Home Associations and health administrators in this Province. Those are the numbers that we are talking about.

Let me ask the Minister this: in view of the fact that he has now told the House that he has, in fact, received submissions from all the institutions around the Province, can I ask the Minister to confirm that in order to live with the budgetary freeze that the

health care institutions in the St. John's area, the hospitals and nursing homes, in order to live with the freeze projected for next year, if in fact it goes ahead, that those institutions would have to reduce their budgets by \$25 million? That in other words \$25 million of the \$60 million cut would come here in the St. John's region alone and that 200 employees would be affected.

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

Mr. Decker: Mr. Speaker, we are sort of bordering on speculation here because the hospital boards have not received their budget yet. Basically, the Department of Health is going to try to maintain this year's budget next year. If we were to treat everybody equal it would probably be the most unequal thing you could do. You would probably see in certain parts of the Province that no psychiatric services would be available. If we were to treat everybody equal you would probably discover that parts of the Province had no surgical technology available. So we realize that, and looking at the whole system from the perspective of the Department of Health, we have to ensure that every region of this Province has an acceptable standard of health care available.

It might mean that there could be places in the Province where there will be significant cuts compared to last year, but the overall effect will be that we are endeavouring to deliver to the people of the Province, wherever they live, a reasonable measure of health care, the most reasonable we can afford to deliver, considering that we only have somewhere between \$800 million and

\$900 million with which to do that, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Premier. Will the Premier admit that the uncertainty about hospital and nursing home funding for next year and the worry about the possibility raised by the Department of Health of health care institutions having budget freezes are causing grave anxiety and apprehension within the health care institutions? Will the Premier admit that literally thousands of individuals are scared of losing their jobs and are holding back on their spending, thereby compounding the Province's economic problems?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: No, Mr. Speaker, I will not admit that because it is not so. Everybody in this Province is greatly concerned about the economic situation. Everybody in this country is greatly concerned about the economic situation and the ability of the Provincial Governments and the Federal Government to cope with an extremely difficult economic situation.

The Opposition and some other people generally, not the Opposition alone, keep talking about the hospital and medical cuts. There aren't any hospital and health care cuts. We are looking at how we can live within the limitations, the financial limitations that we have, and how we can reduce our spending in all areas of Government activity so as to enable us to cope with an

extremely difficult financial situation.

Now, we have been honest enough with the taxpayers to say up front, bearing in mind hospital and health care take 50 per cent of our budget, we do not see how we will be able to reduce our expenditures next year, to a point that will enable us to live within our financial means, without also impacting on health care and education. So we are trying to find a way of coping with it.

Now, as the Minister of Health said, we cannot make these decisions willy-nilly. It is part of our overall budgetary planning for the next fiscal year, so the absolute final decisions will not be known until the Minister of Finance delivers his Budget in the House.

As soon as you raise the question of possible restraints on Government spending next year, even if you say we will spend as much next year as we are going to spend this year and perhaps even a bit more, even if you say that, people have apprehensions. I understand that. The Government has apprehensions. There is not one person sitting in Cabinet who is not deeply and vitally concerned with what has to be done to cope with our financial situation and the impact it will have, particularly on health care and education as well as other Governmental services.

We are more concerned, I suggest, than the Opposition are, but we also have the responsibility of making sure that we do not in the process bankrupt this Province. The former Government took us close enough to that. We have to act responsibly, bearing in mind

the financial situation in the Province and the overall financial situation in the nation, that was not caused by the former Government - it is a made-in-Canada Federal Government national economic recession that we have to cope with. So we have to act responsibly.

It is easy enough for the Opposition to say, do not cut this, do not cut that, plow more roads, spend more money on everything else. They do not have the responsibility to provide it. We do.

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

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say to the Premier that he and his Government are behaving extremely irresponsibly by putting out to the public and the health care sector the possibility of a budget freeze for next year. That is the only idea they have offered. And when health care administrators react by explaining the ramifications of that, the Premier backs off and says, oh, no no no, you are exaggerating, you are fearmongering.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. Member is on a supplementary.

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Will the Premier provide greater certainty for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, particularly the thousands of health care workers who are scared for their jobs right now?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, no

Government announces its budget four months in advance of the budget day. No Government does that. And we will do our financial planning and announce to the people of this Province our ultimate financial plan when the Minister of Finance stands in the House to deliver his budget.

Now we were frank with the people from the beginning. And we have told them generally the kind of financial situation the Minister of Finance and the Government generally is going to have to deal with when we deliver the budget for this coming fiscal year. We were frank, up front about it, and we invited a variety of proposals from anybody in the Province who has an idea. From the Opposition we have got nothing except you can not do it, you have to spend more money. No ideas as to what an alternative should be, no nothing, just irresponsible proposals to spend more money.

Mr. Speaker, we have asked everybody involved in the provision of public services in this Province, all Departments, including health care and education, to bring forward ideas and the Government would welcome those ideas. We are acting tremendously responsibly and it is obvious that the hon. Members opposite simply do not recognize it, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A final supplementary to the Premier. Now that the Premier realizes because of the feedback from health care institutions that the budget freeze his Minister of Health proposed would result in a \$60 million to \$65 million

shortfall and necessitate the elimination of 1,500 jobs, will he say honestly and directly to the people of the Province that he will abandon the idea of a budget freeze for health care institutions and provide some measure of increases to allow institutions to maintain essential services?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: We will not abandon the course on which we have embarked, Mr. Speaker, because it is the only sensible and responsible course to follow. We do not know and have not yet made a decision. We have asked everybody involved to give us their advice as to what they would have to do if they had no more money than this year. Now in respect of any agency, hospital, department, that may not be the case. In fact, they may have more money, they may indeed have less, depending upon what comes out of the overall assessment. And we will make our decision in due course.

But we have let everybody know a full five or six months in advance that it is going to be an extremely difficult problem to deal with and we want the input from everybody involved. Now it is too bad, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition cannot find it possible to put the interest of the taxpayers of this Province ahead of their own narrow political interests and keep taking the course they do. All they are doing is making it more difficult for the taxpayers to cope with this problem.

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

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

This will be my final supplementary to the Premier. How can the Premier justify causing all the health care institution workers in the Province to continue to worry, perhaps needlessly?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: What about the people in the Department of Labour, the Department of Finance, the Department of Works, Services and Transportation, the Department of Justice, what about all those people?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: So in other words, just go and spend like drunken sailors and have no sense of responsibility for the Province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: Okay. So it is just do it and tell them now. Just do it. Now the proposition, Mr. Speaker, let us answer that proposition, too.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Premier Wells: If we followed that course and came in here and said here is what is going to happen next year, the Opposition would be standing in the House and saying: you did not even have the decency to consult and ask people what they could do to help solve this problem. You think you know everything.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Premier Wells: Well they cannot have it both ways, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Rideout: (Inaudible).

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should bear in mind the significant role that he has in this Province and that kind of impertinent and irresponsible behaviour in the House really does not add to helping to solve the problems of the Province.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Rideout: (Inaudible) go down to the courtroom, boy, what a fool and a sook.

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

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simms: I have a question for the Premier on another topic. The November 10 edition of The Evening Telegram carried a story and a photo of Beaton Tulk presenting a picture to the captain of the M.V. Atlantic Commander -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: - he is well aware of it. Now Mr. Tulk is identified in the photo - this is not important - but as the MHA for Gander. But we all know he is the former Liberal MHA for Fogo, and now a senior civil servant, assistant deputy minister in the Department of Social Services. Now my question to the Premier is this: Since Mr. Tulk is a senior civil servant in the Department of Social Services can the Premier tell us if he is aware of any connection between the work of the

Department of Social Services and the M.V. Atlantic Commander? For example: did the Department provide any financial assistance for the construction of the vessel? Did the Department buy the photograph and frame it and all those kinds of things? Is there any connection at all between the Department of Social Services and the M.V. Atlantic Commander?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, the simple answer is I do not know, I never heard of it. The reliability of it - as it says he is the MHA for Gander - the reliability of the story is immediately put in doubt, to say the least. I will undertake to determine -

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Premier Wells: - whether or not Mr. Tulk is a member of the Atlantic Commander Historic Society or some such thing as that. I have no idea what Mr. Tulk was doing. I have not seen nor heard of him for months. I will check and find out what it is all about. But I must say I have somewhat reduced confidence in the reliability of the story designating the man as the MHA for Gander, when the President of Treasury Board is sitting right next to me, the MHA for Gander.

Mr. Simms: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Simms: I ask the Premier to take a close look at the story and he will see that Mr. Tulk was

representing the Minister of Social Services. That is the point. And, I want to ask, since the captain of the Atlantic Commander actually resides, and is a resident and constituent of the Minister, in his electoral district of Port de Grave -

An Hon. Member: Which Minister?

Mr. Simms: The Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Simms: Is it not obvious now that the Minister really used a senior civil servant to perform a purely political responsibility. If that is so, and if that is obvious, if the Premier laughs it off that is fine, but I am asking him seriously, does he not think that is an abuse, overuse, and misuse of the senior civil service?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. They are really at the bottom of the barrel now.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Premier Wells: I have no idea how this arose but I will undertake to check it and see how it arose, and see why a Minister might ask a deputy, or an assistant deputy, to stand in for him. I have done that on a number of occasions myself. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I will find out what it is all about, and I will confirm to the House who the real Member for Gander is and what this was all about.

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

Mr. Simms: Mr. Speaker, the Premier may find it amusing and continue to laugh it off but from my perspective it is a misuse of a senior public servant to perform a political duty, that is my point. Therefore, since the Premier has already publicly admonished this Minister in the past for interfering in the public service, if you will recall, can I ask the Premier if he will now take that Minister, and Mr. Tulk, out in the backyard somewhere, out in the woodshed, give him a good tongue-lashing, or at the very least give him a real good darn licking, because that is what he deserves. Will he do that?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Premier a question in the House about amalgamation and he said that Cabinet would not be forcing amalgamation on municipalities but the House of Assembly may be asked to do so. I ask the Premier if he would agree that whether it is Cabinet or the House, it is still forced amalgamation?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Maybe the hon. Member does not know it, but this House, within its constitutional jurisdiction, is the supreme law of the land. When you are going to do something, when you are going to take an action that may be against the expressed wishes of a group of people, particularly a significant group in a municipality, we, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, believe that it is wrong to hide in the secrecy of the Cabinet room and hide away from the public, and make these kinds of decisions that

are of significance. If it is right that it should be done it is wrong to hide away in that room and not bring it before this public and lay it out and justify to this House, representing the people of the Province, the basis for it.

An Hon. Member: It is still force (inaudible).

Premier Wells: Well, of course, it is. Every law we pass enforces its provisions against the people of this Province and requires all of the people to comply. Maybe the hon. member does not understand what statutes really are.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, the Premier is somewhat difficult to understand because every day he has a different story.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, let me ask the Premier, then, based on what he said on August 6, 1989 - the Premier said that when all the information from public hearings has been gathered, if communities are not agreeable to amalgamation and cannot be persuaded to amalgamate, then there will not be amalgamation - how does he square that commitment with what he said today?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: All I will do, Mr. Speaker, is go back and get every comment I have ever made in the House and outside, where I have spelled it out time and time and time again, and everybody knows and remembers that. It is exactly

what I said yesterday, it is exactly what I said several months ago, and several months before that. I have no trouble with the consistency of the position, it has been so from the beginning, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, we have copies of what the Premier has said. Let me say to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, that when he spoke to a group of people on the West Coast of the Province, in his own District as a matter of fact, he said, 'We live in a democracy, so amalgamation is not going to be forced on anyone who does not want it.' Now let me ask the Premier, will he not cause amalgamation to be forced and let democracy work, or is he going to admit that democracy has failed and amalgamation will be forced? What is it? Come clean.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Mr. Speaker, I am going to take the position, not what the hon. member reads from some newspaper report.

Mr. Tobin: Oh, you think they are wrong too, do you?

Premier Wells: Well, look, newspapers write about one-fifth of what people say. And if they do not write it all, that is okay. I understand they have limited column or space. Yesterday I answered questions for the media for fifteen minutes on abortion. Last night, on the news, I saw twenty seconds.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Premier Wells: I understand the

limitations of the media, but they sure did not get my full position out on the question I can tell you that. But I understand they have limitations and they work within those limitations. So if the hon. member wants to hold me to what I said, quote fully what I said, not a reserved excerpt, not a restrained and partial statement of the position:

Mr. Speaker, everybody in this House, you, Your Honour, perhaps in particular, will remember my standing in this House on a number of occasions and stating the position quite clearly and there were howls from the Opposition then. They howled then and they are howling now, but they are howling for a different reason. They have to be consistent. If they howled about that position then, why are they denying that it was said. There is little inconsistency there.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, if the newspapers are wrong, what about his letters to a council which say, 'I assure you that if the majority of residents of your town are opposed to being amalgamated with any surrounding municipality, then there are no plans to force the issue.' Is that the news media, Mr. Premier?

Mr. Simms: That is his own letter.

Mr. Matthews: That is your letter. You have it signed.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: I would like to have the letter. Because, you see, I don't see any inconsistency with it. Just remember now what

the hon. Member read. And in respect of any particular municipality there may not be any plans to force the issue. There are no plans to force the issue in respect to that municipality, and I have no idea which one it was.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Premier Wells: I can only say that that is the truth. There are no plans to enforce the issue.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation. In last year's Budget some \$4 million was announced for design for a new ferry with icebreaking capabilities for the Fogo Island run. Has the design work for that boat now been completed?

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

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, the amount that was announced in the Budget for the new ferry for Fogo Island - the plans are proceeding according to schedule. I might say to the Member that the Ferry Committee on Fogo Island are quite happy with the situation, the operation of the ferry down there, the one they have, and they are looking forward with great anticipation to when they get the new icebreaking ferry. As a matter of fact, I have a letter here from Wayne Cull, the Chairman of the Fogo Island Development Association. He says: we

sincerely thank you for your understanding and co-operation in making the Fogo Island ferry service better and meeting the demands of the area. And that is since we made the changes there.

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. the Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Mr. Speaker, my question was, was the design work being completed? I did not get an answer, so I will ask the Minister, is the design work completed? And, furthermore, in view of announced budgetary cutbacks and freezes, is it the intention of your Department to continue the construction of the vessel in the next fiscal year?

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

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, yes. And I would assume we will be carrying on, the thing is in progress.

Mr. Speaker: Question Period has expired.

Answers to Questions for which Notice has been Given

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

Mr. Gilbert: Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Member for Menihek asked me a question concerning the closure of the Wabush motor registration office. He asked about the projected savings: salaries \$63,000; operational

costs \$20,000 for a total of \$83,000. I will table this.

Petitions

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

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to present a petition of Memorial University students. The prayer of the petition is: Your petitioners urge the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to reverse its change of policy and continue to permit social assistance recipients to retain a substantial portion of maintenance and child support payments as well as regular social assistance.

Mr. Speaker, I received a letter from a single mother who is attending the Memorial University Grenfell College campus. The letter is as follows: 'So, this is a luxury. At least I am told that student life is a breeze. If this is true then I must be standing downwind of the outhouse.

It all began innocently enough. The Wells Government announced an increase in provincial grants to married students and single parents, but I am old and wise enough to know better.

First it was Mr. Efford who decided to cut social services allowances to those receiving child maintenance payments. Then Mr. Warren decides to enforce a hidden policy that cuts grants to students enrolled with less than four courses. So much for progressive governments.

What is next gentlemen? Would you like to have my first-born child

as ransom? You seem to target women and children when you need that little extra to fill the coffer. There must be a research project hidden somewhere to discover a way to extract blood from turnips. Perhaps you would like me to learn a foreign language and carry' -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

I just want to remind hon. members that there are too many conversations going on now and the Chair is having great difficulty following the petition.

The hon. the Member for Humber East.

Ms. Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 'Perhaps you would like me to learn a foreign language and carry a foreign passport. Would I be eligible then for the benefits that are supposedly available to Canadian citizens? Yours truly, Colleen R. French.

Mr. Speaker, last week in the House of Assembly during Question Period and during discussion of a similar petition the Premier promised that he would meet representatives of the Single Mothers Against Poverty. Friday morning the staff at that organization got a message on their recording machine indicating that the Premier and the Minister of Social Services would meet with their representatives Tuesday afternoon at 3:00. They went to the Premier's office on the eighth floor of this building only to be told that the Premier did not know anything about such a meeting. Now I would like to press the Premier to honour his commitment and have the meeting with representatives of Single Mothers Against Poverty, because perhaps

hearing from them directly face to face he may gain some appreciation of their plight.

The Premier is excusing this regressive policy change as being fair. I say to him, there is nothing fair, consistent or liberal, small 'l' liberal certainly, about this change. It has hurt thousands of individuals, single mothers and children, in the Province and there is nothing equal about it. It is penalizing children of social assistance recipients who separate or divorce. Children of parents on social assistance can benefit from the fathers earnings because those earnings are treated as allowable income. If the father separates they cannot benefit because now, illegally, the Department of Social Services is treating child support paid by an absent father out of his job earnings as non-allowable income. This has resulted in a drop of income of up to \$115 a month.

Furthermore, the policy destroys the incentive for single mothers to seek child support and it removes all the responsibility from absent fathers to contribute to the support of their children. Terribly regressive, no defense. And I am hoping that if the Premier talks one on one with single mothers affected that he may begin to see that this change cannot be contained in his neat little dogmatic ideological box of fairness and balance.

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

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Efford: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This gentleman can speak for himself anytime, anywhere.

Make no mistake about that.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of comments about the petition, again, that the hon. Member for Humber East is still presenting to the House of Assembly, still out knocking on doors, still telephoning in the nighttime trying to drum up a few supporters to sign a petition. I suspect she has just about everybody now driven to their wits end in order to get the names on the petitions.

One thing I will make clear. I did meet with the single Moms against poverty, the single parents last week. The hon. Member should not do it because after I finished meeting with them, she met with them in the corridor, and I happened to pass by while she was trying to get some information from them about the meeting we had held.

In fact it was only yesterday I talked again with the people involved in the association, we will meet anytime they wish to meet. The Premier has agreed, at any time, night or day that they wish to meet and we have -

Ms Verge: (Inaudible).

Mr. Efford: No, you have your information wrong again. You have your information wrong as you always do. You are trying to play political football with something that is not even an issue, it is just that you want to try to enhance your name politically. Somebody mentioned to me in the foyer yesterday that your name is continually in the news, and it is not because you believe in a particular cause, it is just that you are trying to promote your own political image.

It is as I said before, Mr. Speaker, if I had heard one Member of the Opposition get up sometime over the last eighteen months and speak about the other single parents in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, who are not receiving this amount of money and they should receive more, I would probably feel more supportive of what the hon. Member for Humber East is saying.

Did you attend the New Beginnings graduation of thirty-two single parents on Monday past of this week, where thirty-two single parents attended a training programme and fourteen of the thirty-two are no longer on social assistance, but now have full-time permanent jobs?

That is the type of programmes that this Government and this Administration is trying to put forward for single parents, to get them away from dependence on social assistance, get them into the work force and get them to become independent. You can speak all the political rhetoric you please and you can do it 'til doomsday. The new initiatives which we are going to give the single parents are what is best for the individuals and not what is best for the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak to this petition. Let me say to the Minister that if his assistant deputy minister, Mr. Tulk, was doing the work of the Department rather than delivering pictures on his behalf to the districts, this might not necessarily happen. That is what

is going on here Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Verge: He was not qualified for the job in the first place.

Mr. Tobin: If the assistant deputy minister of Social Services responsible for child welfare was doing the work of the Department instead of delivering pictures for you, it may not happen. That is what is going on in the Department of Social Services.

Let us not lose sight of what has happened. Whether it was thirty-two or 102 or 1,000 single parents went to work, that is one issue. That has nothing to do with what has taken place in the cutbacks. What has happened is, the Department of Social Services has changed maintenance payments from allowable income to non-allowable income.

It is not that they have done anything in terms of people making more money or less money, it is, they have made maintenance payments that were always allowable income now non-allowable income, so if a person made up to a certain amount, they were - not as the Premier said one day, if someone gets \$2,000 maintenance payments, they should not get social assistance.

Under the system which was in place they would not get social assistance, nor if they made a \$1,000 they would not get social assistance, it depended on how much money they made and if someone got one hundred dollars a month, that was considered non-allowable income and would not be deducted from the amount they got from social assistance.

So that is what has taken place, the Minister, and the Department

have changed the maintenance payments from allowable income to non-allowable income and that is done as part of the cutbacks of this Government. This Government has cutback on the most vulnerable people in our society. They have attacked the single parents under the maintenance program which was always in place and was -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, it was always considered allowable income, always considered allowable income and this Minister here is the person who changed it from allowable income to non-allowable income, never before, never before was it called non-allowable income.

Mr. Speaker, he can show us all that he likes, everything that the former Minister said we agree with and support, but that has nothing to do, nothing to do with changing it from allowable income to non-allowable income, that is what did it. You are the Minister who will go down in history as being the person who attacked the single mothers of this Province, the most vulnerable people in our society. Also, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education, who is not here, who attacked the sick children in the hospitals by taking away teachers from them. That is what is taking place in this Province. When the Minister of Finance, and this Government, have to balance their books on the backs of single mothers in this Province I think we live in a desperate society, created by the incompetence of the Minister of Finance. He is incompetent beyond any doubt. He stood in this House and predicted a surplus, but he now comes back crying with a \$120 million deficit and asks the single mothers and

the fatherless children in this Province to pay the debts. That is what is taking place, and the Minister of Social Services stood by and supported it, and let it happen. That is what has taken place as it relates to these maintenance payments, and the program that was there. The Minister of Social Services carried it further than that. He did not necessarily stop in his Department by attacking the single mothers and the young children.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: If the Member for St. John's South has some contribution to make let him stand up and make it, and if he is not going to stand up and make it, let him stay quiet, because this issue is too big for you, Sir, to make fun at, or poke fun at.

Mr. Murphy: It is a lot of foolishness.

Mr. Tobin: It is not foolish, Mr. Speaker. The single mothers in this Province today need assistance, and they need someone to support them. If the Member for St. John's South thinks it is foolish why did he not go down in the lobby of Confederation Building last week and tell them it was foolish. It is sensible, serious stuff, that is what it is. It is serious, Mr. Speaker, when the people are getting their social assistance cheques cut. I do not think it is foolish and I think the Member should be ashamed of himself to suggest that it is.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Tobin: When I was Minister of Social Services it was never changed from allowable income to non-allowable income, nor was

there a Minister with a conscience, whether it be in Social Services or Finance, that ever changed it from allowable to non-allowable income. Never before in history have vulnerable people been attacked like they have been by this Minister and this Government.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Mr. Tobin: We have talked about a lot of things you have cut back.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's time is up.

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

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

I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise and speak to a petition signed by residents of Labrador City and Wabush concerning the proposed health care cuts. The prayer of the petition is: it is the petition of the undersigned residents of Wabush and Labrador City that we protest the proposal of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to cut back the funding of the Salvation Army Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital in 1991-92. Your petitioners urge the Government to reconsider this proposal which will have the effect of reducing the level of health care service in our communities. The petition is signed by 282 people who are very concerned about these cuts that have to be made in the Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital in Western Labrador. They have to be made because the Minister of Health suggested to them in meetings that they would have to operate the hospital at a 12 per

cent reduction in money of what they had last year. They were instructed to do up a proposed budget for next year on what effect this 12 per cent cut, or freeze, would have on the operation of the hospital in Western Labrador. If they were to go ahead, indeed, and have to operate this hospital with these proposed cuts it would have drastic effects on the delivery and the quality of health care in Western Labrador. They would have to cut approximately \$780,000 from their budget. That would be approximately 12 per cent. These are figures compiled by the Board of Directors of the Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital. The effect this would have on the employment level, if you will, in the hospital, would be twelve to thirteen people laid off and while that is a concern of mine and is, I am sure, a concern of those twelve or thirteen people who may lose their jobs, it is a direct concern of theirs and it does cause stress and anxiety with these individuals who do not need any more stress and anxiety in the particular roles they fill in delivering health care to patients.

The Board of Directors have suggested that if they have to live with these cuts, if they have to live with this freeze in health care in Western Labrador, they would have to cut approximately 51 per cent of the proposed cuts, \$781,000, that they would take it out of non-patient care areas, and this would be in engineering, environmental services, nursing administration and dietary. They would save approximately \$418,000 there if they had to go through with this cut and, of course, that is going to lower the quality of health care in Western Labrador.

In the patient care areas they feel they would have to cut about \$390,000, and they feel this would cause the most damage, if you will, to the quality of health care in Western Labrador. Because in this area they feel that they would have to shutdown beds in the hospitals - eight beds would have to close - and they would cut down on the elective surgery being performed.

Now the problem with this, of course, if we do cut back on elective surgery in the hospital in Labrador West, is it could have a devastating effect on the actual quality of health care in Labrador West. Because of that cutback in elective surgery, we could lose our one single surgeon we now presently have. Of course, that would be devastating to an area such as Labrador West, to lose the only surgeon we have. And he is suggesting that he may leave if there are cutbacks, because he does not have the personal fulfillment or development opportunities if the surgery has to be cut back by, I believe, a 30 per cent reduction.

Of course, I am not even sure how effective this is going to be, and neither are the hospital administrators, in being cost effective. Because if you cannot do the surgery in Labrador West they will have to fly the air ambulance in, and it would probably cost \$5,000 or \$6,000 a trip, I would suspect, to charter the air ambulance flight in and out for people who have to come in.

But forgetting the cost effectiveness, it is the anxiety that that is causing the people, the residents of Western Labrador if there is not a surgeon. The largest industrial complex in this

Province is in Western Labrador. Quite often, because of the nature of the employment out there, working around heavy equipment and moving machinery, we do have industrial accidents. The fact that we would not have a surgeon in the area -

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

Mr. A. Snow: Could I just have one second, by leave, to clue up?

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member have leave?

Some Hon. Members: By leave.

Mr. Speaker: By leave.

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

That factor alone, I would hope, would influence this particular Government to reconsider not having the Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital implement these cuts, because it would have a drastic effect on the delivery of health care in Labrador West. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Ms Verge: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to support the petition so well presented by the Member for Menihek. There is terrible uncertainty among people in health care institutions and other citizens of the Province about what is going to happen in hospitals and nursing homes. The uncertainty may well be much worse than the reality, but it is only the Government that can dispel

the uncertainty by giving some greater certainty by laying out some parameters that will guide them in the preparation of next year's Budget.

All that people in the health care institutions and others have to go by now is the communications from the Minister of Health and his officials to the health care institutions' administrators. The Minister of Health has asked all of them to provide statements of the impact on their operations of a Budget freeze. He directed that those impact statements be provided by October 31. He and his officials have had those assessments for about three weeks now, and surely the Government is in a position to say, Sorry, there is no way that we can implement a freeze on the operating budgets of nursing homes and hospitals, the consequences the administrators have laid out for us are unacceptable. We as a Government, as a Government claiming to be liberal, just could not live with the devastating implications of budget freezes for the health care institutions. No, we cannot give you absolute decisions about funding for next year, final budget decisions have to wait until the winter, when we have all the information about revenue and spending for all Departments. But at least we can let you know that we are not going to proceed with freezing health care institution budgets. There will be reasonable increases. You will be able to carry on your essential services.

That kind of clarification would relieve much of the apprehension and fear. And, as Members opposite should appreciate, when workers are scared of losing their jobs there is a terribly negative impact on their work: morale

suffers, the quality of work goes down, people become preoccupied with worrying about their own futures, people look elsewhere for employment. Right now in this Province junior health care workers - physicians, nurses, graduating nurses - are applying for jobs outside the Province. Maybe there is no need for that. But all they have to go by is what the Minister of Health has told the hospital and nursing home administrators.

And in this climate of uncertainty and worry and apprehension, people are holding back on spending. We just heard a report of the retail trade leading up to Christmas. Spending is way down. So the economy is being hurt needlessly. I appeal to the Minister of Health and the Premier and the President of Treasury Board, who seems to be a compassionate individual, to lay out some parameters for people, give them some greater certainty, rule out, for heaven's sake, the spectre of freezes of health care institution operating budgets that would result in a \$60 million to \$65 million shortfall and necessitate the elimination of about 1,500 jobs.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to take time for a couple of comments concerning the petition and concerning, generally, what is happening with this particular issue.

If I understand the Members opposite correctly what they are saying is that at this point in time Government should end all the uncertainty that is out there. I am not sure I understand how they

suggest we do that. Perhaps that we make our decisions now and announce them. Maybe that is a way out. That would certainly do away with the uncertainty. Or that we make a decision that there will be no budget freezes at all, which is something that at this point in time is impossible to do. So I do not know specifically what solution they are suggesting.

Let me deal with both the alternatives. First of all, at this point in time saying that there is going to be no frozen budget, that we are not in a time of restraint, that we do not need restraint at this point in time and that we will go ahead the way we have been going, now that would be fine if at some point two or three months down the road somebody were to tell us that they were going to give us an extra couple of hundred million dollars. That would be very fine. However, we suspect that is not going to happen. Because of that we have to be honest and straightforward about the whole process and indicate that we are going through difficult times, and that is the decision we have made.

Now we also made a second decision which causes problems for the Opposition because they say it creates uncertainty, and that second decision was that we would go to the institutions and go to the unions and so on, the labour movement, lay out the problem for them, and try to elicit suggestions from them to, first of all, indicate what effect a frozen budget would have on each system, and to elicit from them suggestions as to ways in which we can cope with the financial crisis that we are in.

This, I believe, is in the spirit

of openness and co-operation and honesty and consultation, and that is why we chose to do it this way. If we were to simply to make the decisions ourselves we would risk two things, we would risk the wrath of the Opposition, and we are not particularly afraid of that, I might add, but we would risk the wrath of the Opposition -

Mr. Simms: That is why you are bringing in closure all (inaudible).

Mr. Baker: - because they would then say, you know, you are not consulting, you are being dictatorial, you are a bunch of dictators, making decisions yourselves, not consulting with the unions, not consulting with the hospital boards, not consulting with the hospital administrators, not consulting, but making all the decisions yourself. So that is one thing to be faced with.

But, Mr. Speaker, something far worse than that we would be faced with if we did that, and that is the possibility, the very real possibility we would make serious errors. Because we do not know the systems like the people out there who are in the systems. That is the real danger. So we are going through this process.

I know there is some uncertainty out there, and I understand exactly what the members of the Opposition are saying. There is some uncertainty out there. But I would suggest to the Opposition that rather than trying to feed on that uncertainty and rather than urge it along, and rather than to continually make exaggerated statements and so on, rather than do that it would be a bit more responsible if they were to

explain to the people who come to them that this is a process, that decisions are going to be made. And when the decisions are made they will be announced, and if at that point in time there are some disastrous things having to be done to the health care system or the educational system or any other system we have, then that point in time is the point to come to Government and say, as an Opposition, Look, you did not do this properly, here is something you should have done instead. Or, indeed, come up with your suggestions now. I think that is a far more responsible way, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the problem than spreading fear, feeding on rumours, and feeding on the uncertainty that is out there in the systems.

Orders of the Day

Mr. Baker: Motion 4, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Motion 4.

I would like to tell hon. members that before we do Motion 4 the procedure is we vote on it, then the House Leader or somebody will move that we move into Committee. The first procedure is to vote on the closure. I can read part of the Motion so that hon. members will know what we are voting on: 'To move, pursuant to Standing Order 50, that the debate or further consideration on Motion No. 3, respecting certain Resolutions for the granting of Supplementary Supply to Her Majesty (Bill No. 6) standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance be now voted upon', and that means, of course, we are into the closure debate.

All those people in favour of the Motion, please say "Aye"?

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Mr. Speaker: Those against "Nay".

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: Carried.

Mr. Baker: Motion 3, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The motion is that I do now leave the Chair for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of 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!

Bill No. 66.

Mr. Tobin: We are debating the gag order, are we?

Mr. Simms: Is the Government House Leader going to explain his reason invoking for closure, or what?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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

Bill No. 66.

Mr. Simms: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Question.
Question.

Mr. Chairman: Question.

Mr. Simms: No, I am raising a point of order.

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

Mr. Simms: This is the weirdest kind of experience I have ever seen in this Legislature. It is bad enough to be bringing in closure, Mr. Chairman, but here you have a Government invoking closure and nobody from the Government side, particularly the Minister, or the Government Leader in the House, who proposed the motion, is even prepared to stand and explain why.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Well, this is the appropriate time to do it. Surely the Government House Leader or the Premier or somebody is going to get up and attack us and explain why they are bringing in closure, are they not? I mean this is really unusual. Strange. Pretty strange.

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

Mr. Baker: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman, I believe, in two separate speeches in the last few days, there were two ten minute segments where I explained in great detail the reason for introducing the closure motion. I pointed out, at that point in time, to members of the House that we have a number of pieces of legislation that we need to get through.

Mr. Simms: Is this to the point of order now?

Mr. Baker: Yes, this is to the point of order. I am just

explaining what I had said to the point of order.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible) time.

Mr. Baker: Well, I am answering your point of order by pointing out, Mr. Chairman, that I explained in great detail in the last few days, there was one ten minute segment, and another ten minute segment, where I explained in great detail the reason for closure. I was sort of outlying to Your Honour what I had said so you could make a judgement on the point of order. I had simply said that I had many indications, indications in newspapers, and in interviews that the Leader of the Opposition did, that it was the intent of the Opposition to continue and hold up all money items, I believe he referred to. This is precisely what we are on now, and, Mr. Chairman, as you know, according to the rules of the House, in Committee stage the Opposition can keep this going for three months, or three years. There is no way to close it up other than to use the proper parliamentary procedure of closure. So, Mr. Chairman, I took twenty minutes to explain in great detail why it was that closure was being introduced, and I thought it would probably be unnecessary at this point, in the beginning. I may a little later on get up and make some comments.

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

Mr. Simms: I think we can agree in advance that it is not really a true point of order but I think we will use the occasion, or an opportunity of a point of order to try to somehow -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: But like the Premier always says, we are being frank and open with the Chairman so he will not have to wrestle with this question. I want to repeat, Mr. Chairman, that I was not in the House on Tuesday, or whenever it was the Minister spoke. I certainly, for one, would like to hear it, and I am sure there are others who were not in the House. I certainly did not see anything reported to any great extent in the news media, and I think the public have a right to know. I think the Chairman almost agrees with me. I cannot tell, but by his smile, you would almost be led to believe that. Mr. Chairman, in all seriousness, here we have a situation where the Government is invoking closure for an unprecedented third time in the last six or seven months, unprecedented in our history, in our Legislature. Here you have the Government, the Leader of the Government, or anybody from the Government, who is not even prepared to get up and explain at the outset of this draconian measure and this debate, to explain once again to the public why they are making this move after two or three days at the maximum, of debate on a \$30 million supply bill. Now, that is absolutely outrageous as far as I am concerned, Mr. Chairman. I think the Government House Leader should reconsider. I think he owes it to the public, to the people of the Province, to at least introduce the debate and explain his reasoning, even if he has to repeat what he said two or three days ago, why we are proceeding in this particular manner. It is unbelievable.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The Chair is ready to rule on the point of order. The Committee is considering Bill 66 and all members have the opportunity to rise and speak whenever they want to for twenty minutes. They can speak only once, so the Chair is not going to provoke or ask anybody to speak. It is entirely up to hon. members if they want to speak on the issue.

There is no point of order.

Mr. Simms: Nobody is going to speak in the debate on closure, can you believe that?

Mr. Chairman: Are we ready for the question?

Mr. Simms: I suspect we will provoke them sometime. The Premier is sitting around hoping to attack the Leader of the Opposition, no doubt.

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

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, obviously, and in all conscience, we cannot let this particular Bill, under the rules of closure now I remind the Committee, to pass just yet. I agree with my colleague for Grand Falls. I thought it would have been appropriate that the Government House Leader, at least, or some Minister speaking on behalf of the Government, would have attempted to explain to the House why it is that after, I believe, it is three days, I believe it was last Thursday or so that we started debate on this particular Bill, three or four days anyway, why it is that after three or four days the Government finds it necessary for the third time in six months, finds it necessary for the second time in two weeks, to invoke

closure, to cut off debate, to force members to finish debating a public bill, a bill that will enable the Government to spend an additional \$30 million of taxpayers money? Now, why is it that on the last two money bills we have attempted, not to an unusual length of time in my view, I mean the Loan Bill was \$325 million and we debated it for four, five, or six days. That is not an unusual length of time in my view. This particular Bill calls for an additional expenditure of something in excess of \$30 million and to debate it for three, four, or five days is not an unusual length of time, in my view.

But why would we do that, Mr. Chairman? Well Mr. Chairman, the fact of the matter is, and everybody in this Province knows, that this Government in its March budget projected a \$10 million surplus. And then by September or October of this year that \$10 million surplus had totally disappeared and become a \$120 million deficit.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Well, it begs the question. Has it really disappeared? And Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Finance in particular had been very tight-lipped on two money bills now in providing this House with any up to date financial information on the financial affairs of the Province. The finance critic for the official Opposition and a number of us from time to time have asked the Minister pointed direct questions about his revenue expectations for the rest of this year, the balance of this fiscal year. We have asked pointed direct questions

about the expenditure expectations for the rest of this fiscal year, where the Minister expects to be above or below his most revised projections. Because in order to be able to tell this House and the people of this Province that the Government was facing \$120 million deficit, Mr. Chairman, the Minister must have had some revised projections. He had to. Other than that he just pulled them out of a hat, and I would not assume that the Minister did that. I would assume there were revised projections provided by his officials.

But yet, Mr. Chairman, day after day in debate and in Question Period we ask for that information but we never get it in any detail. The Minister will throw out a bit of information every now and then that Provincial revenue might be down as much as \$30 million, Provincial expenditure is up a little bit over what it is estimated. What is it? And that is why we have been using, Mr. Chairman, the two money bills that have been before this House, to try to elicit from the Minister some appropriate and up to date as possible information.

But the Minister is stonewalling. He will not do it. He says the next lot of information I am going to give you is when the fiscal year is over or when we bring in a new Budget. Now, Mr. Speaker, for a Province whose financial affairs turned around so quickly from a \$10 million surplus to a \$120 million deficit projected, I say that is not good enough for the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance should have been, particularly during the debate on those two loan bills, more forthcoming in providing up to date fiscal information as best he

could, realizing that at the best of times they are guesstimates, they are estimates, they can not be definitive, we know that, we understand that. But be forthcoming enough to provide as best he could the most up to date information that he could to the House.

Now Mr. Speaker if that were to be done we would still take what we consider to be a reasonable amount of time to debate a money bill. No money bill, in my experience, has gone through the House just on a - very seldom will you see it go through in a one day sitting. Very seldom. You might take two or three or four days on a money bill. This is serious business. But if we had gotten some information then I think we could have felt comfortable in allowing those money bills to go through. But, Mr. Chairman, no, the Government's attitude is to stonewall, to give a little bit of information every now and then. You might get the Minister out of his seat, or the President of Treasury Board out of his seat, over the course of a three or four day debate, once or twice, for two ten minute sessions. That has been about the norm with this Government and those particular Ministers over the last number of weeks, Mr. Chairman.

And we say that that is just not good enough. The people deserve better than that. And we have a responsibility to try to elicit from the Ministry the best information that they now have on the fiscal position of the Province. But no, that has not worked. So here we are again, Mr. Chairman, for the second time in two weeks in this House facing a closure motion.

I believe I told the House during the last time I spoke on a closure debate that it was, as best as I could ascertain from having researched the records of the House, that closure was used in this legislature from 1949 up until the time this Government took over, I believe it was on three occasions. Once by the Smallwood Government and twice by the Peckford Government. Three occasions, from 1949 to 1989.

This Government used it three times in a six-month period and twice now in two weeks for a total of four times this Government has used closure in the last eighteen months.

Mr. Chairman, it is unprecedented, and you cannot just slough it off because of an obstructionist Opposition; how can you call four or five days on a money Bill, obstruction, Mr. Chairman, with the state of our Budget as it is today, with the state of our fiscal affairs as it is today, how can you call four or five days obstruction? Mr. Chairman, how can you call it obstruction when those money Bills have been on the Order Paper since last May, I believe, how can you call it obstruction when a lot of other pieces of legislation have not even been tested on the floor of the House and the Government is saying we have to use closure to get off those, because we have to get on to others.

There are many pieces of legislation on the Order Paper that have gone through committee, that have gone through the committee system unanimously, as far as I know, many pieces of legislation, and in the ordinary course of events that legislation, I suspect, will go through the

whole House relatively smoothly, I would think so, I do not have any reason to think otherwise.

If it went through committee without any great hassle, with consensus or unanimity, then one might expect that with the odd exception, or the odd observation that legislation would flow through this House relatively smoothly, I would expect that.

But, Mr. Chairman, there are two or three other pieces of legislation that is bad legislation which has to be debated thoroughly, and it is the responsibility of those of us on this side of the House; certainly, we take it as our responsibility as the official Opposition to point out bad legislation, and the people of this Province spoke loud and clear on the Crown Lands Act, for example, and that has to be reiterated in this House now, when that Bill comes before this House, because we have a majority and a minority report from that particular committee.

The people of this Province have expressed grave reservations on the Regional Services Board Bill, and we have a responsibility to make sure that is debated thoroughly. I believe there might be one other - oh yes, the Ombudsman, Mr. Chairman-

An Hon. Member: There is no doubt about that one.

Mr. Rideout: No, not a bit of doubt about that one. If there is any doubt about that one, the Minister should read the latest report.

An Hon. Member: A pack of nonsense.

Mr. Rideout: A pack of nonsense? What is nonsense, Mr. Chairman, is that we will be the only legislature in a Western democracy to have instituted the Office of the Ombudsman and then repeal and abolish it, and this Minister and this Government are doing that. We are not going to allow ourselves to be voluntarily made fools of because this Government cannot see the error of their ways.

We are going to have to stand here, to a person, and we are going to have to fight the Government through every Parliamentary means available to us, to try to keep them from doing something no other freely elected legislature has ever done, as far as I know.

You know that Office is an Office of this House, Mr. Chairman. It is not an Office of some Government Agency or Board, it is an Office of this House, and when we are taking away something from this House, we are taking away something from every member of this House and from every person who lives in this Province. That is how big it is. It is too big for the Minister of Finance to understand, I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. But, I tell you, it is something that we cannot allow to happen without an appropriate debate and the Government might as well know that.

Now, those are the only three pieces of legislation, Mr. Chairman, that I believe there is very much difficulty with. So all of this nonsense of closure because we have to get to our business on the Order Paper is just that, nonsense; absolute nonsense. It is the dictatorial approach to Government; it is an approach that also indicates that

Government cannot manage the affairs of this House in a competent and ordinary fashion. Why didn't Government call some legislation and see what would have happened to it? When there was a problem with the Hibernia legislation, did we stand in the way of it passing through this legislature, Mr. Chairman? No, and that we did not. When there was a problem with that legislation, the Government House Leader - do you know where the Government House Leader called me, Mr. Chairman? The Opposition House Leader was not available at the time, and do you know where I returned the call to the Government House Leader from on the Hibernia legislation? From the International Airport in Toronto. Then it was to the Government House Leader's advantage to want to do some kind of a deal to make sure that the Hibernia amendments were not hung up, and he was able to find either me or the House Leader, and he found me. He got a message to me in the International Airport in Toronto, where I was on my way to British Columbia to bring my Mother out there for the winter. I called him back from the International Airport in Toronto and I said take the legislation and send it down to our policy advisor. I will talk to that person tomorrow and if it is as you say, just consequential amendments, I will tell you over the phone that yes, we will put it through, we will put it through all stages if you want to. Now how more co-operative can you be than that, Mr. Chairman?

So I think we have proven on a number of occasions in this House that when the Government has a timetable that it has to meet, then we are prepared to be

co-operative in meeting that timetable. Nobody came to us on this particular bill and said they had to have this authority by a certain amount of time. I have heard rumors floating through the press gallery and other places around this building that the Government must have this bill by tomorrow. That is the rumor I have heard, but nobody from the ministry - the President of Treasury Board or the Minister of Finance - have indicated that to me or to anybody else over here, as far as I know. So we cannot operate on rumor.

The principle here, Mr. Chairman, is that the Government has decided to close off, to choke off debate. That is the principle. And the bottom line is that they have given up on trying to answer any questions. They have given up and they are going to sit back now with the bunker mentality and take it for the next, I do not know, how ever many hours it might be until there must be a vote on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, it is unprecedented that for the second time in two weeks this House would be debating a closure motion. It is unprecedented that for the third time in six months this House would be debating a closure motion. It is unprecedented that for the third time in eighteen months this House would be debating a closure motion. All those debates, Mr. Chairman, are unprecedented. So I think it shows a clear picture of what this Government is all about. The Government will make the determination how long a debate should go on. The Government will make the determination. If they think that two hours, three hours or two days or four days is

enough, if they think that is enough debate, then they are prepared to move in a now, I think, dictatorial fashion to invoke closure. How is it that previous governments got legislation through this House, budgets, loan bills and everything, without using closure this frequently, this often? How is it? Because there was proper management of the House, Mr. Chairman, and we just sat there as a Government and took it, defended it when we felt it necessary, but we let debate take its flow on all occasions except two over a fifteen or a sixteen year period.

But not this Government, Mr. Chairman. This Government has made up its mind that it alone will dictate how long this House is going to debate a bill from now on. And, Mr. Chairman, if that is the way it is going to be, there is nothing we can do about it. We are not going to co-operate with the Government, and cave in to the Government, and give in to the Government. We have no intentions of doing that. But at the end of the process, when everybody over here has spoken, then the Government will have its dictatorial way and the question will be put.

All we can do, Mr. Chairman, is point out to the people of this Province that this particular procedure is being used on more occasions than it has ever been used in the past in this House. It is being used without necessity. Because we have proven to this Government time and time again, as I was saying in the absence of the President of Treasury Board, when they wanted legislation approved for a good reason and there was no difficulty with it, we co-operated. And we

can stand on our reputation on that, Mr. Chairman. Nobody has said to us, or said to me at least, that this had to be approved today.

And the final thing, Mr. Chairman, is if the Minister of Finance would only become co-operative and over the course of a three or four or five day debate try to rise on a half a dozen occasions and provide reasonable, up-to-date information to the House, then, perhaps, we could get somewhere. My recollection is the minister probably spoke twice in the whole time that this debate was on on this Supplementary Supply Bill. He provided a bit of information once on the bonds - I do not think he convinced many people that it was necessary to move on this immediately - and he provided some information on the additional \$705,000 that is required for the Economic Recovery Commission.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: I do not know where the member was, but that is the point I have been making. Nobody has told us that.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: I said I have heard rumours of that around the press gallery and elsewhere, that tomorrow is the deadline. But nobody has told me that. And I do not know if anybody else over here has been told. I cannot find anybody who has been told.

Mr. Simms: Not told today. Never told.

Mr. Rideout: But the Government should know, Mr. Chairman, from dealing with us here in the official Opposition that if there

is something necessary like that, then we have always co-operated. I said it before in debate on a money bill that we would be prepared to do it again. But, you know, that is -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: No, what I said and I just repeated, and I will not take all the time I have left to repeat it again, was that there are certain bills on the Order Paper and we have a responsibility on behalf of the people of this Province to ensure that they are debated as thoroughly as the parliamentary process will allow, and I named them for the minister - I named them. That horrendous Crown Lands Act has got to be debated thoroughly, as thoroughly as parliamentary procedure will allow, because there are thousands and thousands and thousands of people in this Province upset about it and they are looking to us to make sure that it just does not slip through the parliamentary process.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Rideout: Yes, I have. Oh, I have seen your new amendments. All they do is make the whole situation worse, Mr. Chairman, according to the people who have to live under the Act. But that is another debate, and we will get into that at another time.

But on other occasions, including this one, Mr. Chairman, we have always attempted to be co-operative. But the Government does not want co-operation. This Government wants confrontation. They only want co-operation when they think it is to their advantage, and they do not think there are any Brownie points for

them in co-operating on getting a bill like this through. They do -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) an obstructionist.

Mr. Rideout: The what?

An Hon. Member: Obstructionist.

Mr. Rideout: Mr. Chairman, how anybody can say that two or three or four days debate is obstruction is beyond the bounds of imagination.

Mr. Matthews: How could you say that?

Mr. Rideout: You cannot say it, because nobody will accept it, nobody will believe it. What people are believing is that this Government does not want co-operation, its wants confrontation. This Government is not interested in working out co-operatively some kind of timetable on bills they say they must have, this Government is prepared to use the guillotine, this Government is prepared to use closure. They have already used it twice in two weeks, three times in six months, three times over the last eighteen months; more times than any other Government since Confederation. Now, if that is not proof, Mr. Chairman, of what this Government is up to, then I do not know what is. And I understand the media in the Province have been told that they are quite willing, and will in fact, use it on several more occasions this session, this Fall. That is what we are told, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Matthews: Dictators.
Dictators.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the

Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: I was expecting to see somebody from the other side. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I was slow getting to my feet is because I understood this was to be a debate. That is what a parliament and a legislature is for. That is why I was slow getting to my feet, I was anticipating somebody from the other side getting up and speaking in this debate. Obviously, they have made a determined decision to try to let the clock run out - let them get up and speak, speak out the clock, and eventually at six, seven or eight o'clock, or one o'clock tomorrow morning, we will have the vote and it will be all done. That is their approach. Now, that is some approach to a debate, that is some approach for a parliamentarian to take. Parliamentarians on the other side of this House have consistently refused to participate in debate. The backbenchers are not even allowed to get up and speak in debate unless they get special permission.

Mr. Hogan: Lies. Lies.

Mr. Matthews: Mr. Chairman, unparliamentary. He called out 'lies', Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simms: He is asking you to withdraw.

Mr. Hogan: I do not know if it is unparliamentary or not. I said that what the member was saying, that we were not permitted to stand and speak in this debate, was lies.

Mr. Chairman: That kind of language cannot be used in the Parliament, and I ask the hon. member to withdraw.

Mr. Hogan: I withdraw the word 'lies' Mr. Chairman. It is just untrue.

Mr. Simms: Once again, Mr. Chairman, not only do we see the backbenchers in Government not even willing to participate in debate like good parliamentarians, now we see them being ordered by the Chair to withdraw the use of unparliamentary language. So it is typical of the backbenchers and it is typical of the Ministers. Mr. Chairman, it is not only in this debate that Ministers and backbenchers are afraid to get up and debate.

Mr. Hogan: Lies. Lies.

Mr. Simms: Now, Mr. Chairman, please! I mean, that cannot be permitted. The member must be asked to leave or something. I assume the Chairman heard him.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The Chair did hear, again, some remarks which he considers to be unparliamentary coming from down there. I cannot identify the member who said it, but I ask that the hon. member refrain from uttering those unparliamentary words.

Mr. Hogan: I said it was lies that we were afraid to stand, Mr. Chairman, and I withdraw the word lies. It is untrue and cowardly to say it.

Mr. Simms: That is unparliamentary - 'cowardly'.

Mr. Chairman: I ask the hon. member again to withdraw without qualification the unparliamentary words.

Mr. Simms: Without qualification.

Mr. Hogan: I withdraw, unqualified.

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

Mr. Simms: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So here we see it again. Now, not only did the member do it once, but the member, after being called to order by the Chair and asked to withdraw unparliamentary language, categorically said the same thing again, right in the face of the Chair's ruling. Now, Mr. Chairman, that cannot be permitted. If that hon. member is not able to control himself then the best thing he could do is go out in his Common Room, have a cup of coffee, and get out of the House if he can't take the heat. Or better still let him get up and participate in the debate despite the fact that nobody over there is going to allow anybody to get up. Despite that fact let him get up in the debate. And then he can say what he wants to say, hopefully using parliamentary language, language that is acceptable, not unparliamentary language.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: And by the way, Mr. Chairman, I do not mind saying that that kind of language coming from that Member is very unbecoming of that Member, he is not noted for that, and I hope he is not being goaded into it by anybody sitting around him or anything of that nature.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me get back to the dictatorial approach of this particular Government. We have a supplementary supply Bill here worth \$30,935,800 which the Government forgot to budget for

six months ago. Now you talk about mismanagement, \$30 million they forgot to budget for. Six months later they are bringing in a bill asking the Legislature, Mr. Chairman, to approve this \$30 million supplementary supply Bill, with little debate, no participation from the Government side or very little, and asking and expecting the Opposition who are duly elected and have as the Premier would say: we as an Opposition have a constitutional responsibility to stand in this House, to say in this House, and to ask questions, and to debate.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: And the Members opposite can make fools of themselves all day and try to interrupt, but it is not going to bother me one little iota. I will say what I have to say, Mr. Chairman, and so will other Members. And the more Members do that then I can assure them the lengthier this debate will be. I can give him all that assurance if that is what he is looking for.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Anyway, Mr. Chairman, as I said, first point, this is not a debate. How many hours have been used in this debate? How many hours would one think, before closure has been called by the Government, how many hours and how many days do you think would have been included in the debate? You would think there is several -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: No, you do not bring in closure after two or three days' debate. The Member knows that, the President of Treasury Board knows that. Mr. Chairman it

is kind of difficult to shout above -

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

Mr. Simms: - the animals over there on the left-hand side.

Mr. Speaker: Order please! Order please!

Mr. Simms: I withdraw that.

Mr. Speaker: Order please!

I would ask the hon. Member to withdraw that statement.

Mr. Reid: Point of order, Mr. Chairman!

Mr. Chairman: Order please! Order please!

An Hon. Member: Withdraw that!

Mr. Simms: And Mr. Chairman, as I was saying -

Mr. Reid: Point of order, Mr. Chairman!

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

The hon. Member for Carbonear on a point of order.

Mr. Reid: I could not hear Your Honour's ruling. Did you ask for that remark to be withdrawn?

Mr. Simms: That's a point of order (inaudible)?

Mr. Reid: May we hear it, Mr. Chairman, please?

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

Mr. Simms: To the point of order, Mr. Chairman. To the point of order. If the hon. Member wasn't yelling and bawling down there he

would have heard that I already withdrew it. So wake up and smell the roses.

Mr. Speaker: Order please!

An Hon. Member: You're a good man!

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

No point of order. The hon. Member has withdrawn his statement.

Mr. Simms: No point of order again! You see, Mr., Chairman, again, you see their tactics?

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Anyway, Mr. Chairman -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order please!
Order please!

Mr. Simms: Now, Mr. Chairman, I wish the television cameras were here and focused down on that corner, I really do. I really do.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: So their constituents can see the contribution they are making to the debate over a \$30 million supplementary supply bill. I bet you they would be shocked, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we have had in this debate from the Government's side eight speakers as far as I can tell. Seven, as a matter of fact, seven only.

An Hon. Member: Who are they?
Who are they?

Mr. Simms: I will give you their names. Kitchen, Baker,

Dumaresque, Efford, Decker, Walsh and Ramsay. That is who spoke in the supplementary supply bill, the \$30 million supplementary supply debate. And along with the numerous Members here opposite - this is the information I got from the Clerk at the Table, by the way, so if any Member opposite has a problem with it check with the Clerk at the Table. The other point is, Mr. Chairman, along with all of those who have spoken on this side -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

Mr. Simms: This is unbelievable.

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

An Hon. Member: Gone, gone!

Mr. Chairman: Order please!

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Now, Mr. Chairman, this is unbelievable. If Members opposite are going to continue to interrupt like that what is the point in trying to continue the debate and trying to make your points? It is not acceptable. Bad enough to be bringing in closure but then for the Government House Leader to allow that kind of interruption to go on, I think that is unacceptable really, Mr. Chairman.

Now Mr. Chairman as I was saying, the debate has lasted -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: And yes the Deputy House Leader should probably jump in there. As I was saying, the debate on this particular

supplementary Supply Bill has also only lasted now, for ten hours and thirty-eight minutes; ten hours and thirty-eight minutes -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: - yes, and that includes the night sitting. But when the notice of closure was given, the night sitting had not occurred and it was given earlier in the day before the afternoon session had begun, so up until the time the notice was given, it was approximately somewhere in the area of five to six hours only spent on debating a \$30 million supplementary Supply Bill.

Now I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that is not a reasonable practice, but it obviously is the approach that this Government is going to take from here on in, I suppose. They are simply going to rule with an iron fist. They are going to be dictatorial and when they need to bring in closure to get on with the next item, they will bring in closure. If that is the way they want to do it, then, Mr. Chairman, I suggest to you the people of the Province will be the ones who will finally determine whether or not that has been an acceptable way to run a Parliament.

Whether or not it is acceptable, whether or not it is acceptable to put the kibosh to those who wish to speak and those who wish to debate and those who wish to ask questions, whether or not it is acceptable to stifle debate and discussion, whether or not it is acceptable to cut off the right of an individual who has been duly elected by constituents to stand in this House and express their concerns over a particular piece of legislation.

And, Mr. Chairman, I personally did not have a chance to speak in the debate. I personally did not have a chance to speak in the debate on Supplementary Supply yet. The first day our critic did it and then the second day some other members spoke and I believe on Tuesday I was not in the House as I was in my constituency, so I never even had a chance and I feel there are other members, I am sure, that for different reasons did not have an opportunity.

I can say to the Government House Leader, that I quite legitimately had a number of questions I wanted to raise. I know that the Finance critic, the Member for Mount Pearl, raised numerous questions -

An Hon. Member: Good ones, too.

Mr. Simms: - particularly on the first two items - the first two items, the bonds, the bonds issue. I had some questions I wanted to raise on the Economic Recovery Commission. A considerable amount of debate should be allocated to discuss that particular item for a number of reasons, not the least of which are those that have already been addressed.

The considerable amount of money that is going to be spent on new furnishings for the Enterprise Newfoundland Crown Corporation offices all around the Province, a considerable amount of money being spent on that, at a time when every afternoon we hear Ministers opposite standing up and preaching restraint and cutbacks and all this kind of thing, but, Mr. Chairman, we are not even allowed to get into a debate on it, we are not even allowed to ask questions on it, because by the time you ask questions on everything else,

before you get to all the questions, the Government brings in closure and says, no more debate. We do not want to hear any more questions being put by Members opposite because they are giving us the willy-nillies, they are making life difficult for us, they are making life unbearable. We have to stop this -

An Hon. Member: Why don't you ask a question?

Mr. Simms: We asked the Minister of Finance.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Simms: I will say this, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Mount Pearl asked the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Finance spoke once in answer. Look at the answers. Read the answers.

An Hon. Member: One more time.

Mr. Simms: Read the answers, Mr. Chairman, read the answers.

Dr. Kitchen: I answered every question he asked, and no one else asked a question afterwards.

Mr. Simms: I see, I see.

Mr. Chairman, we are now debating a closure motion. The Minister of Finance does not even understand what we are debating, that is how stunned he is. That is how stunned he is.

An Hon. Member: Unparliamentary.

Mr. Simms: That is not unparliamentary, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Now that might be

true, that might be true. Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to also address this. I want to address the approach that the Government is taking and the question that was put by the leader of the Opposition: why is it we find ourselves in this difficult situation, why have we had closure once again, after having it just two weeks ago, was it, or maybe not even that long ago, on the Loan Bill, not to mention the one that we had back in April on Meech Lake. Why is it we are not progressing with legislation?

An Hon. Member: No co-operation.

Mr. Simms: Government opposite, will argue that we are not co-operating. Well, we shall soon see that not to be true. We shall soon see that not to be true, Mr. Chairman, as the Government House Leader well knows. We are quite prepared to co-operate and always have been, but, when the Leader of the Government in the House, who is responsible for planning the legislative programme, introduces, after the House has been closed for four or five months, the first item, a Loan Bill, for which there is no urgency at the moment at that time required, he brought in a loan bill, and he knows full well that people can debate all kinds of items in a loan bill. He brought in the first item, a loan bill.

Then what did he bring in? He brought in another very controversial Bill, the Regional Services Board, knowing full well there was going to be a considerable amount of debate on that. He had to move away from the Regional Services Bill because he knew what was happening. And then he brings in a supplementary supply bill, another finance bill,

for which people are entitled and quite prepared on this side at least, to debate and ask questions about.

So that is the approach of the Government House Leader. Now make no wonder he can't get through any legislation. All he had to do was bring in legislation that would receive reasonable debate, and as usual he and I could have talked about it and arranged for that to occur, in fact we already have done it for tomorrow. But it could have been done three weeks ago as he well knows.

But no he deliberately provoked what has happened in the House over the last few weeks by bringing in these kinds of legislation. Now I say to him if he wanted legislation approved, all he had to do was properly manage his legislative programme and he would have gotten the cooperation necessary.

An Hon. Member: No co-operation.

Mr. Simms: Alright, we will see tomorrow if there is cooperation, Mr. Chairman. Now, Mr. Chairman, I should also remind Members of course that we have another supplementary supply bill, as the Minister of Finance would know. There is another supplementary supply bill on the order paper that has been there since last June. Now let us see what the urgency is on that one when the time comes. It has been sitting on the order paper since last June. Another supplementary supply bill worth \$41 million. Now if it is so urgent, how come they have not called that one? That's what? How many months ago now? Five months ago.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Mr. Chairman, I would like to get you to remove the Member for LaPoile because quite frankly - no, I won't say it. I won't say it.

Anyway Mr. Chairman, \$41 million on the Order Paper already now since last June. Another supplementary supply bill. And the Member is soon going to have to call that one.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Mr. Chairman, the only thing I can say, I can understand quite clearly why that Member is not sitting over there with his colleagues. I know exactly why.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: No, no, that is not the reason either. Now I could tell members why but I will not.

An Hon. Member: He wants to join us.

Mr. Simms: I could tell Members why. Now, either that, either because of his well known views on a number of matters or his good wife is in the gallery, whom I saw today at lunch. Now I do not know if she is here or not. But I thought he might have been over here because he wanted to make an impression.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Anyway, Mr. Chairman, look Mr. Chairman -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Mr. Chairman, members opposite have successfully interrupted me for the last fifteen or twenty minutes. Successfully. And that is an

example of exactly why closure should not be brought in. Because Members in this House should have the right to speak without interruption as we have seen here in the last twenty minutes. And this is not being provided to members of the Opposition in particular who are elected by the people to serve as an Opposition, to penetrate, to ask questions, to debate -

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Simms: To debate.

An Hon. Member: Oh.

Mr. Simms: And Members opposite of course do not see their role and duty as a Parliamentarian in the same light. Because they obviously do not intend to debate. They intend to sit back and heckle and interrupt and come over and make foolish looking faces sitting next to a Member speaking - things like that. All those silly little games, when we are in this House, Mr. Chairman, to debate a \$30 million supplementary supply bill. It is enough to make your stomach turn, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms Verge: Thank you, Chairperson.

Chairperson, invoking closure for the third time in six months and resorting to closure on a supplementary supply bill worth over \$30 million after only three to four hours of debate, are marks of an authoritarian and elitist Government. Frankly this really does not surprise me because I have known the present Premier longer than most people in this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: You worked for him.

Ms Verge: There have been a number of indicators of an authoritarian approach. We have seen the arbitrary reduction in student aid for university students, always classified as full time, who are doing four courses or three courses a semester. A change instituted without notice to the students affected or to the student representatives on the Education Minister's Student Aid Advisory Committee.

We have seen the shocking reduction in social assistance for single mothers receiving maintenance or child support, instituted by the Minister of Social Services on October 1, without the benefit of legal authorization and in the absence of advance notice to the families affected so they could adjust their plans to tighten their belts for a reduction in the family income of as much as 20 per cent.

We have seen the slash, I say, to the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, the slash in funding for substitute teachers instituted by the Government in September with effect retroactively to April 1, which has caused school boards to reserve substitute days remaining for sick leave, and has forced the cancellation or reduction of professional development programmes which in many cases had been planned for months ahead, and which the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations would know better than most people, are absolutely essential if teachers are to keep abreast of developments in pedagogy or to adapt to changing curriculum.

We have seen the Government's dictatorial approach to municipal amalgamation, with the Premier playing with words, using his slick legal skills to bamboozle and to confuse people, but with no doubt having been left here today that the Premier is prepared to use the Government's majority in this House as opposed to the Cabinet, a technical, fine decision nevertheless to use force to impose municipal amalgamation against the expressed wishes of communities affected.

The Economic Recovery Commission, which is one of the subjects of this Supplementary Supply Bill, is another indicator of the authoritarian elitest approach of this Premier, and since the Government is the Premier's one-man show, is typical of the Government as a whole. The Economic Recovery Commission is constituted to perform vital functions of the Provincial Government, namely, the expansion of our economy. Now to remove this responsibility from the Cabinet and from the public service and to assign it to an unelected and unaccountable commission, is against all of the traditions of our democracy. It reflects the Premier's lack of regard and respect for the elected members of his own caucus. Obviously, the Premier thinks so little of the Minister of Development and all the other members opposite, he would prefer to assign perhaps the most important public responsibility within provincial jurisdiction to an outside, unelected group.

I was talking to a businessperson in the Maritimes the other day who is looking at investment opportunities in Newfoundland and Labrador, and this individual said

to me, who are House and Humphries? I really did not know what he was talking about. He said, House and Humphries, the people with all the influence in the Provincial Government over Economic Development. And finally it dawned on me that this individual was talking about Dr. Doug House and Mr. Wayne Humphries, two of the members of the Premier's Economic Recovery Commission.

So, Mr. Chairman, closure on this Supplementary Supply Bill, closure for the third time in six months, student aid reduction, social assistance slash, substitute teacher retroactive cut, and municipal amalgamation as well as the Economic Recovery Commission, are all indicators of the elitest attitude of the Premier and the authoritarian approach of the Premier's one-man show Government.

Chairperson, the Economic Recovery Commission is one of the subjects of this Supplementary Supply Bill. The Bill provides authorization for extra money for the Economic Recovery Commission. Now we in the Opposition have been asking questions about the Economic Recovery Commission. We stated our fundamental opposition to the entity called the Economic Recovery Commission but, given that it exists, and given that it is going hither and yon purporting to discharge, to use the Premier's favourite verb - to discharge - perhaps the most important responsibility of the Provincial Government, we have to ask what exactly are they doing and why do they need more money? Why does the Government want to give them more money? What has the Economic Recovery Commission accomplished to date?

The first day, I believe it was, one of the first days of this fall sitting of the Assembly, the Finance critic, the Member for Mount Pearl, asked the Premier how many jobs the Economic Recovery Commission has created so far? Now, we are still waiting for that answer, I say to the Member for Placentia. If he recalls, the Premier said then he estimated about 1,500 jobs; he was not sure, he would check and supply the details. We are still waiting for those details. He said perhaps the most significant accomplishment of the Recovery Commission was the revival of the Twillingate fish plant. And while the Minister of Fisheries sat stoney faced and red faced, the Premier made a show of crediting Dr. Doug House with the revival of the Twillingate fish plant and said pointedly that the Minister of Fisheries, the Member for Twillingate District, had little or nothing to do with it. Now what an insult? What a lack of regard for one of the Premier's Cabinet? But again not surprising, given the Premier's mentality and the way he treats other people.

So, in answer to the Minister of Finance, a question that we have asked and that we are still awaiting an answer for is how many jobs has the Economy Recovery Commission contributed to creating, and what are those jobs? Let us have a list of those jobs. The Twillingate fish plant revival, the Premier cited. So what has the Economic Recovery Commission accomplished so far? How is it justified to give them more money? There has certainly been no evidence presented by members opposite to convince me that I should vote for this Bill to fuel the Economic Recovery

Commission further.

We keep hearing about plans of the Government to retrench, to reduce spending, to slash spending on social and educational programs. We have seen evidence of that already - I have cited examples. So why should we tolerate a reduction in student aid or a cut in income for single parent families on social assistance and acquiesce in or agree with providing more money to the Economic Recovery Commission?

Now the Commission is a strange entity. I have mentioned already that it defies the usual British parliamentary and even Newfoundland governmental traditions, in that it is an unelected, unaccountable commission given a mandate of economic development, a responsibility which should be performed by the Cabinet and the professional permanent public service.

The Economic Recovery Commission also doubles as the Board of Directors for one of Newfoundland's business financing agencies, the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation. And the Government has a grandiose scheme of creating Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, which is proposed to be an amalgamation - the Government seems to get off on amalgamating. Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador is envisaged as another grand merger of Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, the former Regional Development offices which were part of the permanent public service, the former Rural Development Division of the Department of whatever it was, I think most recently Development, again another part of

the permanent public service, yet none of this has jelled. We have not even seen a bill creating this new monstrosity, Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Ms Verge: Now, the Member for St. George's says it is coming. Well, it sure takes the Government a long time. If the Government is so good at planning, how is it that seventeen months after they assumed office they have not even finalized the organization of one of their first commitments?

The Premier promised this Economic Disaster Recovery Commission when he was campaigning for election and said that it would be set up within thirty days of his taking office. Well, here we are seventeen months later and the commission structure is not even in place yet; individuals have been shuffled around from one organization to another without any certainty of where they will end up. Individual public servants with the Department of Development have been assigned to Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador with no assurance of seniority or other earned benefits being carried forward, and they are being left dangling, waiting for legislation that may materialize this sitting, or may not be seen here until next Spring.

So we have major concerns about the Economic Recovery Commission. We have asked pointed questions and we are still waiting for answers. The Premier still has not told us what the Economic Recovery Commission has produced so far. He estimated off the top of his head 1,500 jobs, citing the jobs at the revived Twillingate fish plant, but never did provide

the list that he promised. Is there any wonder that there are doubters? Is there any wonder the Member for Pleasantville is still squeamish about the Economic Recovery Commission? So why, I ask, should any of us over here rush to vote more money for this Economic Disaster Commission?

Chairperson, I have talked about the lack of planning on the part of Government, and the fact that they are here looking for an extra thirty-odd million dollars is typical of the lack of planning. The Minister of Finance is a disaster in that position: He bungled the Budget badly, his revenue estimates were exaggerated, the Provincial Revenue Estimates were completely out of whack with economic indicators last Winter and Spring, he exaggerated the professional forecast of retail sales tax revenue, he was way off the mark on his revenue projections, but the more serious negative variances, we are led to believe, are on the expenditure side of the Budget.

Well, obviously the real change administration lost control of public service bargaining. They entered into arrangements for health care sector employee collective agreements and set a standard, built expectations, and now they are not prepared to live with the consequences; they are telling hospital and nursing home administrators that they have to find the extra costs of their payrolls out of fixed budgets for this year, and they are being threatened with frozen budgets for next year. Freezing health care institution budgets in any circumstances would cause serious problems, but to do it when the Government itself has agreed to

major salary increases and the implementation of pay equity, would be, to use another one of the Premier's favorite words, unconscionable.

The Government has lurched from one decision to the next with no apparent planning. There seems to be a dearth of research, there seems to be a lack of consultation and co-ordination. We are left to believe that last Winter and Spring, while the Premier was crusading across Canada on the Constitution, when the cat was away the mice played, or maybe the problem is that since the Premier is so authoritarian and has so little regard for the members of his Cabinet, for the elected members of his Cabinet, that no decisions were even attempted in his absence. Everything had to be put on hold until his return from his Constitutional crusade. Maybe that is part of the explanation for the chaos, but whatever the reason, Chairperson, it is clear that the Liberal administration has made a mess out of managing the public service. Morale has never been worse, they have created a disaster out of budgeting, and they are not owning up to the state of affairs they have created. They have not explained where the Budget for this year stands. They have estimated that they are now looking at a \$120 million current account deficit, but they have not told us how they calculate that. They have not told us what the revised figures are for revenue, or for expenditure. They have not said what the revised spending is for the Department of Health, for the Department of Education, or for the Department of Social Services. Why can we not have Department by Department breakdowns of the revised

Budget? I say to the Minister of Finance, if only he would table revised estimates for each Department so we could see at least by broad categories where are the variances that have resulted in a plunge from a \$10 million current account surplus to \$120 million current deficit, then maybe we, and the people we represent -

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member's time is up.

Ms. Verge: Could I finish my sentence, Chairperson?

-maybe we would understand better the kind of situation we are facing.

Thank you, Chairperson.

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

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Obviously, the member has not been here if that is what he is saying.

Mr. Chairman, I am surprised to find myself on my feet debating another closure motion. This is the second time in the last two or three weeks that we have had a closure motion. As has been pointed out before, I think there have been three closure motions in the last six months. Mr. Chairman, what is a closure motion? A closure motion is when the Government cannot take the heat and they decide to choke off debate. What amazes me most of all is that members opposite do not defend the closure motion. It surprised me that the Government House Leader did not stand to give reasons as to why this closure

motion should come in. There were no reasons for his actions, Mr. Chairman. Why is it that Government is trying to choke off debate in this House?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hodder: Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to be heard in silence. I only have a few words to say. I happen to be suffering from the flu and I do not know if my voice is going to last very long, or not, but I would just like to be able to say what I have to say, and I have the right to say that here in this House whether the Minister of Social Services likes it or not.

Mr. Tobin: You have the right to speak in silence, too.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I would ask you for silence, and enough comments from the peanut gallery opposite.

Why is it that Government is choking off debate?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, if I may be allowed to speak without the Member for Placentia interrupting.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member for Port au Port requests silence.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I want to ask why the Government is choking off, and I will say it again, debate? The reason, Mr. Speaker, is because closure is the Government's hobnailed boot which causes the House of Assembly to turn its attention to other bills.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I saw a list of the bills that are supposed to

come to this House before Christmas. As a matter of fact I have them here on my desk. Mr. Chairman, we are willing to pass those bills, if the House Leader opposite wants to bring in those bills, we will debate them and many of them, Mr. Chairman, we will pass in very little time. But, Mr. Chairman -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I asked to be heard in silence.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. Member requested silence.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, not only does the Government have contempt for the people of the Province, but the Minister of Social Service has contempt for the people of the Province and has contempt for the people who he is suppose to serve, the social service recipients of this Province.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

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

The hon. Member requested silence.

Mr. Hodder: Now, Mr. Chairman, I had not intended to get into this particular tone of voice. But, I do not understand why when a member stands in this House to make a speech, that he is not allowed to do it. Why Government members, who have not stood since this closure motion was brought in, not one, and if they followed what they did during the last closure motion, to speak tonight, why it is that they will not let members on this side say what they have to say. Mr. Chairman, I am

asking for the opportunity to say what I have to say.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

I remind the hon. the Minister of Social Services, the hon. Member for Port au Port has requested silence.

An Hon. Member: Name him! Name him!

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

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I happen to represent the District of Port au Port, and during that election campaign the Premier came to the District on three occasions. And on each occasion, Mr. Chairman, he promised the people of Port au Port that they would be given a better deal. As a matter of fact he left Port au Port and he came down to Carbonear, the day after one of his meetings, he told the people of Carbonear that the people of Port au Port were going to get a better deal under his administration.

An Hon. Member: They have.

Mr. Hodder: Well, Mr. Chairman -

Mr. Tobin: What does that have to do with it.

Mr. Hodder: Now, Mr. Chairman, Port au Port just happens to be one of the Districts in this Province which has a very high unemployment figure. Mr. Chairman, the Chairman of the Economic Recovery Commission is quoted and reported as saying that in hard times we should be spending money on education. And,

Mr. Chairman, if we are going to do anything in this Province, if we are going to change the direction of this Province, then certainly education is very important.

Now, Mr. Chairman, hon. members might know that for some twelve years I was a teacher, and I was principal of perhaps one of the most modern schools in this Province. The school which I was principal of was opened in 1973. I was the first principal of it. But not only that, Mr. Chairman, it was designed by the teachers. It won an award across Canada for its excellence and the model of the school was displayed at the CNE Exhibition in Toronto.

Mr. Chairman, I spent some five years of my life working with teachers as their principal. And, Mr. Chairman, when I hear members on the other side who stand and say that teachers have the summer off, that teachers should do things on the weekends, and let the teachers do it at other times, Mr. Chairman, these -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, it was certainly said by the Premier, it has been said by the Member for Mount Scio - Bell Island.

Mr. Winsor: The Minister of Finance.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, that shows an abysmal ignorance as to what goes on in the schools. It shows ignorance of what is happening in the schools.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, he asked to be heard in silence,

there is no need of that.

Mr. Hodder: No, Mr. Chairman, let him rave on, he does not really bother me.

But, Mr. Chairman -

Mr. Tobin: If I was in the Chair, he would be quiet, I tell you that.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, you have teachers in the teaching system at the present time, who, perhaps have been teachers for twelve, fifteen perhaps twenty years. And, Mr. Speaker, in-service training is one of the most important, innovative things that can happen. Changes are taking place in education all the time.

Mr. Speaker, the use of in-service training in this Province is not wasted. It is not wasted time.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hodder: It is quality time, and then Members on the Opposite side say do it on weekends, Mr. Speaker. Many teachers that I know go back on weekends or work on weekends to prepare their lessons.

Very few teachers in this Province have the luxury of having periods off in order to prepare lessons. Very few teachers in this Province have the luxury to -

Mr. Tobin: Misery loves company.

Mr. Hodder: Very few teachers in this Province have the luxury to be able to correct their papers or grade students during school hours, Mr. Speaker, so a teacher is a very, very hard working person and it is a very demanding job.

Mr. Speaker -

Mr. Efford: Sit down.

Mr. Hodder: The Minister of Social Services says, 'sit down,' well, Mr. Speaker, the Government and that kind of an attitude from the Government, is of course, the kind of an attitude that brought about this kind of a decision. But when Government decides to take away the training of teachers, the in-service training of teachers, then I say, Mr. Speaker, that this Government is definitely taking a backward step.

An Hon. Member: I wish you were on the (inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker-

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand this. This is getting to me.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Speaker; in referring to the people in the district of Port au Port, there are in the district very few opportunities for people to gain employment, and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that the Port au Port Peninsula and the district of Port au Port is not the only area in the Province where there are few opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, the school boards in the district are actually the biggest employers. We have no fish plant, we have a small operation that is a large operation with few people in the Lower Cove mine and we have initiatives on Aguathuna, which are, at the most, sixteen or seventeen seasonal jobs.

But, Mr. Speaker, when you look at education in a district like that

and you look at the statistics that show, that the more education a student has the less chance he has to be unemployed, and when you get to the university level, very often, the higher the education that the person has, the more chances he has to find employment by a large measure.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at a district like Port au Port and you look at the school system which is so inadequate in the district at the present time, and you look at teachers who are striving in their classrooms to try to bring students up through, and to keep them from dropping out and to try to educate the children, so that they can be better citizens, and that they can go in and do the things that will give them employment, which their fathers and mothers do not have. When you see that, Mr. Speaker, and then you cut back on whatever quality in-service education they have, then, Mr. Speaker, that is terrible, it is criminal.

Mr. Speaker, when this Government took office, and I hear this all the time, I heard it today from the peanut gallery on the other side, that we were bankrupt before we went in, but, Mr. Speaker, this Government took office on May 5th and their first Budget was on June 6th when they had a \$10 million surplus, or they projected a surplus of \$10 million, then they came in the midyear and they revised it to \$52 million.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that when this Government took over they had a surplus, at least on current account, and then when the second Budget came in, they projected a \$10.2 million surplus, and now the new projected deficit is \$120 million. Now how did that

happen, Mr. Chairman, when they have only been in for a year and a half? Well one thing is certain, Mr. Chairman, that they did have a surplus when they came in and they certainly have a deficit now. Mr. Chairman, for Members opposite to say that they are taking over something and trying to handle something that was handled incorrectly in the past is incorrect.

This Government came in, they projected a surplus of \$52 million, and at that time they settled with the nurses of this Province and they gave them a very generous settlement. Mr. Chairman every other major union which came up after that came in under arbitration and of course the arbitrators were going to give them fine salaries, because the Government had set the tone. They were talking about a \$52 million surplus and they also had set the scene by giving the nurses a very high raise, which they deserved, by the way.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what has happened to the hon. gentleman over there today, but something has gone wrong with him altogether.

Mr. Chairman, I think the Member for Humber East referred to the Meech Lake debate a little while ago. I remember back to when the former Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Trudeau, was bringing home the Constitution and the whole economy of Canada, and I am talking facts, went down the tubes. I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, if that is not what has happened to this Government, that while the Premier was charging off from one end of the country to the

other on his constitutional battle, the incompetents - the Minister of Finance and the Cabinet - mismanaged the affairs of this Province without any idea of where they were going or what they were doing. And they got us into this mess we are into now, where they predicted what they did not have and raised the hopes of Newfoundlanders, trade unions and trade union negotiators, and, Mr. Chairman, they delivered nothing.

Mr. Chairman, the promises this Government made: they were going to bring Newfoundlanders home. There are more Newfoundlanders leaving this Province now than ever left this Province before. And it is happening at an increasing rate.

Mr. Chairman, they said they would not close hospitals and nursing homes. What did they do, Mr. Chairman? They closed the Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centre. One of the places where they get most of their revenues is from alcohol and the Liquor Commission, and they closed a treatment centre. They have closed over 400 hospital beds since the last election. Now, Mr. Chairman, they have told the hospitals that they are going to have to foot the bill for the salaries, the increases: Through their negligence -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hodder: No, Mr. Chairman, that is the truth.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what other promises did this Government make during the last election campaign? Think about it. You all got elected on it. You promised to make education a priority. Education, Mr. Chairman, is being cut back in

every way, shape and form, and only one shoe has dropped yet. You promised to open the Central Newfoundland University, and you promised to increase post-secondary tuition by 10 per cent. Instead of that, Mr. Chairman, they closed the schools for the sick in the hospitals.

Mr. Chairman, remember that? People have forgotten that now. And now there is a freeze on Teacher Aids for the handicapped.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

An Hon. Member: Mr. Chairman, are you going to allow comments like that (inaudible) on the floor of the House?

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) that was uncalled for.

Mr. Hodder: That is typical. They cannot stand to hear the truth, Mr. Chairman. And not only that, they have slashed the amount that elderly patients in nursing homes can keep. These are all things which have been raised in this House.

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) comments that were ever made in this House.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I did not hear what he said but I would not put anything past the Minister of Social Services. Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Social Services, of course, is the person who deducted the child support payments from single mothers; he is the person whose Department is in shambles. Mr. Chairman, he is the most hated Minister that the Department of Social Services has ever seen. There is a reign of fear. Every time you ask a question of any person in the Department of Social Services

about any matter, they refer you to the Minister's office.

It is a reign of fear, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister has instituted. It is, clam up! And if you do not, you are in trouble. The minister should go out to his offices and talk to some of the people and find out what they are saying and what they are thinking about the minister. Because, Mr. Chairman, there has never been so much doom and gloom, and so many people - the social workers are upset. There are not enough of them; they cannot do the job they were asked to do and they are afraid for their jobs, every single one of them. And they are afraid to speak.

Mr. Efford: (Inaudible) ask me so many questions in Question Period, then.

Mr. Hodder: There is not much sense asking a minister questions in Question Period if he is not doing anything. The minister is not doing anything, he is just sitting there like a lump with a big mouth.

Mr. Chairman, I did not mean to be so intemperate in my comments, but the minister drives me to it. And these are the things the Government do not want to hear about, I guess; that is why they are so upset today.

Mr. Chairman, what about the bridge in Labrador? What about what we have not talked about here, the fact that they raised the personal income tax by 2 per cent? What about the taxation measures? What about the health and education tax? As I said the last time, this is the only minister in history who, in order to raise money for health and

education, taxed health and education. Mr. Chairman, that is what this minister has done.

Mr. Chairman, they have cut back ferry services, they have cut out motor registration. If there were no more cutbacks, they have done enough so far to destroy the social fabric of this Province. Since this Government came to power unemployment is up by 2.1 per cent over last year. Since the Wells Government took office, the economy has only grown by 1 per cent, versus 4.6 per cent before.

Mr. Chairman, what are we seeing? There is a little fish plant in Piccadilly which, on a number of occasions, has been without an operator. We have a Minister of Fisheries who will not - will not - roll up his sleeves and try to do anything to attract anybody. There are a number of people who are interested in that plant right now and they cannot get to first base with the Department of Fisheries. Now, is that the way we are going to cure unemployment in this Province?

Mr. Chairman, the Premier gets up and says, 'Where are our ideas?' Well, Mr. Chairman, he was elected to govern and he is not governing. He is reacting to what is happening; he is depending on the Economic Recovery Commission, and there has never been a group of non-elected people put in charge of an economy trying to recover; it takes ideas, it takes bold imagination and initiative, which the Premier does not have.

An Hon. Member: What?

Mr. Hodder: This is a caretaker Government with no ideas. Mr. Chairman, we have the worst

fisheries crisis the Province has ever seen, and the worst economic decline in ages, and at what point do you cut back to such a point that the bottom goes out of it anyhow? Does the Minister of Social Services realize that if you fire enough people, if you get rid of a thousand workers from the civil service, that is like closing down Abitibi-Price in Stephenville and Grand Falls, and closing down Kruger in Corner Brook? Does the Minister of Social Services realize that?

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

Mr. Hodder: And I will send a warning right now that this Government is coming dangerously close -

Mr. Chairman: The hon. member's time has elapsed.

Some Hon. Members: By leave.

Mr. Hodder: Mr. Chairman, I did not get a five-minute notice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Premier.

Mr. Tobin: I (inaudible) him, after what you just said about the Premier. (inaudible) that time what you said.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) what you said. Who cares about (inaudible)?

Premier Wells: I have no doubt, Mr. Chairman, that the biggest member is also the biggest supporter in the House. I have no doubt whatsoever.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Premier Wells: Mr. Chairman, I sort of regret that I did not hear all of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, I regret I did not hear all of the speech of the Opposition House Leader, and I regret that I did not hear all of the speech of the hon. the Member for Humber East; but I heard enough of it to give me the general tenor of the comments and to compel me to stand up and deal with some of the outlandish claims that have been made by both the Leader of the Opposition and the Opposition House Leader, and to sort of express some sympathy for the poor member for Humber East, who has such an obsession that she can only see devil's horns growing out of my ears. That is all she can see every time she looks across the House; because the sole thing she can comment on is the Premier. Now, I do not know what causes her to feel that way and react that way, but I have not seen or heard her speak of anything else except my being an autocrat or my being something else. I appear to be her personal obsession, and I feel sorry for her, because I would not want to be in that position.

So, I want to deal with those three speeches. What I heard from the hon. the Member for Port au Port, I really do not think needs any dealing, it speaks for itself and it does not need very much attention. But the question is raised why we are bringing in closure. Three times in six months the terrible, autocratic Government: Never before in the history of Parliament in Newfoundland have we had this kind of action by a Government.

Mr. Tobin: We had it three times in forty years, you have had it three times in six months.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Premier Wells: This is the proposition, why are we, this terrible Government, bringing in closure? It has nothing to do with Government or its attitude, it is all the incompetence of the Opposition, who see nothing but their own personal view.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if any in this Province have any doubts, let me just give them some figures that will spell it out. They talked about three times in eighteen months. They went on to say three times in six months, but at the very least they pointed out, in the eighteen months that we have been the Government, we have used closure three times; this terrible, terrible Government, choking off debate. They are the autocrats, the dictators, choking off debate. Let me tell the House and the general public of this Province - and I sincerely hope the news media is listening so they will pay some attention to this. They are absent from the gallery, but I hope they have their hearing mechanism turned on, Mr. Chairman, because this is quite important.

Mr. Simms: This is going to be a big, dramatic announcement.

Premier Wells: Yes, it is, and people are going to know the real truth.

Mr. Chairman, let us look at the eighteen months since we have been in Government. Let us look at the parliamentary democracy that this Government brought to Newfoundland and Labrador. In the time the House has sat in that eighteen months, we have sat, Mr. Chairman, a total, up to November 13th, of 454 hours. Four hundred and

fifty-four sitting hours.

An Hon. Member: How many days?

Premier Wells: Well, I will get the days - 454 hours.

Now, let us go back another eighteen months. Let us go back to the eighteen months, the last eighteen months that they were in power, a total of 216 hours, less than half, Mr. Chairman. Less than half.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Premier Wells: Now, Mr. Chairman, do you want to know why we have invoked closure? It is very simple. We are facing an obstructionist Opposition who have so little confidence in their programs, in their abilities, that they have to try to obfuscate and cover up so the people of this Province will not see the real Opposition. So they spend their time preventing the Government from functioning, to try to make the Government look bad.

Well, we are invoking closure, Mr. Chairman, to protect the interests of the public of this Province.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I think if you really went back, not just eighteen months but twenty-four months, before the last election, you will find that it was still only about 216 hours. But we are looking at an eighteen month period, so I go back eighteen months. And I can say with complete confidence that the total time in their last eighteen months was 216 and one half hours.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) for those 216 hours.

Premier Wells: Because you had a competent Opposition helping you govern the Province not trying to prevent the people from having good government. You did not know how to govern and you do not know how to oppose.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we brought real democracy to this House.

Mr. Simms: Democracy? Democracy? You have to be kidding.

Premier Wells: Because instead of the Government bringing in this legislation with virtually no notice and causing it to be forced and pressured through the House without people having an adequate time to consider it, we put in place Legislative Review Committees so that these Legislative Review Committees could consider the legislation beforehand, give members on the opposite side an opportunity to review it, to hear public response to it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in addition to the 454 hours of the House, there has been another 120 hours of Legislative Review Committees. That is what we did. When we were in Opposition, Mr. Chairman, we opposed the Government on a sane and sensible basis, but always we put the interest of the people of this Province ahead of our own narrow political interests, something the present Opposition has not yet learned to do. Mr. Chairman, for the people of this Province who want to know why we are invoking closure, that is why. We care about the people of this Province and we want to get the business of the people of this Province conducted. We reconvened

Mr. Simms: It is like every other

argument you use, we don't believe it anymore. We don't buy it anymore. It will not wash. It ain't going to wash, buddy. You will see.

Premier Wells: We will see. People know these figures. What the Opposition have not learned is that they have no credibility with the people of this Province.

To listen to the Member for Port au Port stand in this House and say that the Minister of Social Services is the most hated Minister in the Province. You should see the letter I got the other day proclaiming the great virtue and sensitivity of the hon. the Minister of Social Services, and what a great minister he is. I would dare say he is the most popular minister in the Cabinet. And the Member for Port au Port can stand and make that unfounded statement in that way? It is just incredible, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Tobin: Why did you flick him out of Cabinet?

Mr. Simms: What about this letter?

Premier Wells: Mr. Chairman, now that I have told the House, I hope the media, if they are listening, will tell the people of this Province the truth.

Mr. Simms: Don't get mad now if they do not listen to you.

Premier Wells: Now that I have told this House the real reason, I want to plead with the Opposition. Bear in mind that all of us have a responsibility to the people of this Province to make sure that we pass the legislation necessary to protect the interest of this Province; to protect the interest of the people of this

Province; that we deal with the public issues in a timely fashion. And the Opposition has a significant role to play in that. The Opposition should remember that the interests of the people of this Province is more important than their narrow political interests.

Mr. Simms: That is what we have been trying to tell you for weeks.

Premier Wells: Well, you have succeeded in causing - how long have we been sitting, a month?

An Hon. Member: Yes, about that.

Premier Wells: Yes, about one month. And in one month we have had two pieces of legislation pass this House - two pieces of legislation.

Mr. Simms: Yes. And why?

Some Hon. Members: Why? Why? Why?

Premier Wells: Because the Opposition have done nothing but obstruct the people's business. And one of those, Mr. Chairman, had to be passed with the invocation of closure.

Mr. Simms: You don't know how to plan your program, that is the problem. We will see tomorrow what co-operation is all about. Why didn't you do that three weeks ago?

Premier Wells: We have had two pieces of legislation in a month and one of those because of closure. The other was the Hibernia legislation. That is it.

Mr. Simms: Sure it is up to you to call the legislation you want.

Premier Wells: That is right. And we wanted the financial legislation because it was important to us, all of the legislation.

Mr. Simms: What about your Supplementary Supply Bill which has been on the Order Paper since June? How important is that \$41 million? Why didn't you call that?

Premier Wells: The Supplementary Supply Bill, we are debating the Bill now.

Mr. Simms: No, no. There is another one.

Premier Wells: There is another one? Good. We will deal with that, too.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have not yet done an account of the legislation we passed in the session that started - was it late February or early March? I have forgotten when we started.

Mr. Simms: You mean when you changed all the Departments (inaudible), yeah.

Premier Wells: No, when we opened the House with the Throne Speech for this current sitting of the House, this current session of the House. I am going to go back and check. Maybe the clerks know very quickly. How many pieces of legislation have we completed since the last Throne Speech? Twenty-two pieces of legislation. We have forty more on the Order Paper. Now, we have already sat in this sitting so far this calendar year 289 hours, plus three is 292, plus another nearly two is 293 hours, just 292 hours and twenty minutes to be precise, and in that time we have gotten twenty-two pieces of legislation

past the House. When I raised this question the other day I heard the Leader of the Opposition - as a matter of fact, the Member for Humber East said it today - maybe she did not, I should not attribute it to her, maybe it was the Leader of the Opposition who said it, that the Government tied up all the time of the House on the Meech Lake Debate. Well, we had to have closure on that too, if I recall correctly. It was the Opposition who tied up all the time of the House and, if I recall correctly, Mr. Chairman, it was the Opposition who complained that we did not give enough time on the Meech Lake Debate. So they cannot have it both ways.

Now, I am asking the public of this Province to look at the record of performance of the Opposition and what they have done with the concerns of the people of this Province, and how they have treated the concerns of the people of this Province, and in a total of 454 hours, more than twice the time they had the House open in their last eighteen or twenty months in office - more than twice.

Then on top of that, at least another 120 hours of Legislative Review Committees. Now, in that time, Mr. Chairman, look at what the Opposition allowed to go through this House. The wonder is we have not had to invoke closure on every single piece of legislation because of the obstruction of the Opposition. They have nothing to offer the people of this Province on their own merit, and their sole objective is to try and stop the Government from governing.

Some Hon. Members: We will see. We will see.

Premier Wells: Well, I will say to the Opposition now, Mr. Chairman, if we have to invoke closure on every piece of legislation, we will. Because there, Mr. Chairman, is the justification for it.

Now the House Leader and the Leader of the Opposition wanted us to justify what we have done.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Premier Wells: There is the justification for what we have done, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Simms: There is no justification at all.

Premier Wells: And it does not solve his problem to say, weak, weak, weak. It is not weak, it is an irrefutable argument, Mr. Chairman. The numbers are there. The time is there. The record is there. Look at their record, look at it, 216 hours.

Mr. Simms: The silliest things you ever heard in your life.

Premier Wells: And in the previous twelve months of so, it was a total of 196 hours, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: Well! Well! Well!

Mr. Tobin: Do not be telling lies.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible) your own research.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

I ask the hon. Member for Burin - Placentia West to withdraw that remark?

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, there is nothing I shall hate more than he who knows in his heart one thing and speaks another, but I shall withdraw that comment.

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

I want the hon. member to withdraw that without any qualification.

Mr. Tobin: I withdraw.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Premier.

Premier Wells: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, if you want to go back another eighteen months, in the eighteen months since we formed the Government we have had more time in this House debating issues of the people of this Province than the former Government had in three years.

Mr. Simms: (Inaudible) night sessions on Meech Lake.

Premier Wells: Now, Mr. Chairman -

Mr. Simms: What else have you dealt with?

Premier Wells: Now Mr. Chairman - we dealt with Meech lake in March, April, May, June and July of 1988, too.

Mr. Simms: What else have you done as a Government?

Premier Wells: That is right. Now, Mr. Chairman, we have tried to do and conduct the business of

the people of this Province in an orderly way. We provided for increased opportunity to discuss legislation, not only with the Members of the Opposition, but with the public in general through the Legislative Review Committees. We provided good opportunities. We want to provide good Government.

It is the Opposition that wants to obstruct the people of this Province and we will not let them do it, Mr. Chairman. And if it takes the use of closure every single day that this Legislature sits for the people of this Province, Mr. Chairman, we are prepared to do it. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

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

Mr. Matthews: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, Mr. Chairman, I have heard a few speeches by Premiers on different issues in this Province since I have been sitting in this Legislature, but none as weak as the defence just offered by this Premier for invoking closure three times in six months.

Mr. Chairman, I feel sorry for the Toronto Maple Leafs every time I listen to the sports news. Well, let me tell the Premier that his defence is much worse than the Maple Leafs. I said a few days ago that the Minister of Finance had a record that was worse than the Maple Leafs, and the Premier's defence is worse. It is unbelievable, Mr. Chairman. What we are seeing here again today has nothing to do with the Opposition, it has to do with the total incompetence of the Wells'

Administration to govern this Province. That is what it is all about.

And well we should be open as long as we have been open. Because I do not know of any other group of individuals anywhere in the Parliamentary system that could blunder and screw up so badly in eighteen months as this Government has. And so we should be here in this Legislature. Because I have never ever seen so many blunders, so much incompetence and so much inconsistency as portrayed by this Premier and this Administration.

And I want to say to the Premier he can come in when he likes and lecture, but it does not make any difference to us. It works with his own troops; he lectures them and he whips them into line on all the issues and the best they can do then is go in their little small groups and complain about it. But he can come in and lecture all he wants, we are going to continue to do our job as an Opposition; we are going to expose the Government for what it really is.

And, Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt now that the people of this Province finally know that, yes, they voted for a real change in 1989, but it was a real change for the worst. I cannot believe what has happened in the past sixty days in this Province. I go down to my area of the Province on weekends and to hear what the people are saying and the questions they are asking about the Premier and about the Government, I cannot believe the change that has taken place in the last sixty days, and justified, too, I might add. It is all justified.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to go back over what has happened since this Government came to power. In the first Budget they projected, I think, a \$5.3 million surplus. Having said that, in the very same Budget they introduced \$100 million in new taxes; they took \$100 million additional taxes out of the pockets of the people of this Province. The Minister of Finance tried to justify it by saying that we were not the highest taxed people in Canada. But when he was cornered by the press on it, he said he did not understand the tax formula, did not understand how it was calculated.

In this year's Budget, 1990-91, he projected a \$10.2 million surplus. Just six months after that \$10.2 million projected surplus, the Premier released an economic statement on behalf of the Government saying we were facing a \$120 million deficit. Now, what has occurred to me in the last few weeks is I am beginning to wonder, I am beginning to doubt the economic statement that was given to the people of this Province by the Premier. Because on the heels of his economic statement which said we are facing a \$120 million deficit, the Minister of Health went to Corner Brook and told the Hospital and Nursing Home Association people they were facing a \$60 million shortfall, the Minister of Education has gone and met with people and told them they are looking at \$30 to \$40 million less next year, and in the last few days the Premier is sort of backing off on just how drastic and severe the health and education systems are going to be hit in the Province. So it makes me wonder how sincere and how factual his economic statement of

September really was.

Mr. Chairman, in this particular Budget document the Government has bragged about achievement of a surplus on current account for the second consecutive year, the adoption of measures to streamline Government's operation, with savings being re-directed to higher priorities, such as economic development, health and education, and so on.' He goes on then 'In order to generate the money revenue measures are introduced as follows: a new post-secondary education tax; corporation capital tax rate will be increased from 2 per cent to 3 per cent; and a number of fees and licences. These are all facts out of their Budget. Bragging about their fiscal position. Bragging more and more about the fiscal position.

It goes on to say on page one of the introduction that we have been able to produce a Budget that addresses in a very significant way the Government's three basic priorities of economic development, health care and education. A Budget that does not come down hard on the people.

An Hon. Member: No!

Mr. Matthews: Now after taking approximately \$190 million in additional taxes, in two Budgets, the Minister of Finance says -

An Hon. Member: How much?

Mr. Matthews: \$190 million in two years.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Your officials estimated it.

Mr. Matthews: Oh, we did not get it from you. We got it from your documents.

He goes on to say, 'This is a prudent Budget that will enable us to go a long ways to delivering to all regions of the Province and so on, the services that are necessary, and to be fiscally responsible to the present and to the future.'

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Now that was said in this Budget document. And six months after the Premier of the Province has to stand before the people of this Province and tell them what a financial mess this Province is in. That is what has happened.

Then the Premier stands in his place and lectures us because we are standing here debating and have debated a \$325 million Loan Bill; another, what is it, a \$31 million bill that we are debating now, and the other legislation that has not passed yet, the Regional Services Boards and so on. Why we debate it? And so we should debate it. The people of the Province expect us to debate it, and to get answers to questions from the Government.

People about this Province are pretty concerned, Mr. Chairman, about the financial position of this Province. They are very, very concerned about the competence of the Minister of Finance. They are very, very concerned about that.

An Hon. Member: Bull.

Mr. Matthews: Bull is it? Is the Minister saying he is full of bull or he is full of incompetence?

An Hon. Member: You are full of bull.

Mr. Matthews: Yes, I might be full of bull. There is no doubt I might be.

An Hon. Member: You are a man behind the (inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Now the Minister of Finance should not be talking about other peoples' heads, and other things. He should sit in his place and if he wants to take part in debate get up and debate the issues. But the problem is when he stands in his place he cannot give us one answer to a question we have asked. He does not even know the answers about his own Budget.

An Hon. Member: There has not been a question yet.

Mr. Matthews: There have been a hundred questions asked on the Budget and you have not answered one.

He went on to say, Mr. Chairman, in the Budget, that he projected a current account surplus last year of \$5.3 million, and he was pleased to announce that he achieved a surplus of \$37.8 million. A \$37.8 million surplus. And he goes on to talk about the improvement and so on in the fiscal position of the Province. What do we get six months after? And at the time the Budget debate was on in this legislature the finance critic, the Member for Mount Pearl, told the Minister of Finance at the time, he said, why don't you be realistic and honest with the people of the province. At that time he predicted a \$50 million to \$60 million deficit. And if the Minister of Finance, and of

course, the Government - the Cabinet, had been honest with the people of the Province that is what they would have projected in their Budget. It would have been a \$50 million to \$60 million deficit. And then when the Premier had to stand before the people a few months ago and tell them that it had gone to \$120 million he might have been a little more understood out there; the people might have been able to grasp it a bit more. But to look at \$130 million difference was a little bit hard for the ordinary Newfoundlander and Labradorian, Mr. Chairman, to come to grips with; they had difficulty understanding it. How could anything be out of whack that much in six months? That is what people are asking today and they still have not got an answer from the Minister of Finance; they still have not got an answer.

The Minister in his speech went on to say it is with considerable satisfaction and pride that I am able to announce that in this Budget we will achieve our second consecutive current account surplus at a level of \$10.2 million. Now, who did he think he was fooling, Mr. Chairman? Current account revenues are projected to grow by five per cent on the strength of growth in provincial revenues.

Now, I would suggest to the Minister that is where he was out of whack, because the revenues, as we all know in the Province, has been decreasing. Now, that is what the Minister told the people in this Province, and he was days going around touting it as a peoples Budget; and what a Budget. And, you know, the poor people of the Province for two or three weeks actually believed that

it was a good Budget, until the real Budget was exposed to the people. Then they started to see through it.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is pretty well 5:00 so I will adjourn the - Do I go on or -

Mr. Chairman: Continue.

Mr. Matthews: This is debate.

Mr. Chairman: I believe there is an agreement to continue.

Mr. Matthews: Do we just continue on? Is that what is happening?

Mr. Chairman: Yes, just continue on.

Mr. Matthews: I do not know what is happening. The Premier has consented for us to continue has he?

An Hon. Member: We are not used to this.

Mr. Matthews: We are not used to this kind of co-operation, no. This is unusual. Perhaps the speaking back to the Premier and putting him in his place is finally starting to pay off.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: It cannot be one minute. How long do I have?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: No, there is something wrong with that. There is obviously something wrong. I mean it was just about 4:50 before the Premier finished.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: He goes on to say

that our attempts to achieve our fiscal goals and sound fiscal management have been interfered with by transfer cuts in the Federal Budget. Then he goes on: because of the very real need to sustain funding, particularly for health care and post secondary education, we have been left with no choice but to recover the shortfall through our own revenues.

So, he admits in his own Budget Speech that he was very much aware of what was happening to transfer payments, and so on, to the Feds.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Oh yes. You had better be quiet now because there are other things in here.

An Hon. Member: No there is not.

Mr. Matthews: You better familiarize yourself with your old budget document now before you get too cocky over there and start going on about that.

So, Mr. Chairman, that is why we hung tough on these money bills. We have every reason to do so, and every right to do so, because we just cannot slough off \$325 million. You cannot slough off another \$31 million, as if nothing was happening, as if it is not important to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, when they have heard from the Premier, from the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, that people are being laid off in this Province, services are being cut in this Province, and yet this Government expects us to stand there and just approve at will, money bills. We are not going to do it. And I suggest to the Premier that with

all his lectures about the Opposition not being responsible and being obstructionists and being whatever else he called us, that he can call us that until the sun comes up, but we are going to continue to ask the questions and to do what an Opposition should do, and that is to probe into actions of the Government; to probe into the financial handlings of the Government and to let the people of the Province know and expose. We have seen it now in two Budgets. We have had Budgets brought into this legislature with the Minister of Finance not able to answer questions about his very own Budget. He did not understand the Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax; he did not understand it. It was an embarrassment for the Government, for the Premier and the other Ministers, to watch every night.

An Hon. Member: Tell the truth.

Mr. Matthews: I am telling the truth. The people of the Province watched the Minister of Finance trying to bluff his way through something he knew nothing about. He did not even know who had to pay the tax. He did not even know who the tax applied to, and here he has brought in a Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax that was supposed to be for health and education, and what are we seeing today?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Yes, but if you impose a Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax on the people of the Province to be used for health and post-secondary education, which gave you more revenues for health and education, and here you are telling them today that you are going to spend less, that teachers

are probably going to be laid off. You are going to see three or four classes taught in the one classroom. School busing is going to be affected; health care people are going to be laid off; transportation workers are already laid off. That is not maybe's, that is definites with your taxation office in Clarendville and the motor registration office in Clarendville, and the ferry workers who were on Fogo, the weigh scales in Goobies; they are not maybe's, they are people who are laid off.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Transferred? Where are the people in Goobies being transferred to?

An Hon. Member: What about the ones in Wabush?

Mr. Matthews: Wabush, they are definites. And as the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Humber East tried to determine today, tried to ask the Premier - I mean seriously there is a lot of apprehension out and about the Province, mainly by those working in the health care system and the education system of the Province; transportation system and so on, but as well by people who need health care services. There is concern. And there is nothing worse than insecurity and uncertainty about your future, particularly when it comes to a job and earnings; people with commitments, cars, houses, mortgages and so on. There is nothing worse on people than insecurity. I think it is very unfair to deliver a statement a few months ago saying how bad it was going to be, and for hundreds of people out there working who are expecting the ax to fall every day, and to drag it on. No one

wants to see anything bad happen to them. I hope they keep working forever. But if you are going to lay them off come clean with them and tell them. And that is the whole point of it. You can not stickhandle and skate anymore. You have to be definite and make decisions and be decisive about it. If there is not going to be any negative impact next year tell them. But people out there expect to be laid off in January. Rise today and tell us it is not going to happen until the new budget. That is further confusing people. Because the Minister of Health led us to believe that once he got his impact statement from the hospital and nursing home associations that decisions were going to be made. I believe he indicated that there would be decisions announced by the end of November.

So, Mr. Chairman, that is why we are here debating today and of course we are very very disappointed that Government has seen fit once again to invoke closure on this Legislature. But be that as it may that is the choice of the Premier. The choice of the Government. And I suppose if you were looking at it in a purely political sense you would hope that he does it on every bill. Because the word is out about the attitudes of this Premier and this Government.

And people can't believe - and people in the press can't believe - that three times in six months we are going through this exercise here. The Premier alluded to all the hours. And I say it was a weak defense when he had to count the minutes that we sit in the House. That tells me everything. When the Premier has to stand in his place and the best defense he can put up for his Government is

to count the minutes that we have sat in this House and debated, I tell you that is pretty weak.

And you talked about Meech Lake. Yes we were here a long time on Meech Lake. And I say to the Premier quite sincerely - and there are other Members I would say on both sides of the House probably think the same, but over there they will not say it - that it probably had more to do with the economic situation in this country, in this Province today, than anything else.

Some Hon. Members: Hear hear!

Mr. Matthews: Including the downturn in the fishery.

An Hon. Member: You demonstrate that.

Mr. Matthews: What was that?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: What is the old mumbler over there saying now?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: Why don't you go back up to reading Shakespeare up at the University? Is that where your friend is gone? Go up to the University and read Shakespeare. There is a particular part there in all the Shakespeare plays that applies very adequately to the Minister of Finance. And he had a certain kind of dress, you know?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: It would probably be unkind for me I suppose to say it, I will not do it. But he reminds me so much, every time he gets over there and mumbles and waves his arms, he mumbles and

goes on and makes foolish comments. In the Shakesperian plays they were referred to as a certain kind of person. And I will not tell him. He knows. I see him laughing.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: But Mr. Chairman - how are we doing for time, by the way?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: How are we doing?

Mr. Chairman: Two minutes.

Mr. Matthews: So, Mr. Chairman, I have to conclude my remarks. What I have tried to do really is to just review and go through the process since the first Budget this Administration brought in. With the \$5 million surplus, what the actual surplus was at the end of the fiscal year, what this surplus was projected in this budget, what the Premier's economic statement was, what that told the people of the Province, what has happened since the economic statement, the Loan Bill, \$325 million that was on the Order Paper, I believe since last spring; this Supplementary Supply Bill up before us now and I understand there is another one coming.

Is there any wonder; the Minister of Finance holding up three and four and five, I do not know if there are that many more coming, Supplementary Supply Bills, but, what I am doing is to try and tell Members Opposite what is happening. Since the first time this Minister of Finance stood in this Legislature and delivered the Budget, is there any wonder we question the financial competence

of the Government.

I mean, you understand why we are doing it: We have to, if we did not, we would be totally irresponsible. We have to, and I just hope that the Premier soon has a little shuffle over there and gets a new Minister of Finance.

Mr. Matthews: Yes, the Member for Placentia points at himself and I would say he would make an excellent Minister of Finance.

Mr. Tobin: (Inaudible) like the Premier, this evening.

Mr. Matthews: No, no, he is only joking, he is only joking. We all joke every now then, he is only joking. He is a good natured fellow.

The business community of the Province, which is so vital to job creation, have grave doubts about the financial competence of the Government, they do, the Private sector really has grave concerns. The general public, who usually do not get too taken up or tied into financial matters, are asking questions about the financial handlings of this Government, that I have never heard before by the way. Everywhere I go on weekends to functions, people are asking questions, how could anybody be that far off.

There are so many million dollars that are not explained; not explained, where is it gone. And you know, people are suspicious by nature.

Mr. Parsons: Did they steal it, did someone steal it?

Mr. Matthews: They are asking the question, where did these millions and million and millions go. We

do not know where it went, but yet the Government is telling us we are going to have cutbacks in health and education services, and they have not explained where all this money went. People are saying they took \$100 million in the first Budget, eighty something million in the second Budget, they are now saying there is a \$120 million deficit, that is a lot of money. That is a lot of money, Mr. Chairman. People are saying where is it all gone, because the people of the Province have not seen the benefits of the expenditure of those dollars, and that is why they are asking the question, they are wondering where the money was spent, it is gone, but no one -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Matthews: What was that? He sits over there and jokes, he sits over there and jokes about a \$120 million deficit. Yes, it might be a joke to the Minister of Finance now, but there is a day coming, I assure you, Mr. Chairman, where it will not be a laughing matter to anyone on the other side.

Thank you very much.

The House continued past 5:00 p.m.



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OF
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PRELIMINARY REPORT
(Hansard)

Speaker: Honourable Thomas Lush

Thursday

[Preliminary Transcript]

15 November 1990

The House resumed at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Member for Burin - Placentia West.

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

It was with interest that I listened to the Premier fumbling around in his defence for bring in closure more often in six months than it was brought in the last 40 years in this Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, the Premier got up and talked about the 450 hours this Legislature has been in session during the last 18 months. Would the Premier not know that more than one-third of that time was spent debating the Meech Lake Accord on two occasions, once when closure was brought in. Now there is another interesting thing when he talks about his 450 hours. In 1990, let me say to the Premier, this year, the House of Assembly including today we have been sitting for 77 days. Last year under the first year of the Liberal regime 1989, the House of Assembly sat for 59 days. Then he talked about when we were in Government. Yes, Mr. Chairman, in 1988 we sat for 71 days. That is pretty comparable to this year and five weeks more than the year before. What does the Premier have to say about that, was he not trying to mislead and mistate the facts? In 1987, 66 days, in the year before that 87 days. Those are the facts about this House. If the media wants to carry - as the Premier pleaded to the media to carry what he was saying - let the media carry the facts and not the rubbish the Premier presented that was not true. What the Premier said, Mr. Chairman, was distorting the facts - that the House of

Assembly in the last - with the exception of 1986, Mr. Chairman, - year had the worst record of sitting in the last five years in this Assembly. Now these are the facts of what happened in this Legislature. Not what the Premier said, that the House of Assembly sat less last year, 59 days, it was one day more than it sat in 1986, and that was the second worst record of this Assembly in the last six years. Is that what the Premier is trying to gloat about, when he tries to distort the facts and shift them to the Press. That is what is taking place.

Mr. Chairman, if the Premier wants to talk and the Government wants to talk - I could not help it when I looked through this campaign 1989 policy manual, the Liberal Campaign 1989 Policy Manual. Do you know what it says on page 6, a Liberal Government will start immediately on the construction of a similar small university campus in Central Newfoundland to develop there as Grenfell has developed in Corner Brook. Start immediately, that is what the Premier told the people of this Province back in 1989. Mr. Chairman, that was as distorted then as much as what he presented to the House one half hour ago was distorted. That is what is taking place, no wonder they are saying out in rural Newfoundland and indeed the City of St. John's and other urban parts, who can trust this Government. No wonder it is being said, Mr. Chairman, when they said we will start immediately on the construction of a small university for Central Newfoundland.

Mr. Chairman, probably one of the reasons why it is not started is that the Member for Gander insisted that it go to Gander and

the weak link from Central Newfoundland the Minister of Forestry could put up a good battle. Probably that has something to do as to why it took place.

An Hon. Member: Some of that, some of that.

Mr. Tobin: There is some of that. Indeed, there are some of that. We all know some of that. That is what took place. The old weakling. And you had the parliamentary assistant and the Premier. The parliamentary assistant to the Premier, another fellow from central Newfoundland.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, I can tell the Member from Placentia that my colleague from Port au Port is not interfering with me. None whatsoever. No more than my colleague from Placentia was interfering with my other colleague when he saw the Premier coming in and said who cares about him?

But, Mr. Chairman, I have to say to the Premier that the Member from Placentia was saying it in fun, and I would seriously hope that he not hold it in for him. Because my colleague from Placentia is a very jovial individual who enjoys having a bit of fun and there was no meaning whatsoever to what he said. And I would ask that the Premier forgive him.

Mr. Chairman, the real reason why the college never went to central Newfoundland is because the committee decided that the college was going in the Grand Falls area and the Member from Gander stopped it. That is why the college has

not gone to central Newfoundland. Because of the parochial attitude of the Member from Gander who prevented it from going somewhere else. And we can go on through this election platform.

What did he say about environment? (Inaudible) and provide for municipal waste disposal areas and landfills. What untruths, Mr. Chairman.

A Liberal Government would reorganize the Department of Fisheries. A Liberal Government will greatly increase research and development efforts in aquaculture and provide assistance and encouragement to inshore fishermen. Mr. Chairman, I remember, and I have it somewhere, a manifesto that was put forth by the Minister of Fisheries when he was Minister of Fisheries in the Moores administration. I remember that one. And nothing -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman, if the Member from Placentia wants to get involved in this debate let him stand in his place. Never mind trying to interrupt me. I just apologized to the Premier on his behalf and I do not intend to do it any more. Now, let the Member from Placentia stand in his place if he wants to get on with that type of gibberish.

The fact of the matter is that he is part of an administration that is putting the gag to the voice of the people of twenty-one districts on this side of the Province, that is what is happening. The hobnail boots support the Government! Closure! Closure, Mr. Chairman, more often in six months than was used in the previous forty years! Is that what the members are proud

of, is that what they take pride in, is that what they support the Cabinet in doing, socking it to the competition but putting a gag on the representatives of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador who will not permit them to debate. Can one imagine, Mr. Chairman, that there have been more closure motions in six months than there were in forty years with three administrations. That is a record to be proud of, Mr. Chairman, that is a record to be proud of no doubt.

And the Minister of Fisheries goes on in his - the Member for St. John's South better be careful or I might respond and he may never open his mouth again in this Legislature. Mr. Chairman, and that will not be very long more, whenever the Premier calls the next election because he will never see inside here again. I understand that is one of the reasons why, that he was the one that made the request to the press to take pictures of all Members in their seats, he would like to have it for his old age because he will not be here after the next election. That is the rumour.

Mr. Chairman, the last elections, he said the Canada French Boundary question must be settled. Who is going to argue against that. But what has this Government done to deal with that? And we can look at it, and I am from the Burin Peninsula, as my colleague is from Grand Bank, and we know the tragic situation that the St. Pierre Bank fiasco is having to the fisheries on the South Coast.

If we are to listen to the scientists, Mr. Chairman, they tell us that the northern codfish only swims as far as Cape St. Mary's and Placentia Bay, and

Fortune Bay, and all of these areas depend on the Gulf fishery and there has been no fishery there. And the Member from Development, Mr. Chairman, does not know a whole lot about the fisheries to make comments such as the one that he just made. His comments would be more appropriately addressed to the Marystown shipyard workers when they refused to build a shrimp trawler to harvest the fish in Newfoundland. That is your commitment to Newfoundland, Mr. Chairman.

No, Mr. Chairman, they are all my Tory buddies. There are very few Liberals left up there, in fact, they are getting less and less everyday. I heard they even had difficulty in the convention to get some of them to go out.

Mr. Chairman, what about the Municipal Affairs. I have to read this one. 'Our Liberal Government will undertake an immediate assessment of the ability to establish a provincial water and sewer corporation that will take over and continue to operate all existing water and sewer facilities in this Province.' Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the propaganda that this group over here issued during the last election campaign. Where is it? What district has it taken place in? It has not taken place in the Placentia district, Mr. Chairman, according to the calls I had last night from one community. And you know I had them.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Tobin: No, it was not Dunville, because Dunville was done when Bill Patterson was the Member. That is when Dunville was done, Mr. Chairman, the time when

you were out seeking the Tory nomination, that is when Dunville was done, and a lot of Placentia was done. No Mr. Chairman, I was never a Liberal. I could never ever be associated with the group over there.

I will tell you something right now if you want to talk about Liberals. You are probably the biggest Liberal in this House, the Member from Port aux Basques. He is probably the biggest Liberal in this House because he wants to give everything he has away. Mr. Chairman, that is what is going on in this House. We are debating a closure motion that is probably the worst-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: Now Mr. Chairman I can tell you that it is probably the worst to ever happen in this Assembly. And the Premier has just given his Parliamentary Assistant a message for the boys in the corner, the Premier has just given him a message to be on their best behaviour. That is what has happened. He won't come in now. But I saw it happening, Mr. Speaker, and for the record let it be known that the Parliamentary Assistant to the Premier walked down the corridor, he did not drive.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Tobin: That is what has happened and why? Why are we bringing in closure? Why are we debating this motion. The Premier has just issued instructions for closure in that end there and it is about time that you responded to the Premier's instruction because no matter what you said this evening you do care about it. Mr. Chairman, why are we

debating a closure motion this afternoon? Why has the Government House Leader brought in that motion and not explained to the House why it was going to be debated? Why has the Premier come in here and tried to convince the public through a list of hours that this House was in session when indeed, Mr. Chairman, there were more hours of debate in previous years than there have been this year.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: Mr. Chairman it is not bunk, it is not bunk. The Premier can say it is bunk all he likes. The fact of the matter is that in this session of the House of Assembly there have been less hours spent in the debate than there were in other years.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: It is not Mr. Chairman. There have been less hours of debate in this Assembly than in other years. This year compared to other years.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: Yes, Mr. Chairman, how about 87 days?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) 1985.

Mr. Tobin: How about 87 days? Days, yes. Well the hours makes up days. Days makes up hours.

Mr. Simms: No, no see what they are talking about is hours (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: In 1990 so far this year, including today we have been open for 77 days.

An Hon. Member:

Right(Inaudible)289 hours-

Mr. Tobin: We have been open for 77 days including today and in the last five years, and that is less than 87 days. No it is not less is it?

An Hon. Member: Hours are counted(Inaudible)It is no wonder the budget is like it is.

Mr. Tobin: Now, Mr.Chairman, that is right.

Mr. Simms: Another example of trying(Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: So that is what is happening in this Legislature. That is what is happening in this Legislature. They are bringing in the muzzle, Mr.Chairman, on this debate to give their friends, to give the Newfoundland Senators, Mr.Chairman, the crowd retired in the Economic Recovery Commission, to give them more money, 700-odd thousand dollars to be thrown at Doug House and his commissioners again. For what, Mr.Chairman, for what? The Premier said in this Assembly one day that one thing he remembers them doing was keeping the fish plant open in Twillingate and that the Minister of Fisheries had nothing to do and it is the Premier said that the Minister of Fisheries had nothing to do with keeping the plant open in Twillingate. Now, Mr.Chairman, I don't believe the Premier. No I do not believe the Premier. I have known the Minister of Fisheries far too long as a politician and as a representative to believe that he had nothing to do with keeping the fish plant open in his district as Minister of Fisheries. If the Premier wants to talk about bunk I would say that is bunk Premier because the Minister of Fisheries played a

major role.

An Hon. Member: He had nothing to do with it.

Mr. Tobin: Oh, yes he did. That is what the Premier said but the people of Twillingate do not believe it. Sure, they said different. For the Premier to say that the Minister of Fisheries, in his district there was a fish plant kept open, even though it was a sweetheart deal, that the Economic Recovery Commission kept it open and the Minister of Fisheries had nothing to do with it. What a way to treat one of your senior Ministers and a man with more time in this House than anybody. That is an attack on your Cabinet colleague, that is what that is.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr.Chairman, it is not. The Premier had the confidence in the Minister of Fisheries to put him in charge of fisheries and what he said to him the other day was a lack of confidence in him. Now, that is the long and short of it. That is what took place in this Assembly.

An Hon. Member: He did the same with Social Services.

Mr. Tobin: The Minister of Social Services does not have to stand up in that case. If you stand up to make a fool of yourself the Minister of Social Services can remain seated. What is happening here is incompetence throughout this Government. That is why we are debating a closure motion, because the Premier does not have the confidence in the Ministers, nor should he, to bring up that. How can you have the Minister of Finance, for example, stand up

here - What is it? A picture tells a thousand words. Is that the one?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Tobin: No, Mr. Chairman, I will not. Mr. Chairman, I have one minute left.

An Hon. Member: By leave.

Mr. Tobin: I will not, by leave. But I can tell you one thing, this administration will regret bringing in closure on this Assembly, make no mistake about it, that the day will come when they will regret bringing in closure. Mr. Chairman, I am wondering if this message just came from the Premier or from the Speaker? How much time do I have left, Mr. Chairman? Do I have one minute?

Mr. Chairman: Time is up.

Mr. Tobin: Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity, but some day the people of Newfoundland and Labrador will not forget the gag and the closure motions of this administration.

Thank you, very much.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the Member for St. Mary's - The Capes.

Mr. Hearn: Thank you, very much, Mr. Chairman.

I was waiting to see if somebody would get up over there. It is a duty to participate in this record making event because everyone who speaks here tonight is participating in a record making event. It is the third time we have had closure brought in in the past six months. It has never

been done before in the history of Parliament in Newfoundland so unfortunately we see it happen and undoubtedly we will see it happen again. What really concerns me, Mr. Chairman, before I get into the Bill itself was the Premier's action in coming into the House with what was really twisting information. The Premier is a master at doing this. When he comes in and talks about the number of hours that the House is open, the only time you run into extra hours in the run of a regular sitting day is when there is some controversial issues being discussed and, of course, the Premier well knows most of the time spent recently was spent discussing Meech Lake, another issue that he got out of by leading his fellow Premier's down the garden path. The Premier says that we were open 450 hours and so many minutes. That translates to 77 sitting days, as my hon. Colleague for Burin - Placentia West said only 57 days last year, the fewest in a number of years. Consequently, once again he is twisting the facts to try to convince the public they are doing an honest days work.

The other morning as I was driving in I listened to the Premier on Open Line, I must say I only listened to him long enough to switch stations, but I listened to him and he was talking about the Opposition. I wanted to hear what the Premier thought about the Opposition. I was surprised because the Premier handled himself very, very well in response to the telephone calls that he had. Most of them were set up calls as we know happens on Open Line, but he had a few pointed telephone calls. He handled them in a very politically astute manner, there is no doubt

about that. But then the Moderator asked him: 'Mr. Premier, Sir, what do you think about the Opposition?' I really expected the Premier to get up and say, well they are doing a very good job, they are keeping us on our toes, they are forcing us to the limit. They are asking a tremendous amount of questions. In fact, one night last week during the last closure motion they asked something like 50-odd questions in the one few hour session after supper. Even if he did not add we did not give them any answers, but if he had said that - but what he said surprised me. Of course, there is no good in me saying what he said because he would only say he did not say it. But in gist he said that they are doing a terrible job, wasting the time of the House and the people's money. He said, 'So far they have only allowed us to pass one Bill.' Anybody out there listening would think: my that is terrible. The fact is that it was not true. It was not true that we had only passed one Bill.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hearn: Right.

So the Premier was only 50 per cent correct. That makes a tremendous amount of difference. What he said was not factual, as a former Premier would say, it was untrue, false, it did not conform with reality. He did not tell the truth on the Open Line Program. That is what the Premier is continuing to do. He does not come out and tell a bare faced intentional lie. But he implants in the minds of the people, -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hearn: He said one.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hearn: No he did not. During commercial he probably said to Bill Rowe, I made a mistake during the course of the conversation with him. Once again, I should not say that, Mr. Premier, because maybe you did. Because I did not listen to it long enough to know whether you did or not.

But during the period whereby you were answering the question, you said one quite clearly. But the point that I am trying to make is that intentionally or otherwise you are implanting in the minds of the people who are listening the fact that the Government is doing things which the Government is really not doing. But anyway, that is neither here nor there, and I am sure there are not too many people out there overly concerned whether we have sat 450 hours or seventy-seven days or 450 days or seventy-seven hours. Because a tremendous amount of them do not care how long we sit. They do care what we do while we are sitting. And that is one of the problems.

So, with that, I would like to make a few short comments on the bill. And looking at the amounts that we are discussing, enterprise development operations, grant subsidies, amounts approved, \$13 million, \$30,869,100 - where are we too? - \$13,869,100 compared to supplementary supply of over \$2 million in that section. Enterprise development loan fund, where the estimates were only \$6 million, and supplementary supplies up to \$27 million, and the Economic Recovery team support where the increase is also significant. I would expect in whoever responds, the Minister of Development perhaps or the

Minister of Social Services - who is the only person who responds regularly over in the Government side - they will probably say yes, the extra expenditure is necessary because of all the good work that the Economic Recovery team has identified and all the different projects that we have initiated around the Province.

What we would like to know then, point of question, is what has or what projects have the Economic Recovery team initiated? Where? At what cost? What is the duplication involved? Is the Economic Recovery team operating on its own? Are they just going in and rubber-stamping what has been done by people in the Department of Development, the regular workers? The Rural Development section in particular, the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Forestry, or whatever. Are they just going in and when, through the regular, everyday run-of-the-mill process projects are initiated and approved, are they then going in, and taking credit? As they did down in Twillingate and where the Premier, trying to give credit to the Economic Recovery team, embarrassed the Minister, who certainly went into his own district with his sleeves rolled up? And even though, as the Member for Burin - Placentia West said, it was a sweetheart deal, and we never got the answers to the questions we asked about it, he did get a plant going in his district - all due respect to him - as he should. And provided a tremendous amount of work for the people in the area.

Unfortunately it was not a good year in the fishery there, but there is nothing he could do about that. But he did get a plant

going. The credit goes to whom? The Minister of Fisheries? No, not likely. The Economic Recovery team. Because the Government is so embarrassed by the Economic Recovery team's activities, or lack thereof, that consequently they have to give the credit that belongs to other people - hard working civil servants, and in some cases, hard working politicians - to the team.

So perhaps in responding the Minister of Development will give us a list of activities in which the Economic Recovery team had been directly involved.

What have they initiated, what new ideas have they initiated, what new projects have they started, how many jobs have they provided and the loans and grants which are being provided here, are we getting our money's worth or is it just mismanagement in some of the older projects which were there and where we have to throw extra good dollars after bad. In an area -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Hearn: Well, we have said before and you can mark it down that the Economic Recovery Team, could quite easily be the enviroponic plantation of the Liberal Government, consequently, I hope the Minister, when he stands will give us answers to those questions.

In an area such as my own, a rural rugged district of St. Mary's - The Capes, we have three fish plants, two are not operating, one is under the axe, so far I have not seen any activity from the Economic Recovery Team. I have not seen them in there knocking on doors, I have not seen them asking

for meetings, I have not seen them come up with any suggestions, so I am wondering where are the Economic Recovery Team members concentrating their energies.

Is it only in Twillingate where the work was already done for them or they just went in, threw out a lot of money for somebody to go in and run the plant, or are they concentrating in areas of need, areas of potential, areas where jobs can be created with very little activity and not a lot of funding, but with some encouragement, backing and some incentives?

One of those days I might even, out of the kindness of my heart give the Premier a list of things that can be done by the Economic Recovery Team, if I thought he would do it.

He said earlier today he is not getting any suggestions, maybe we will give him some suggestions, and then give him some time to see if he could put those into fruition, because, from an Opposition point of view, it is not our job to tear down and destroy, it is our job to point out the weaknesses in Government, what Government is not doing, but surely God, if we see things that can be done in the Province, we are going to make such suggestions and then hope that the Government will follow-up on them, and we will, specifically list several things that can be done, even tell you perhaps, how they can be done. We will not tell you who could do them because it will give you the opportunity to put some of your own people in to do the job.

Most of us do not care who does the job, as long as it is done and done properly and people benefit.

I take some encouragement from that, seeing the Minister of Development looking and nodding his head because we see in the last few days some backing-off on the threats to scuttle education and the health services, we see some backing off, because we think people are listening to what we are saying about the drastic effects which will take place if the Government goes on the course it set out some time ago. So, maybe, indirectly they are taking advice from the Opposition and consequently changing their ways and that is good, there is nothing wrong with that.

There is nothing as good as admitting you are wrong and that you will do what is right and proper; the Premier has always said that, he is a fair-minded man and he said whatever is fair and right and proper he will do and he is not expected to know everything, so consequently trying to make decisions for the fifteen people he has around him, you are going to make some mistakes, therefore, there is nothing wrong with occasionally saying, well now, maybe we did not do the right thing, we were in a bit of a rush and I do not have the most competent people around me so, consequently we have to make some changes.

I think when the Minister of Education gets back, for instance, the Premier is going to have to sit down and have a heart to heart talk with him in relation to some of the directions in which he is setting out, including his last trip to Labrador, which might have caused a long term stir for the Premier and his Government. But we will talk more about that later on.

But anyway there are a number of others and I am sure I see people over there on the edges of their seats who want to get up and respond.

In relation to the money that you are asking us to approve, what is it for? What has the Economic Recovery Team really done to deserve extra funding on top of the \$2.128 million they have gotten already, what have they done to deserve extra funding to continue the line of work and what part do they play in relation to the expenditure of the other \$30 million or so that is there? If they have done something worthwhile, if there are new projects being initiated, if there are new jobs coming on stream then consequently, we will have no hesitation at all in approving such expenditure. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: The hon the Member from Menihek.

Mr. A. Snow:
Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise and speak in this closure debate, a debate that you hear very little coming from the other side. You hear people speaking on this side, talking about why the closure should not be imposed. There should not be a stifling of-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. A. Snow: I do not know, they are scared or too chicken to speak, probably, as were the people on the other side a few minutes earlier.

This closure being imposed on this House has been referred to by previous speakers as a method of -

it is now we are seeing, the hobnail boots of this regime coming down upon the democratic process in closing debate on this supplementary-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. A. Snow: Yes, I said that. I quoted previous speakers in suggesting it was the hobnail boot of this regime coming down on the people of this Province and stifling debate.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible) write a poem now.

Mr. A. Snow: He undoubtedly may be able to write up a poem or do something like that. The hon. Member from Green Bay is very gifted with the pen. Unlike the Member from Exploits who is not gifted with the pen as well as the Member from Green Bay is, he is gifted, according to my information that I am getting from people that have worked with him, he is endowed in a little different manner of gift, according to some teachers that I talked to and I am on dangerous ground, I am told.

But a closure of motion is something that should not be imposed that frequently, I do not believe. It does stifle debate. Historically, we have seen it in this Province; in our modern history, in Parliament. We have seen our only living father, former Premier Joseph R. Smallwood, did it once, and Brian did it twice, and Clyde has already done it three times. I believe that it shows that it is a sign of a Government on the run. It is a Government that is scared to have any discussion or any debate about this bungling of this administration.

The budget that was brought down on March 15th was so far off the mark that the economic forecasting of the Minister of Finance gives credence to astrology. That is what it does. Any man that would come in here and present a budget with a \$10 million surplus and then six months later come back with a \$120 million deficit that is what it does. His economic forecasting does undoubtedly but of course that budget was brought down-

An Hon. Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. A. Snow: The Minister of Finance said that they cut open the goat and examined the entrails and that is how he ended up with his economic forecast but of course we know that March 15th.-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. A. Snow: He was quoting the Minister of Finance as being the gifted educator that he is, was quoting Shakespeare earlier and talked about, I believe he had some quotes from Julius Caesar and of course we know that March 15th. was the Ides of March and he should have prefaced his budget to the people of the province with the soothsayer's comments out of Julius Caesar "Beware the Ides of March".

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. A. Snow: Yes and there are a lot of people out there with a lean and hungry look, and I am sure that some of the stories that I am hearing that somebody might be saying Et Tu Brute when they looked a couple of seats over. Earlier this afternoon we heard the Premier talking about why he had to impose closure in the debate and he admonished the

opposition for obstructionism, I believe he referred to it as, that we are merely obstructing the Legislative process of this province and since I have come to the House of Assembly I do not believe you can label me as a person who obstructed the Legislative process in this Chamber. One of the things that had bothered me is that when I speak to a petition or raise a question and do not get proper answers I find that difficult to deal with. My previous involvement in government was with municipal government and when you ask questions, or somebody asks you a question you deliver honest, upfront answers to the best of your ability. I find that we do not get that type of discourse in this forum. I have asked questions, presented petitions and as an example of that one of the things that I did present was a petition concerning the closure of an administration office, Motor Vehicle Registration Office in Wabush which the honourable Minister of Works, Services and Transportation thinks is in Labrador City! Now the office that was there is located in Wabush. Now I want to make sure that he understands that. The one that he shut down is the one in Wabush but anyway when I did present the petition the Premier rose in response to the petition and said that one of the reasons why this office was closed was the fact that, and I will quote what the Premier said as recorded in Hansard, the Premier said on November 13th. that "Mr. Speaker we are going to implement the program for the whole of the Province so that the whole of the Province will have improved access to drivers licences and driver registration", and that is why I presented the petition asking that

this office would remain open until the service was implemented throughout the province, the Premier stated that. He went on to say, 'We have great trouble getting legislation through the House we have invoked closure on every other piece of Legislation simply because hon. Members opposite just hold up the Government's agenda. He then continues on, 'We cannot get the ordinary business through the House without invoking closure. If the Members in the Opposition are more concerned about promoting their own political ends than they are about looking after the tax payers of the Province, we are going to have more trouble getting good solid legislation through this House and other legislation like that piece of legislation. Now that piece of Legislation that he is talking about is legislation that would give the power, would privatize this government service that is now being offered throughout this Province in Newfoundland and Labrador that it be held up. So what the Premier is suggesting here is that he is invoking closure on the legislation so that he can move on to this good legislation that is going to give this service to the people of the Province. As a matter of fact, he continues on and he says, 'We will see, Mr. Speaker, that we will implement that program as soon as we get the legislation through the House and authorization to do it.'

What the Premier is suggesting is as soon as this piece of legislation that we are debating here today is finished that they are immediately going to proceed with this other piece of legislation that is going to privatize the Motor Vehicle Registration in this Province.

Well, that is misleading this House, because he knows and I know and so do the hon. Members of this House that Bill is not going to be coming up within the next week or so. Not only that -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: The Bill to Privatize the Motor Vehicle Registration.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: Yes. The Government House Leader is nodding his head in affirmation of that fact.

Of course, the other part of this to is even if we passed that Bill here today, or next week, it is going to take that regime over there a year.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: Well, now the Government House Leader is saying that I am wrong. He is saying that I am wrong. Yet, in a press statement that was put out by that infamous Minister, the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation, and the telephone numbers for the PR people who would answer any questions pertaining to this issue, they suggested that it is going to be one year before this service will be implemented because they have only had one meeting with the bank and the bank has told them it is going to cost a substantial amount more than \$1. I am sure of that.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: It is there. All the hon. Government House Leader has to do is telephone these numbers and one of the public employees who are employed as

public relations officers will tell him that it is going to take one year for this service to be implemented. So for the hon. Premier to suggest that we had to invoke closure so that we can go on: that was one of the things he said he would be able to open, this new service, and now the hon. House Leader suggests it is going to be three months. Well, I suggest that he put out a press release on it because the PR people are saying it is one year. Now, that is another example of how this Government, this regime does not know what they are doing, the left hand does not know what the right hand is doing. In this bill we are talking about giving approval to borrow money to fund the Economic Recovery Commission, a Commission that was put there to administer the economic development of this Province. One of the things they will be doing, of course, is cancelling, as the hon. Minister of Finance suggested that he was going to save a couple of hundred thousand dollars of the taxpayers money, he said, by cancelling the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Savings Bonds. I spoke previously on this, and I will say it again, I think it is an unwise move for Government to be doing this. I believe it was a good move of the previous administration. The former socialist from Pleasantville, now the capitalist from Water Street, the man who walks in different shoes every day, and there is no wonder he needs new shoes in his mouth, is it? I believe that was good legislation. As the Province of Quebec introduced some vehicles, if you want to call them that, about ten years ago, I thought it was a good move when the Province of Quebec did that ten years ago, and I thought it was a good move

for the previous administration, the people who administered the previous Government that was in power. Unlike this regime what they did was they wanted to create more of an enterprise spirit in this Province and they provided these two vehicles, just two of many vehicles that should be provided, and those two, I believe, were good initiatives and should have been continued. I believe the Minister of Finance is being penny-wise and pound-foolish by doing this. He is suggesting that he was going to have to pay a few dollars more, and so he would, but what he failed to mention is that he was going to be paying it to Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who would invest into the future of this Province by providing capital from the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation and then they could then provide that capital to the entrepreneurs of this Province to go out and produce new opportunities for development, provide a tool of capital. Now, the new capitalist over there from Water Street will have the opportunity to stand up and wear out his new pair of shoes when he gets to his feet, but I would hope that he would please keep quite and allow me to finish.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. A. Snow: That is the hon. Member for Pleasantville, the former socialist who is now the capitalist from Water Street.

Mr. Noel: Confess yourself.

Mr. A. Snow: Yes, I have left leanings, if you will, but I have not gone so far right as the hon. member has. I have to admit that I do not apologize for being a member of the NDP but I have not

gone so far right as the hon. Member has.

An Hon. Member: He was in the NDP?

Mr. A. Snow: Yes, I have to admit that I do not apologize for being a Member of the NDP, the New Democratic Party of this Province. And I certainly was. I was one of the founding members as a matter of fact of the local Menihek - it was called Labrador West New Democratic Party Association in Labrador West. One of the founding members there and I guess I sowed the seed and I guess Peter Fenwick reaped the harvest.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: Oh, back in my steel worker days. And I am very proud of those days. I believe I learned a lot by working with the NDP. And it taught me to have a social conscience. Which is one of the things that this Government, this regime, does not have. They do not have a social conscience. Not one iota of it do they have.

But these two initiatives to stimulate the private sector which is going to be the engine of economic recovery of this Province, they should have been left in place. And I would urge this regime to continue with that initiative that the previous administration put in place, because they were good initiatives. They were found to be good initiatives in other Provinces and I believe that they could help this Province.

An Hon. Member: Do not say what you do not believe.

Mr. A. Snow: The Newfoundland

Stock Savings Plan was another opportunity for people to invest, take a direct equity investment into companies and to provide new employment opportunities for the people of this Province. It was a route or a vehicle of active investment to provide new capital which is very, very important for a new enterprise. It is something that we have to do in this Province, is provide a lot of capital for new enterprise. It is no good for this Government to think that all they have to do is privatize some of the things that the Government are doing. Such as what they are doing with the Motor Vehicle Registration office in Wabush. It is absolutely senseless just to turn it over to a bank. If you are going to create new opportunities and privatize things you also have to create the climate on the other side, that the people will be out there willing to invest and have the opportunity of raising capital.

And that was what one of these two things, these two vehicles, could do. So you just can not have this single-minded, narrow, or myopic approach that this administration -

Some Hon. Members: Myopic? Myopic?

An Hon. Member: That is a good one.

An Hon. Member: Myopia Incorporated.

An Hon. Member: Yes, 'mycrosopic'.

An Hon. Member: Myopia Inc.

Mr. A. Snow: In the March 15 budget that this Minister brought in he talked about the three priorities. And the three

priorities of this administration were going to be economic development, health care and education. Now, we saw what they did with economic development, they bungled that, they fumbled the football badly.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: They fumbled wells, I believe the hon. Member from Pleasantville said. They fumbled wells. That is a good line. He is getting good over there. I hope that he keeps all those things and when he stands to his feet Hansard will properly record them and he will be there forever in the history of this Province.

They have fumbled with the economic development schemes that they have come up with. And their other two priorities were health care and education, and what have they done there?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. A. Snow: I know in my district these threats of cuts will have a devastating effect on the quality of health care in Labrador West because we live, unlike some of the other people here in this Chamber who live close to several different hospitals, in Western Labrador we only have one single hospital servicing the 12 or 13 thousand people who live in Western Labrador and another community across the border in Fermont servicing 3 or 4 thousand people there. The Captain William Jackman Memorial Hospital is an excellent facility, health care facility, one of the best managed, the best run facilities in this Province but it needs resources to run it. It is unfortunate that this administration, this regime has

either one of two things. They are either going to be cutting this or they are setting the stage for the biggest tax grab, which I suspect and a lot of people in this province are becoming suspicious of, they are setting the stage of the largest tax grab that has ever been made on the people of this Province. It is either one or the other. Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Chairman: The honourable Member for Humber Valley.

Mr. Woodford: Thank you Mr.Chairman. Just a few short comments on this supplementary bill and closure I guess, closure itself on Bill 66 and a few of the comments right from the start Mr.Chairman, I asked the other night when I was speaking on this bill in our ten minute back and forth I asked the Minister a couple of questions. One of the questions was what amount of the 600-thousand dollars in grants went out in grants and who did they go to. So the Minister has not told me yet. Maybe he has not had time to get the information so I will take it that he still is looking. But 600-thousand dollars Mr.Chairman going through the ERC in grants, to me is a lot of money. I would like to see more but if you were further on into your mandate, but the 600-thousand dollars to the ERC, especially when the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation was mainly before, a lending institution and nobody in this Province, no business person in this Province ever got a break from the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation because if they did, if there is anybody out there that did they should let me

know because I have never met them that ever got a break because they knew nothing about the small business person in this province. They had absolutely no social conscience, none, absolutely none. They dealt with big business. If your project or application came in was not at least up around 500,000 or a million dollars they would not look at you. Now the interest rates charged by Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, the Minister can correct me on this one if I am wrong, I think they were the same as a chartered bank, almost the same as a chartered bank or probably in some cases worse. Now I know of all kinds of people, business people around this Province that had nothing but trouble. Now there were a few, I must say but then again when you look at the characters involved they were well used to putting together applications for big business, but the typical small business person in the Province then, and when we were there, and we were there then, I criticized it, and I criticized it today, or up until now anyway, but we will have to see what happens. The typical small businessman in the Province, when he picked up the application forms, got the application forms from the Development Corporation, they were usually forms with eight or ten pages in them. Now, you give that to a fisherman anywhere in this Province, most of the fishermen in this Province, or to the logger, or to the farmer, or to anybody involved, somebody in the tourism industry, and the first time they look at that, Mr. Chairman, as soon as they look at the application they are turned off, so he has either got to go to the so-called consultants who are making all kinds of money on the

backs of the fellow who is trying to do something for himself. I experienced it some sixteen or seventeen years ago and they are still doing it. The only recourse that the small business person has in this Province, and I found always had a good word for it, was the rural development authority. At least you had three ministers on the board representing the Departments of Forestry, Agriculture, and Development who, in most cases, had a heart. When they sat down along with the members of the board they could make a decision right there in the room, they did not have to go any further, and most of the time they knew the individuals involved. Because, usually if anybody in the Province came to their Member they always brought it to a member of the board and he in turn had a look at it in a constructive and favourable way. Now, in my short term there as Minister, Mr. Chairman, I witnessed it first hand. I knew about it before ever I got in there, but when I got around that table-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: No, not only Tories got loans. Well, I do not know what happened before that but I doubt it. I saw lots of Liberals in my district, lots of good Liberals, good business people that got loans and I went to bat for them because I make no distinctions and leave anybody out regardless of what political colors they are. But that is the only hope they had because each loan given out through the Rural Development Authority was at three percentage points at that time below prime.

Now I do not know if that policy is still in place because

everything now, where everything is rolled into the Enterprise Newfoundland or NewCorp, I do not know if that policy is still in place. But that was excellent, and I will say the Minister of Development, the few cases I have had last year on it, that when I did go to him about an individual in the district, I did not ask him to approve it. I said look at it in a constructive way. This individual is a good business person, he has a good sound track record and at least give him a chance.

So, that has been done on a number of occasions, but how many people are out there that have no help? They look at the application, and when someone is sitting in behind the desk, that is getting a paycheque Friday evening, guaranteed a paycheque every Friday evening anyway, he picks up the application and he looks at it, and he rolls down into the first two or three pages, oh, we had one of them last week, we had one of them a month ago. So we cannot approve another one of them, without any further consultation, without any further communication, and then all of a sudden the individual is struck down right in his tracks. He goes no further.

And that is there, it was there a few years ago, I would say it is there today, and unless some of the Ministers who are responsible for those departments takes the bull by the horns - and the main thing that I stress with regards to this NewCorp or Enterprise Newfoundland is to make sure that the Rural Development Authority or some of the rules and regulations that were instituted under the Rural Development Authority are kept there.

Now, I understand that Authority or that Board can be stacked in conjunction with the ACOA grants up to a maximum, I think any loans of \$60 thousand or under, they can be done on a stacking procedure in consultation with Rural Development and ACOA. So, I hope that does not change, Mr. Chairman, because that was an excellent programme, it is there today and I do not want to see the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation alone, alone, acting as a lending institution for the ERC or anybody else.

But in any case, if I was given today a job to do and give me a bank with which to do it, I do not think there would be any problem in creating some jobs around this Province I can assure you, and that is exactly what the ERC has; they were given a job to do a mandate to fill, some eight to ten years to do it, the best kinds of salary to do it and then they gave them the bank to back up whatever applications come in or whatever ideas came in from the public, so how can you go wrong, if those two people cannot do it nobody will do it.

The only thing that will stop it is the attitude of individuals out there, who if they have been put down and they cannot get to first base by the same - the thing that worries me too in the ERC, is that, some of the people who are acting as the Regional Presidents and Chairpersons today, are former bankers. They came out of the banking system and unless they change their attitudes, from what they had in the banking system, in private enterprise, Mr. Chairman, I do not think small businesses in this Province is going to have much of a chance.

When you look at the amount of bankruptcies today, the total number of bankruptcies in this Province and not only in this Province but all across Canada, but I worry moreso about here. We have such a small industrial base, a very small industrial base; we have in the resource industry, all kinds of opportunity in the Forestry sector for instance. The sad thing about that, Mr. Chairman, is that all our forests, most all our forests are owned and operated by big companies. We cannot create, I suppose, not another one job, when the forest industry today is just cutting for pulp wood.

Whatever pulp wood is used, if it is 300,000 cords a year, wherever it is cut, there are no other jobs. There are no new jobs, unless there is an increase in the newsprint capacity. The only jobs, Mr. Chairman, is in the logging itself; in the logging and the sawing of lumber, because for every 1,000ft. you put out in the logging industry, you are creating new jobs. You are creating new jobs because the potential is there, the sales are there. We are importing millions of board feet of lumber per year and that could be developed in the Province if we could get back some of the claims from the lumber companies.

Mr. Chairman, with regards to some comments made over the last few days on amalgamation, the so-called forced amalgamation of communities, because as far as I am concerned what the Minister could not do through amalgamation, and after having said he was going to amalgamate X number of communities, they kicked up and all of a sudden the Minister went into the so-called feasibility studies then with municipalities,

and now seeing they are back and some communities are still not satisfied the only recourse, Mr. Chairman, is for the Minister to go and bring in the Regional Services Board Act. Every opportunity was there for the Minister under the Municipalities Act, under Section 3 which has to do with regions, to do the same things under that as he is doing now under the Regional Service Board, expect that the Minister himself can direct it, and the second big thing I see in it, is that there is no feasibility studies that have to be carried out. The Regional Services Boards, although not the same in number, but the same in name as a Regional Service Board but always as a regional service in municipalities, it worked before where the communities paid on a per capita basis for the services they enjoyed. That was always done in municipalities across this Province and I am sure that if they were given the choice to take that route, rather than be told what to do, that a lot of municipalities in the Province today would do just that.

Mr. Chairman, I attended a meeting down in Summerside, I think it was last Spring, with the Premier on the subject of amalgamation. He had four communities from his district of the Bay of Islands and one community from my district, namely Hughes Brook. The five communities met at the community hall in Summerside. The Premier was there and I was there representing the community of Hughes Brook and we answered all kinds of questions pertaining to amalgamation. Each and every community in the Premier's district had something to say, each and every community asked questions. We went on for two or

three hours, and at the end of the day I stood in my place and asked the Premier a question. The question I put to the Premier at that time was, it is obvious that the municipalities here tonight do not want to be amalgamated, and it is obvious that the municipality that I represent, Hughes Brook, does not want to be amalgamated, and if they absolutely do not want it will they be forced into amalgamation? He stood in his place and categorically stated that no community would be forced to amalgamate. Now, I was there. It was not reported by the press, it was not reported by someone else in the hall. I was there and I am sure that each and every mayor representing those communities would say the same thing, but when I see the Premier stand in his place and say that there may be some cases in the Province where amalgamation may be necessary, and if the communities do not comply then I will bring in into the House and each and every Member here will vote on it. The Premier knows full well that he has a majority, that not a Member on the other side is going to vote against him. So to me, Mr. Chairman, the question that again I would like to ask is, where is democracy? The communities say they do not want it, period. They do not want it. Do not, on one hand, say that you are not going to do it, and on the other hand say you will do it.

Now with last year's budget - I think it was the 1989-1990 budget - the subsidies to Newfoundland Hydro were cut out, the \$31 million to Newfoundland Hydro under the PDD system. And in conjunction with that there was \$9 million cut out and Newfoundland Hydro was forced to float their own bond, to pay for their own

bonds. Which amounted to another \$10 million, bringing it up to around \$40 million, \$41 million. At the same time there was a request from Newfoundland Light for an increase in power rates. That altogether in conjunction, I think it came to somewhere around 10 per cent or 12 per cent within a two year period.

Now that to me, if you put that on any expenditure in a small business of this Province today, I mean most small businesses are only making it anyway, if they are, they are probably taking a salary out of it for themselves. And they are getting absolutely nothing else except for the bit of equity that they are building up in their business. Now you take 10 per cent in expenditure just in light bills alone. It could mean the difference of whether that particular business lives or dies. And it is obvious that businesses in this Province, when you look at the bankruptcy rate, this is what is happening to some of the people because of those rates. You add that, then you add the payroll tax, then you add the 2 per cent to 3 per cent corporate income tax. And I can guarantee you that if there was a survey done, that I would say 90 per cent of the businesses that went bankrupt in this Province within the last year went bankrupt mostly because of those increases. Now granted, there is a decrease in sales in some cases as well, but it was constituted because of the fact that those businesses were incurred with all those extra expenditures.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I started off by asking the Minister a couple of days ago about the \$600,000 in grants. Now, I would like to have the answers to that at least by

tomorrow anyway. Because I said from the start that \$600,000 would be - especially if you were talking about, I suppose, anything else. But when it comes to Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation I was totally surprised when the Minister of Finance stood the other day and told me that it was \$600,000 went out in grants from Newfoundland Development Corporation. Because I do not know. If you look back through the records I do not know when they ever gave out a grant. I even question what loans they gave out, to be honest with you.

But that is one thing I think the Minister might have some information there for me on that now, - but - on the Economic Recovery Commission with regards to the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation on the grants that they gave out.

Now I would have to mention again about the cut in the substitute days and the highway cuts again before I sit down.

I think, when all is said and done - and some of the questions asked here this past week and the answers coming from opposite were 'no' - over the next few days they are going to find out what I was saying was exactly the truth. When the Minister of Education does come back I will put the question to him and we will see -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Woodford: I do not know, he may be down in the Persian Gulf. If he is down in the Persian Gulf he may not get back. Anyway, Mr. Chairman, just a few short comments. I would like for the Minister of Finance to give me the

information with regards to the \$600,000. As someone said earlier this evening, this closure motion, the fourth time in six months, or the third time within six months, and the in the last 41 years or 42 years we had three, one under the Liberal Administration of Mr. Smallwood and two under Frank Moores and Mr. Peckford. So that says something, Mr. Chairman. If the Ministers of the different departments would like to bring in Bills, I mean, bring in Bills. It is one thing to have them on the Order Paper, it is another thing to get up and stand up and say we are going to discuss a certain Bill, that is another matter. Put it on the table and I am sure that Members Opposite here would discuss some of the Bills without hesitation. A real change I say to the Minister of Social Services certainly does not mean different, I can assure you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Furey: There were a couple of questions, Mr. Chairman, that were asked over the last little while but I would just like to say, first of all, that in listening to this debate so far I think a couple of people have made some sense. The Member for Menihek: I would like to commend him on his speech so far. I think he has been very genuine and very sincere and made a lot of sense. The Member for Deer Lake in his small contribution from Humber Valley made half sense. Not all of it made sense but I say half of it made sense. So the Member for Menihek made a lot of sense, the Member for Humber Valley made half sense, but the rest of it I conclude was mostly nonsense. It

has been nonsense because there really has not been any fruitful dialogue or meaningful contribution. There have not been any real questions that have been put forward.

The Member for Humber Valley asked a question. He asked what is the \$705,000 for the Recovery Commission. The Recovery Commission, you will understand that there are certain projects that cannot access Government funding whether it is federal or provincial or whatever, for any great variety of reasons. They might not meet the criteria. There may be a time problem. There can be a plethora of reasons why companies cannot access that kind of money. So we determined in consultation with the Recovery Commission that there should be a pool of capital there that can be used in circumstances that require, especially urgent circumstances where there are no other sources of capital. You asked for some examples, I believe, of where we did that.

Mr. Woodford: (Inaudible).

Mr. Furey: Well, one of those examples was the Board of Trade. It has an investments opportunities program that we had to put \$50,000 from that \$600,000 into it. We have also budgeted in here \$150,000 to marry to that \$50,000, for a total contribution of \$200,000. Now that \$200,000 will trigger another \$200,000 from Ottawa for a total project cost of \$400,000. We have said to the Board of Trade, do not just limit yourselves to St. John's, let us ensure that when you do these investment opportunities, and that is designing a catalogue of opportunities across Newfoundland and Labrador to bring outside

investment in, do not limit yourselves just because you are the St. John's Board of Trade. We will put some money on the table to trigger the \$200 thousand Federal capital, but you ensure for us that you look at the whole island and Labrador, so that if there are investment opportunities all around Newfoundland and Labrador catalogue all of them.

So it is a mirrored investment opportunities program whereby the Board of Trade will catalogue these opportunities, and they did it very successfully, I should tell the hon. Member, last year in Hong Kong. They were there and made a tremendous contribution to the various seminars that happened in Kowloon and on the island of Hong Kong, presenting investment opportunities, at that time, for St. John's. So that is one example.

I have twenty-eight examples here, I am not going to go through all of them. But another one that comes to mind is the Bourgeois Legacy Film Project done by Allfilms Limited here in Newfoundland. Now that particular one, I should tell hon. Members, they had a pool of capital from Téléfilm Canada, from various Federal Agencies, but in order to access that money they had to marry it with some private capital. They could only raise a certain amount of that private capital. So the Recovery Commission in its wisdom went to that pot of money, that \$600 thousand and said you require \$68 thousand, we will supply you with that \$68 thousand. I should tell the hon. Member that \$68 thousand triggered \$246 thousand into the economy of Newfoundland creating forty jobs on that project in Newfoundland.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Furey: It came from Telefilm Canada, the Secretary of State, a number of various Federal agencies. But the point is, remember that they could not trigger that money and cause it to flow unless they had an investment themselves of, I believe, \$80 thousand.

The Recovery Commission recognized that there was a time factor involved here and in order to trigger the money they had to have their capital investment at a certain point in time. They could not access ACOA, they could not stack from other programs. The Recovery Commission turned to its pool of capital the \$600 thousand and said this is a good project. This money will trigger the flow of nearly a quarter of a million dollars extra. That quarter of a million married to the six hundred for a total of three hundred thousand will spin out forty jobs in an industry that we wanted to support - the arts and the culture of this Province.

That film, I should point out to the hon. Member, not only has benefit from the point of view of the jobs that would be created but is focusing in and looking at a very important part of our Province, the Port au Port Peninsula.

But what are the other benefits that will spin out from that? That film will be purchased by CBC. CBC will run that film right across the Nation. Can you imagine the dollars we would have to pump out in advertising to pay for that, for that hour long film to be played in the Nation during prime time? I would have to spend the entire budget for my tourism

promotion to do that. So do not only look at it in terms of the value of the dollars that we are putting in. Look at in terms of the value of the dollar we are putting in, the dollars it will trigger, the jobs it will create, and the promotion of the Province as a whole. So there is a very good, clear, classical example of why that money is required.

I should tell the hon. Member that of that \$600 thousand it caused twenty-eight meaningful projects to occur around Newfoundland and Labrador. And it is not geographic specific, it is very spread out across the Province.

We are very happy about that and that is why we are saying if there are other examples like that let's put in reserve another 400-thousand dollars for the recovery commission to have that access in the event that they urgently require, and these are businesses that come in off the street to the recovery commission or fax them or telefax them and say we have a great project. But I am sure the honourable Member for Humber Valley recognizes that you need to have that source of capital where nobody else can access other programs and the project is good. You cannot let it die on the vine so to speak or ignore it. The second thing is that incorporated in that 705-thousand - I believe you asked what was the total. The 600-thousand is previous and I think the Minister detailed some of the projects. I just gave you two examples there are 28. I will share them with you in private if you like or I can list them all tonight But I do not think that would be any benefit. Of the 705 extra that we are asking for, 480 will go into that pot to replenish

it. Another 150-thousand will be married into the original 50 for the Investment Opportunity Program with the Board of Trade and I think that another 30-thousand was on the shortfall for the Economic Advisory Board which is a number of business people around the province that we asked to sit on that board and advise the Recovery Commission who were the implementation arm of this program. The 2.6 million, I think the Minister of Finance detailed that and the Minister can correct me if I am wrong. Give him a poke. I think the 2.6 million for Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, you detailed that in your speech. So I don't think there's any real reason to go into that. I think also that the Member for Humber Valley will know that the Minister detailed 17-million dollars for the Development Bonds and how it was costing us a substantial amount of money, but these bonds were coming back in for redemption soon, and that is under the previous government's program. We are just repaying under that program the redemption time that has come up. With respect to the other 10-million dollars: that 10-million dollars is the capital fund required by Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador to carry on with its program, and the honourable Member knows that its programs are essentially loan programs, term loans, young entrepreneur loans, venture capital loans, equity loans, interim financing loans so he should know that when he votes to support this bill it's to put the 10-million dollars back in place in Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador where the vacuum will have been left by the removal of the Newfoundland Development Savings Bond. Recall also that

the money is not what we are voting on today to grant. It is money that we are voting on today to loan. It is money that will be loaned out and the corporation I believe over the last little while has loaned some 20-million dollars to hundreds of companies around the province creating thousands of jobs or maintaining thousands of jobs. So that is essentially what this 30-million dollars is. It is an extra 2.6 to insure that Enterprise Newfoundland is up and running and staffed properly and regionalized. It is 10-million dollars capital funds to insure that they have working money for their loan program and the other 17-million very simply is the redemption bonds that are required to fulfill previous programs instituted by the former government. I think that puts it in a nutshell, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Chairman: The honourable Member for Harbour Main.

Mr. Doyle: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am very pleased to have a few words to say in this debate tonight, and as the Member for St. Mary's-The Capes indicated when he spoke this evening this is an historic occasion when you get right down to it because this is the third time that the government has introduced closure in a six month period.

You know that the Government and the Premier do not want to hear that. The Premier is very sensitive about the fact that he has introduced closure on three occasions. And you do not blame him for being very, very sensitive, Mr. Chairman, because it can only be interpreted, any government that introduces closure

and makes such widespread use of closure, as this Government has done in only a six month period, it can only be interpreted by the people of the Province as not only having contempt for the House of Assembly but also, more importantly, contempt for the people of the Province.

Mr. Chairman, the President of Treasury Board says that is nonsense but he knows in his own heart and soul that it is not. He is very sensitive about it and that is why the Premier had to come in here this evening and come to his aid and try to explain to the people of the Province why they are bringing in closure.

A Member should never forget, Mr. Chairman, that the Members on this side of the House represent 48 per cent of the people of the Province. Forty-eight per cent of the people of the Province voted for the people on this side of the House. And that is a bigger percentage, I would say to the President of Treasury Board, that is a bigger percentage than voted for the Government but because of the democratic system that we have and because of the distribution of seats and what have you in the Province, the party who had the smaller percentage of the votes gets to form the Government.

But the Premier and the Government should never forget that we do represent 48 per cent of the people of the Province and as a result we have a responsibility to the people of the Province to see that their views are well aired and that the people get a chance to let the Government know the heavy-handed approach that they are using in bringing in closure. And it is a very, very heavy-handed approach by

Government to try and muzzle the Opposition, to try and cut off debate, and to literally try and shove through, and shove down the throats of the people of the Province, this legislation without adequate time to debate the issues that are facing the people of the Province.

And never before, and we will make sure that everyone understands, never before since Confederation, has any Government made such widespread use of the closure motion than this Government has in such a very short period of time, three times in a six month period.

Mr. Chairman, it is not our intention as an Opposition to try in any way to be obstructionists, even though we have been accused by the Government. But it is not our intention, Mr. Chairman, to be obstructionists at all, it is our intention to represent the people well.

Traditionally, a supply bill gives Members on both sides of the House as a matter of fact, the opportunity to question the Minister of Finance on his infamous budget that he brought in in March. It gives everyone the opportunity to ask questions on very important issues. And we have been asking the Minister of Finance question after question after question and the Minister of Finance has refused to give answers. And this is why I would say to the Minister of Development and the Member for St. John's South, this is why the Opposition feels it is a grave responsibility to continue to debate the Supply Bill when we do not have the answers coming from the Minister of Finance or from the Premier or anyone else. And we have been attempting to get these answers in

question period every single day and no answers have been forthcoming.

A very important question as it relates to the health care cuts that are going to occur in the Province, very important issues that affect so many, many people of the Province. Cut after cut after cut is being announced by the Government. We have been attempting through the Supply Bill, through the Loan Bill, to get answers from the Minister of Finance and we have been refused those answers. And for that, Mr. Chairman, we have been branded by the Premier and by the Government as being obstructionists. But we will continue, if that is being obstructionists, we will continue to be obstructionists and we will continue to try and get these answers.

Now, Mr. Chairman, it has never been known before that any Government would say and the Premier said it publicly, he said it in the House of Assembly only a couple of days ago, and I believe he said it again tonight, that they will make use of the closure motion on more than three occasions. Any controversial piece of legislation that comes before the House of Assembly, the Government has indicated that it is going to use closure.

Now we have some very, very controversial pieces of legislation which we want to debate in this House. The Regional Services Board Bill is one bill which we intend to fully debate. We have had a committee travelling around the Province, using the taxpayers money, hearing from councils all across the Province who have spent a great deal of time, and in a lot of

cases spent a great deal of money to prepare their cases and put these cases before the Government. So, is it not reasonable for these people to expect the Opposition and the Government members also to fully debate that type of a bill because it has a lot of ramifications for a lot of areas of the Province. Now, is it the Government's intention to bring in a closure motion when the Regional Services Board Bill is brought before the House of Assembly?

We have no intention, I would say to the President of Treasury Board, of being obstructionists and everybody trying to keep that Bill going and going and going. But we do want to have the opportunity to ensure that the views of the people of the Province, especially the councils who will be affected by this Regional Service Board Bill that they have their concerns aired, and fully aired. I think the Government has the responsibility to see that that opportunity is given. We are not asking, we fully intend to take advantage of that and to see that the people of the Province are given the opportunity to make their concerns known in this legislation.

We have the Labour Relations Act which could be a very, very controversial piece of legislation. Now, is it the Government's intention to bring in closure on the Labour Relations Act? No, Mr. Chairman, we certainly do not intend to hold anything up forever, but the Government House Leader has indicated that there are some minor pieces of legislation which will go through very quickly but on the other hand there are some major pieces of legislation which

will have to be fully debated and as an Opposition we have that responsibility and the people expect no less from us but to do that on their behalf.

So the Labour Relations Act is a very important Bill that I am sure the labour movement in the Province will want us to have a few words on. It would be very disappointing indeed for these people to see this Government bring in the closure motion, to stifle debate, to cut off debate and not have the views of these various organizations fully aired.

You have the Ombudsman Act, which is another very important piece of business which is going to come before this House. I understand that the President of Treasury Board needs to have that Bill passed in this session of the Legislature. But you will have to understand as well that is a very important Act. And at a time when the Government is possibly, and I do not know for sure, but at a time when the Government is possibly thinking about downgrading those offices, the Consumer Affairs offices in the Province, it is going to be even more important to make sure that the views of the people are fully aired on the Ombudsman Act as well. And it would be very disappointing if the Government was to bring in closure on that Act.

The Highway Traffic Act is another important piece of legislation. The Minister is going to be increasing the fines in the Province somewhere by 40 per cent to 60 per cent. Now if the Government House Leader wants information as to how long we intend to debate certain bills I am sure the Opposition House

Leader would be only too pleased to make all that information known to him. But I am saying to him that that is an important piece of legislation that I certainly would not want to see the Government invoke closure on.

Also, the Child Welfare Act is an important piece of legislation. Chiropractors, Occupational Health and Safety. All of the indications that I am getting are that the occupational health and safety inspectors in the Province are going to be downgraded, we are hearing.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Well, I am not going to tell the hon. gentleman the source of my information here this evening.

An Hon. Member: Are you making that up?

Mr. Doyle: No, I am not making that up. Occupational health and safety is a very, very important area. And we are hearing that - how many inspectors, I would ask the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, do we have in occupational health and safety within her Department right now?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: No, to be quite honest with the Minister I do not know. I was there twenty or twenty-five days. I hardly got to know where my office was located. So I would ask the Minister now, she has been in the Department of Employment and Labour Relations for an eighteen month period, how many occupational health and safety inspectors do we have in the Province?

Maybe the Member for St. John's South, an old safety man himself, can tell us how many occupational health and safety inspectors we have.

Well, I indicated to the President of Treasury Board that we have an Act on the order paper now, an occupational health and safety Act. Which we certainly hope that the Government would not use the heavy hand and bring in closure, because that is a very, very important area that should be fully debated. And we are hearing that the number -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Yes, but we are hearing as well that the number of occupational health and safety inspectors is going to be reduced. I asked the Minister, she does not know how many people she has within her Department.

An Hon. Member: She asked what they were.

Mr. Doyle: (Inaudible). And surely we would not have the Government introduce closure on the Crown Lands Act. Now if you want to talk about a controversial piece of legislation that has to be probably the most controversial piece of legislation that the Government has on the books.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Around the pond act. And never before in the history of the Province has a Crown Lands Act been so much debated by the people of the Province and received so much public attention.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: There has never been a

Crown Lands Act received as much public attention as this one. And it would be very, very disappointing indeed if the Government was to introduce closure on that important bill, but from every indication that we get, that the Government intends to plow ahead in spite of adverse public opinion on that particular bill. And we had a committee on that bill as well that travelled all around the Province, I believe and hear representations from an awful lot of people who are concerned that the Government is going to go ahead with The Crown Lands Act in its present form.

The committee incidentally might have worked hard and all the rest of it, but they have done very, very little to ease the tension and to ease the fears of the people who have expressed a great deal of concern about that Act. Because if that Act is passed in its present form the Cabinet will have the authority to lease land right to the edge of a pond, Mr. Chairman.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Pardon me?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: Yes. The Governments will have the power to lease land right to the edge of the pond, the ten metre buffer zone will be gone, will it not? So, Mr. Speaker, Newfoundlanders are threatened and in danger of losing access to water bodies around the Province.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Doyle: The Member for Lewisporte says, I cannot read. Well, let me indicate to him that

he should have a look at the Act to see if he thinks it is any different than what I am saying to him that it is. It is in its present form, Cabinet will have the right to authorize the lease or grant of land right to the edge of the water way. So, Mr. Chairman, that is of great concern to the people of the Province because it is perceived that Cabinet has too much power. This Bill will enable the Government to issue a grant or a lease in that respect. Why does Cabinet need that type of authority anyway? Why does Cabinet need that type of authority? Why cannot that particular Clause be dropped? Is it the intention of the Government to bring in closure on that particular piece of legislation. So, Mr. Chairman, there is terrible uncertainty.

Let me move along to another point because I only have a few minutes left. The Minister of Development ate into all of my time because I had been recognized and he got up. So, Mr. Chairman, there is terrible uncertainty I would say to the Minister of Finance among Government workers in the Province. We have brought this issue up on numerous, numerous occasions. There is tremendous uncertainty among Government workers in the Province because they do not know if they are going to have a job in three to four months from now. The only answer that we have been able to get from the Minister of Health is that we have to follow a process and people will know how many layoffs are going to occur whenever the Budget is brought down. I would say to the Government that is not good enough for people from the Public Service to feel that type of uncertainty. I would ask the President of Treasury Board how

would he like to be going into the Christmas season not knowing if he is going to have a job in January or February or March when the Government brings down its Budget. You have persons in the Province who are out applying for other jobs in different parts of the country because they have been told by their supervisors that quite possibly they might not have a job in two or three months from now. So they will have to take advantage of every available job that might come their way. Workers are scared. They are very, very scared indeed, Mr. Chairman. Moral is suffering within the Public Service because people are worried about their futures.

Mr. Murphy: That is nothing new.

Mr. Doyle: The Member for St. John's South says that is not new. Well, it is new. When you are hearing rumours that you are going to have 1500 layoffs in the public service that is very, very serious indeed. They have a great deal of concern about their futures. How would the Member for St. John's South like to be going into the new year, or into the Christmas season not know that you are going to have a job when February or March rolls around?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please!

The hon. member's time is up.

The hon. the Member for Torngat Mountains.

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

I will not take any more than twenty-five minutes in my few remarks.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chairman: He said twenty-five minutes.

Mr. Warren: However, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest to my hon. colleagues opposite that as I go through my remarks, in fact it is not very often I do this, but during the last two or three days, since the hon. House Leader brought the motion of closure, I thought at this time I would spend some time in preparing a speech so subsequently I spent the last two or three days, in fact last night after having a meeting with the Resource Policy Committee, around seven o'clock I went to my office and spent the next couple of hours in trying to put together my remarks for the day. Mr. Chairman, if you allow me I may read some from my prepared statement.

Mr. Furey: You will have to table it.

Mr. Warren: I say to my hon. colleague for St. Barbe, the Minister of Development, that I will be only too willing to table my comments. I will table them, but I think it is important that I should read it as I go through. I believe we saw, in the last two or three days, in fact we saw for the last eighteen months, the path that this Government has set out for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and I believe it is not the path that most Newfoundlanders and Labradorians want for them or for their children. When the House Leader, two days ago, brought in closure, and I decided that I would go back over our last forty-odd years of being a Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, let me just say one thing, and I say this to my hon.

colleague for Placentia, that the first Premier of this Province brought in closure on one occasion.

Mr. Smallwood brought closure in on one occasion in this legislature which was very interesting, and that was in the dying years of his reign as Premier. Mr. Chairman, Premier Peckford brought in closure in this legislature and again if you look back at the time that was brought in, it was close to the dying years of his reign. Now we have another Premier bringing in closure only eighteen months within the reign of his Government, so, I would think that what we are seeing now, is that those eighteen months are the beginning of the end of the reign of this Premier, because, if ever there is a subject that will defeat a Government in a democratic country, it is bringing in closure and by the Premier bringing in closure, I believe that we are going to see the demise of this Government when the next election is called, and I say, Mr. Chairman, I am serious.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Mr. Chairman, I would ask that I be heard in silence and in particular from the big mouth for St. John's South. I feel that my rights, Mr. Chairman, as an elected Member of this Legislature has been tampered with by the greatest dictator that North America has ever known.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I will say that again. My rights as an elected Member in this legislature has been dictated by the greatest dictator that this

country has ever known. Mr. Chairman, let me just say that I am saying about the individual who sits in that chair everyday the House is in session, that is the person of whom I am speaking.

An Hon. Member: Who, Tom Murphy? (inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Now, Mr. Chairman, if the hon colleagues opposite- I will illustrate to you people the message I am getting across and hopefully that my colleague for St. John's South will understand where I am coming from with my remarks and in fact, I am quite pleased that the Minister of Fisheries, is listening attentively because he understands where I am coming from. In fact we both campaigned together some years ago and in fact, it is interesting to note that the only poll that the member won was the area that I campaigned for, the only area that he won was the area that I campaigned for. The only two polls he won in that particular district. The Minister of Fisheries in one particular Federal election I campaigned for the honourable gentleman and the only polls that he won were the polls in the particular area that I campaigned for. Now Chairman I do not profess to be knowledgeable on world history and like my honourable colleague said that is known yes-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Warren: I agree. I am not knowledgeable on world history. Honestly I do not understand too much about world history, however since the House Leader brought in this resolution what I did, I went home the night before last and I decided that I would go back over a lot of the history books I had

and so I went back through the history books, in fact I dug up some of the old history books concerning the fifteenth, the sixteenth, the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. I went back over all the different centuries and also in particular, Mr. Chairman, at the same time I looked at the particular leaders in the countries at those particular centuries. Now, Mr. Chairman, let me say to my honourable colleague from Conception Bay South, that one thing that will never be said about Garfield Warren is that he will not go to a public meeting and embarrass teachers. That is one thing I will not do. Anyhow, Mr. Chairman, as I was going through the books for these five centuries, I came upon some interesting names. Okay?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Warren: No Mr. Chairman, let me just say I came upon the name of Napoleon, John A. Macdonald, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Nikita Kruschev, William Booth the leader of the Salvation Army in 1929, Juliana, Queen of the Netherlands, and also Adolf Hitler in 1889, now, Mr. Chairman, of all those on each one of those -

Some Hon. Members:
Oh, oh. (Inaudible)

Mr. Warren:
Mr. Chairman, after all those names that I read there is one other person's name that I came across and I would like to use that person's name in comparison to the Leader of the Government of Newfoundland today. Okay, Mr. Chairman.

Now there has been a great big

laugh about all the names that I just read. I am going to give you the name of another individual whom I did a little research on, and that person's name is John Adams, born in 1735 and died in 1826.

An Hon. Member: John Quincy.

Mr. Warren: No. John Adams. John Quincy Adams was his son. I am not talking about John Quincy Adams, I am talking about John Adams.

Now, Mr. Chairman, who is John Adams? Here are some comments that were attributed to John Adams. All I ask the Members of this Legislature to listen to those comments about John Adams who was the second President of the United States of America, and compare those comments to the Leader of Newfoundland and Labrador today and just see if there is any comparison. Here is something that is attributed to John Adams, the second President of the United States, let us see what it says. Let us see if it is very close to who we have leading our Province. Adams did not agree with the Democrats that men were naturally good and decent. John Adams did not agree that men were naturally good and decent. On the other hand, John Adams believed that human beings were basically selfish and only good because of necessity.

Now, let's compare the Premier of the day to what has been attributed to John Adams. Adams also denied the democratic idea of equality. He pointed out that among all nations that people were naturally divided into two sorts. What were they? The gentlemen and the simple men. That is what John Adams in 1821 said. He said that

the people in this world, in this country, are divided into two categories, one is called the gentlemen and the other is called the simple men. Now the gentlemen being superior in abilities, education and other advantages were therefore qualified to rule.

In 1821 Adams said, gentlemen were superior in abilities, in education and other advantages and were, therefore, qualified to rule. Now is that similar to who we have leading our Province today. Is that not similar to what we have today?

An Hon. Member: Yes sir.

Mr. Warren: What else did Adams say, what else did he say? The average human being he felt could not be entrusted with power. Adams said in 1821 that the average human being could not be entrusted with power. So you can see, Mr. Chairman, why I am using those historians from years ago comparing to a person that we have leading our Province today. Because you know, and I know, and all Newfoundland and Labrador knows that the Premier believes that only one person can rule this Province and that is he only. And that is the problem, Mr. Chairman, and that is where we are coming from.

An Hon. Member: Hear, hear.

Mr. Warren: Now, Mr. Chairman, so therefore that is why the last couple of nights I went through the different names of the people that I gave you and when I saw this fellow Adams, the second President of the United States, I knew as soon as I started reading about him, I could see that it was the ideal Premier that we have today. And so Mr. Chairman, now

let me continue. I was hoping that my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition was here because my next remarks will have something to do with my colleague.

An Hon. Member: Oh, oh.

Mr. Warren: Mr. Chairman, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador do not want a second Adams.

An Hon. Member: A second what?

Mr. Warren: They do not want a second Adams, Mr. Chairman. The people of our Province during the last election exercised their rights in the last election and for some reason they did not want a doubting Thomas and this is why I say to my Leader of the Opposition, his name is Thomas. Okay, the people did not want a Thomas. Okay, Mr. Chairman, now instead of unknowingly, not knowing what we know today, is they voted for a second Adams instead. That is the problem that happened in the last election. They did not trust a doubting Thomas but they elected unknowingly a second Adams.

And in thirty districts, I think it is thirty or thirty one districts, the people decided that they wanted Premier Wells as the Leader of this Government. But at the same time, they did not realize that they were looking at a person almost identical to the second President of the United States that believed that no one is right but himself. That is the problem, that is what has happened. They voted for a person that thought-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: What has it got to

do? It has a lot to do. I am exactly saying that the electorate was blindfolded by the Premier. And that is how John Adams got elected as the second president of the United States. He blindfolded people at the time in 1821.

An Hon. Member: Who was the third president?

Mr. Warren: Tom Jefferson. What is your next question?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: The sixth president was John Adams' son, John Quincy. What is your next question? You want to ask me about history, I will tell you about history.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Now, Mr. Chairman, today-

An Hon. Member: Jeopardy.

An Hon. Member: No, we only have one fellow for jeopardy, the Minister of Finance. Where is he?

Mr. Warren: Today we have seen a mockery of democracy. And a mockery of democracy has been intruded in this Province by the Premier of this Province. The Premier has made a mockery out of what he preached during the last election. The Premier preached that there would be consultation, there would be debate and everything else. And here all of a sudden he decides to cut off debate.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Warren: Mr. Chairman, I have no doubt that my colleagues opposite might consider it very

funny. But I want to conclude, because I told my colleagues I would be only ten or fifteen minutes.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Warren: But I want to conclude, Mr. Chairman, by saying that the Premier of this Province - I will not blame it on any other Cabinet Minister because they are only handmaidens, okay? - so, I want to say this: it is that the Premier on two occasions before has muzzled the Opposition. And tonight, in another, probably, two hours from now, this bill will pass because of the majority on the Government side. So subsequently he has muzzled us again.

So let me say one thing. And I want to say this loud and clear. Because the people from Nain to Cape Race, from Cape Race to Cape Bauld, from Cape Pine to Cape Chidley, all over Newfoundland and Labrador, that there is one group of people out there that this Premier will not muzzle. And that is the people who will go to the polls in the next election. Those are the people who this Premier will not muzzle. Because those people will go to the polls and they will tell this Premier as the only non-elected Premier in this country of ours, that he has been in this House for the last eighteen months and maybe the next eighteen months, but he will go down in history as the only Premier who has never been elected as Premier in this country.

Thank you very much.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Chairman: The hon. Member for St. John's East Extern.

Mr. Parsons: You mean I -

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

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

I recognize the hon. Member for St. John's East Extern.

Mr. Parsons: Mr. Chairman, with what is going on over there I did not know if you recognized me or not. And that is why I was slow off the mark.

Mr. Chairman: I recognize the hon. Member.

Mr. Parsons: With the noise that is over there, Mr. Chairman, you would almost need a gun. The same as down to the races or to a horse race or whatever. They are yakking over there, they do not know what they are talking about, the trained seals have come to life. All the seals over there that are trained, they have finally come to life. And the surprising part about it is the trainee or the trainer is not in his seat. And you know I have said to my hon. colleague here from Torngat Mountains that "mockery of democracy", that fills the gap. That is it.

You know, Mr. Chairman, I only came in this hon. House about four years ago. Closure to me at that particular time was something I did not understand. But in the last eighteen months with this Government I have seen closure being forced on people, being forced on the Opposition, three times consecutively. I am glad that the hon. House Leader is here. Because he understands fully what closure means as well as most of the people out there and I certainly do.

Closure means to close anything off, to close the door in people's faces, to shut anyone out, to stop anyone from talking, to finish things. That is what closure is about and today this Government, again, for the third time in the last six months, closed out, stopped people from saying, you fumbled. There is money over there that is not accounted for. There is \$85 million that there is no accountability for. That is what the Opposition has been asking, where is the money? They asked the Minister of Finance where the money went. There is \$85 million unaccounted for. That is what we are asking. Why can we not say to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, this Government has misplaced, mismanaged, fumbled, \$84 million somewhere along the line. Now, we are suppose to look over at them, laugh, and say, okay, another \$30 million. What difference does it make about another \$30 million? They have fumbled, they threw away, they stumbled, I do not know but we could say, inappropriately, taken some way or other \$130 million. We can account for about \$40 million. The Minister of Development is over there shooting off his mouth. Can you account for where the money went? I am not going to waste my time up here tonight.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Parsons: The Premier talked about his committees, these committees which review all the legislation before it comes to the House. Well, I am not speaking on behalf of this Party, I am speaking for myself. That is the biggest farce.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Parsons: What did your Committee do? It did nothing only be overruled by a majority of Liberals on the Committee. It is a farce, and the same way with the Crowns Land Act, it is a farce. Everyone in Newfoundland said they wanted 7(2) to come out but the Premier says it is going to stay in. It is a farce, and he is using hours that were spent by that Committee. It would be better for them to be home in bed getting some rest so they would not be yawning when they are in here because they are not allowed to say anything. That is where they should be, home in bed. They are in here in the daytime, they are muzzled, the Premier will not allow them to say anything, and they are like a muzzled bunch of calves out in the meadow. You should go out on the green and go grazing instead of what you are doing. Mr. Chairman, I am sorry the Premier is not here because my few remarks tonight would be directed towards the Premier. I had a friend onetime, a good many years ago, Mr. Chairman, who kept telling himself, when we would be all discussing things, about how good he could swim.

An Hon. Member: Who?

Mr. Parsons: This gentleman I am speaking of. He said, I can swim, I can swim, so one day he jumped in and, Mr. Chairman, he could not swim at all. He went to the bottom, and the Premier is the same way. He is repeating himself so often that now he believes that what he is saying is actually the truth, and it is far from it, Mr. Chairman. He talked about hours but when the hon. Member for Burin - Placentia West mentioned the fact that we punched more days in this hon. House, not hours, because most of the hours that

were spent, which the Premier alluded to, were spent on the Meech Lake Accord, the debate we had. Now, we have had three closures, two on money bills and one on Meech Lake. The Premier said today there are economic problems all across this country, both provincially and federally, he said caused by the bungling, or words to that effect, of the Federal Government. But I am telling you, now you just listen to what I am going to say, the economic problems in Canada today were caused mainly by the man who sits in that seat right there.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Parsons: We have a country now that is fragmentated from West to East Coast, fragmentated by the failure of Meech Lake when you did not have the guts of your convictions to stand up and be counted. You did not have the guts to stand up. You knew then it was a mistake but you were led by that one god, that one man, the Premier of the Province. That is why you are in this pickle.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Parsons: That is why you are in the dilemma that you are in today, that is what the problem is. You have people right across Canada who have no faith in this great country caused by the present Premier who had a halo around his head. Who was going around espousing to the people of Canada I am the greatest because he jumped on the bandwagon. Well, let me tell you closure is going to work against you on those two money bills but more so some years down the road all you fellows across the way, all you hon. gentlemen across the way are going to come and say remember what we

were told by that hon. gentleman from St. John's East Extern. The biggest mistake that was ever made - he does not get up now and say how many letters he is getting from around Canada when the Canadians are going without jobs. He does not get up now and tell us what telegrams he is receiving. He said the hon. Minister of Social Services received one letter telling what a great friend he was to the poor, that perhaps was from some of his family. A member of his family could have written that letter.

What letter, the Premier says.

The letter the Minister of Social Services received. But the Premier is not getting his letters. The Premier will be getting letters opposite to what he was getting in March. He jumped on the bandwagon, he saw what was out there, he saw this is a way for me to get up there, as far as the politics he used, he did not have at heart the concerns of Canada or indeed of Newfoundland. He got up there - certainly Meech Lake. Meech Lake brought in closure but there were a great number on that side of the House who knew that was wrong but because they were tools, tools of that Administration being led by the nose by the Premier, that is why it was passed and that is why those two money bills are passed today. Mr. Chairman, I am amazed, I am alarmed at the sense, at the consciousness that this Government has to bring in closure on bills that affect the people out there so adversely. The people are being laid off, the hospital beds being closed, the teachers with no rooms to teach in, schools being closed. The Minister of Social Services cutting the single parents by \$125

a month, that is what we are talking about. That is why we do not want to see this money being given to the Government because we think they spend their money unwisely. They do not have the resources within themselves to spend their money so it would be spent wisely to create some activity, to create some labour initiative, to create some joy, some life within the Province. This is a dead Province, Mr. Chairman, and it is even more dead tonight when you see this present closure resolution being brought in by the House Leader. Mr. Chairman, I am very sorry that tonight I am a part of a legislature that when you look on this side, thirty Members, can find it within their hearts to go along with this piece of skulduggery. Thank you, very much Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Simms: Just on a point of order.

I really feel as if I should raise this point of order because quite frankly, what has been happening here for the last number of hours, has been nothing short of a joke in my view. It has been an absolute farce -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Simms: Now see, you see, Mr. Chairman. I am not saying this in a humorous way, I mean this sincerely. I mean it sincerely. Anybody who sat back for the last few hours and listened to what has been going on and what has been happening would be absolutely shocked.

If there had been anybody in that gallery for the last two or three hours, they would be absolutely shocked and we would all get a black eye out of it, and I plead to Members, on both sides of the House for that matter, I am not saying Members on that side only, we are just as responsible, I suppose, from time to time, but the problem is, I have found the last few hours have been absolutely consistent, constant bickering, yelling, shouting, mooring, I mean everything.

To be perfectly frank with you, Mr. Chairman, I enjoy a bit of humour as much as anybody else and I enjoy a bit of bantering and I enjoy some of the interjections, but quite frankly, when it is constant, and it has been constant and repetitious, then I would suggest that the House is in disorder and I plead to Your Honour, to perhaps be a little - how should I put it diplomatically - be firmer to both sides and call order, because I could not hear my colleague speaking, quite frankly he had to yell and shout and that just is not right. I do not think that is right for anybody and I mean it sincerely.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To that point of order, I think from time to time in the House, and I believe this was pointed out by the Member for Ferryland in one other such debate, from time to time, things perhaps get a little out of hand and there is perhaps too much noise. I agree that banter back and forth is acceptable and is the kind of thing that normally goes, however, constant shouting on both

sides is not really acceptable.

Sometimes people get carried away and maybe it is alright every now and then for us to be reminded of this, and as I said, the Member for Ferryland did on one other occasion and as the Opposition House Leader has now done, the Premier, quite often reminds people of this and I have on a couple of occasions, so perhaps just by reminding Members we can, a little more expeditiously get through the remaining few speakers.

Mr. Chairman: I guess it is a good point of order, because it is, the last few hours have been very noisy in the House and the Chair has probably tolerated it too much and from now on we will strictly enforce the rules. A good point of order, from the Opposition House Leader.

The hon. the Member for Green Bay.

Mr. Hewlett: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I just want a few brief remarks, like other Members in the House, I want to go on record as protesting the use of closure for a third time in the short tenure of this particular Administration.

I think closure is being brought in because we are on a money bill, we are talking about things generally and we have been exposing the record of this Government on a daily basis and I think that is the reason closure has been brought in, I myself, in addition, to using debate, I have used petitions on a number of occasions to point out the cutbacks in the health care system that are planned by this government. We are facing

thousands of job losses in the health care sector and in the education sector. The quality of both of these public services will go down. The people who earn their livelihood from participating in that public service, many of them are going to lose their jobs. Tonight a lot of people here talked about closure and our use of closure, and true to my form I could say they brought in closure because of our exposure of cuts that are not nice. Joey did it once, Brian did it twice and Clyde's done it thrice and that's not nice.

An Hon. Member: Thank you. Is it all over?

Mr. Hewlett: When the Premier was speaking this evening, Mr. Speaker, I took a phone call in the commonroom and it was from a constituent of mine and I guess in one regard she brought it down to earth for me having listened to the debate here this afternoon and this evening. She has a 17-year old son, cannot find any work for him. He is only 17. The social assistance people will not give him any help. The only job creation projects on the go in government you have to go on welfare first. The young man is 17, he is not of the age of majority, so he is stuck between a rock and a hard place. There are many many people like him throughout my district. I am sure hundreds, if not thousands throughout Newfoudndland. The problem most of these people have out there, Mr. Chairman, is work. Where are the jobs? I have done hundreds of polls in my day, in my former employ, Mr. Chaireman, and everytime we asked the question, "What is the most important issue in your town, your district, your province, your country, in

Newfoundland, always topping the poll was work, unemployment, the need for jobs and so on. I remember the honourable the Premier during the last election talking about a woman who was going to kiss his feet because her children could come home from the mainland and find gainful employment. He was going to bring home every Mother's son, Mr. Chairman. Well I spoke to a mother this evening who had a son who is already home and has no employment whatsoever. So, you know, our chatter about closure, and our chatter about the esoteric things in this Legislature are going to mean absolutely nothing to that particular woman and her 17-year old son. So, Mr. Chairman, I will just use this opportunity to ask government where are all the jobs? People in this Province for real change, Mr. Chairman and the change they were talking about was not being nickled and dimed to death by this government. They wanted loonies in their pockets, not in the cabinet. Mr. Chairman, this government has failed dismally in creating employment, one of the key items that they promised the people of the Province that they would do, they promised to build up health and education. They are cutting back health and education. They have created no jobs Mr. Chairman. There is no work, except, unless you are a French tutor probably you might find work in this building somewhere they tell me, Mr. Chairman. I protest the use of closure and I protest this government's abysmal record in doing nothing good at all for the ordinary people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Chairman: The honourable

Member for Ferryland.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Power: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Prior to the Opposition House Leader's - thank you - I was wondering where all that applause was coming from. I knew it had to be some stranger on this side of the House. Before the Opposition House Leader raised his point of order I was seriously wondering would I make a comment at all because it has been such a circus here this evening.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: No, it is going to be a very short speech. I just want to raise my objections to closure and to the process. As a person who has been in the Legislature for a while I do not intend - some of the parts of the debate have been funny, some of it has been anything but debate. I mean I have to say, with both the President of Treasury Board, our own Opposition House Leader, I mean... if the people of this Province saw what we were doing tonight, and we see the problems (Inaudible), they would have to say why, if you want to save some real money for the taxpayers fire fifty-two of us out of here, spring in fifty-two youngsters and give them minimum wage or something, and the Province would probably be run just as well. I mean, that is what people would say.

One of the problems with the kind of process that we have had tonight - and it is caused by a person I respect in the House and that is the Government House Leader - is that when you bring in closure as a Government, something that is not done very often, but

when you do bring it in, two things basically happen. One is that everybody on the Government side basically has to sit down on their hands and not make very many comments. They are not allowed to take part in the debate because that closure only drags it out. So what happens is, you end up with an Opposition that is on one side continually lambasting the Government for closure, for its performance, and the other side not being able to say a word.

Eventually what happens is Members like the Minister of Social Services, the Member for St. John's South, have to - they can not curtail their enthusiasm to defend the Government. And eventually - they are not allowed to do it in a normal, speaking debating sense - what happens is exactly what we have seen for the last two hours. Lots of sniping and yapping and making comments, and trying to do everything you can to disrupt the speakers on the Opposition side because you really are not allowed to speak yourselves.

And I cannot believe that the President of Treasury Board, a person who I met a long time ago sitting down next to the Minister of Forestry - I think I met him first out in Gander when he was a high school science teacher and he was very anti-chemical spray programmes. And I think I met him first when we were into - I think we had lost a load of spray out of one of our planes, had mechanical trouble outside of Gander or something.

Some Hon. Members: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: Well, we knew where it was lost, but it dissipated so fast, exactly what we said would

happen, that we could not find it. And that is what everyone knew happened to the chemicals but the Minister responsible for Treasury Board today did not believe that, of course, and thought that we had hidden it away or sank it some place. But when I saw the President of Treasury Board way back then, I mean he was a very sincere, legitimate public servant who wanted the Province to be better, who believed in democracy, freedom of speech, who thought the government of the day was not being open and honest about its spray programme, that we were hiding or covering up something, and he continuously asked these questions in the press.

Now he is President of Treasury Board and Government House Leader, and all of a sudden we are bringing in closure every second day. And what happens in closure is the process that I have just described. And the other part that closure does, is that I think it prevents a lot of the Government backbenchers from passing opinions about what is happening with the Government. And that is a legitimate legislative process, that Government backbenchers are allowed to pass comments. And if they are not allowed to pass comments then I think the debate in the House suffers and we end up with the kind of procedure we had tonight.

And I think also, for some of the older Members in this House, people who have been around - like the Minister of Fisheries, who has seen it from both sides, in the House of Commons and here - one of the things that happens when you bring in closure is that you prevent the normal repetitive process of the Opposition to

function. Now, some people might think that repetition is boring, wasteful - I know what it was like to be a Minister over there, like the Minister of Development who is here and the Minister of Social Services, who have a million important things to do. And you find that sitting here in this House listening to twenty persons in the Opposition all saying the same thing over and over again, and it is wasteful, it does not mean anything.

However, here is why that repetitive process works in every opposition, in every Legislature or Parliament in the free world. Because that is the only ammunition that an Opposition has. If, for instance, when the proposed health care cuts were going to be made a month ago, when the notice was sent out to the nursing homes and the hospitals, and only the Leader of the Opposition had got up and said, we are worried, concerned, upset, alarmed about the health care cuts. Then would Government really have had a second look at all this, research done and all the thinking and second thoughts. The reality is that in an Opposition every person has to get up and almost say the same thing. We do not agree with health care cuts, we do not agree with education cuts, and you know the strange part of that process, it works. It does prevent governments from very haphazardly nonchalantly running off which can affect a large part of the populous. If people think that this House now is repetitive you should have been here when we had fellows like Steve Neary, Jim Morgan and even in the last sitting of this Legislature when we had the Minister of Social Services. Any idea of how often

the Minister of Social Services repeated himself in a three year period? Remember the questions, over and over and over again, the Boys Home was every day, it was continuous, repetitive day after day after day.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: Now that is what I am saying, the Minister of Social Services is allowed to speak, I suppose, in the closure debate if he chooses to, or if he is allowed to. All I am saying is that this process that we are involved with, the repetition, the boring part of it is an important part of the Legislatures everywhere and it just has to happen. I just want to say on behalf of the residents of Ferryland that we are not fussy about the closure motion. It is not something that should take place. The Premier's approach to closure going to bring it in every time he gets bored listening to Opposition Members repeat themselves or say the same things over and over again, when the Premier gets tired of that, he is going to bring in closure. Well, I will tell every person in this House that every Member of the Legislature will suffer if you start using closure because the Government gets tired of listening to the Opposition. You may find it dull, you may find it boring, you may not find it productive, but that is the way that Legislatures work. All I say to the Government House Leader is let the process function. You will not end up with night sittings that make us all look silly. You will not end up with any more repetition than if you did it in the normal due process. When you were on this side of the House, Government still functioned. Bills still got passed.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: The House was opened. Maybe not as often as you would like.

An Hon. Member: Eighty-seven days. You were open 77.

Mr. Power: All I want to say is that the process is there. Closure is wrong. If the Premier and the Ministers are going to say we are going to use closure every chance we get then everybody in this Province suffers because of it ultimately somewhere down the road. So I say, use it carefully. Use it only seldomly and this House will function a lot better.

What this House should be doing is discussing the problems in the Province. That is why people are loosing faith. Not only in us as Opposition maybe but loosing faith in Government and loosing faith in politicians. Maybe that is where all the cynicism comes from. Why a fellow like David Peterson, who happened to be a pretty good Premier and ran a pretty good Government, got defeated because the people are cynical about the whole process. As politicians we do that to ourselves. I see an awful lot of problems in this Province with health care, with education. I received a letter the other day from the Minister of Works, Services and Transportation it was exactly the same letter he sent me one year ago asking me for my priorities for Ferryland District. I gave him my priorities for Ferryland District. I sent them back and the Minister saw a copy of the letter. I sent back exactly the same letter that I sent last year. Not one of the roads were touched last year and I only hope

that some of them are done this year. But those are the kind of things people have problems with and which they want rectified.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: Does that make it right?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: I am not being sanctimonious. I am saying that you are the guys who said you were going to be sanctimonious. You are the guys who preached fairness and balance and got elected in that campaign. Do not blame me because you fellows made a commitment that you could not, or did not, want to live with. That you fooled the people and said we will have fairness and balance when you do not intend to do it. Anyway, I sent my letter back saying if you are going to have fairness and balance Ferryland District deserves its share of the road work as well. There are still places that have to be paved and things that have to be done. When you look at the fiscal imbalance, one of the things that is happening in your Government and you do not even realize it, is that you are on this financial restraint kick and that is all you are going to see is financial restraint. And that is a part of Government. Do you want to get up and speak, the Minister of Finance, I mean there is lots-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Power: What is he reading Shakespeare, is he?

The Minister of Finance is having his way in Government. The President of Treasury Board is having his way. The Ministers

responsible for the resource departments are having a very difficult time finding any money to create new employment in this Province. The Ministers in the social departments are going to have a very difficult time maintaining their budgets, giving the service that people have come to expect and demand. And you are going to have real trouble giving those services because this Government's only priority seems to be fiscal restraint, and that should be balanced out.

Those are the kind of things that need to be discussed in this Province, and closure, with all due respect to a person I respect as President of Treasury Board, closure is not going to help the process at all. All it does is make everyone upset. All it does is make people in the Province worry about the whole process what we really are trying to do. And I just say on behalf of the residents of Ferryland that there is a lot of other important things in this Government that need to be discussed, education, health, welfare, roads, and a lot of other things, and those are the things we should spend our time on, not debating closure which is a useless motion in the first place.

Mr. Chairman: The hon. the President of The Council.

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to spend a few minutes to straighten out some things that have been said a number of times, repeated, and in fact are a little bit off the mark.

First of all, I would like to inform the Opposition House Leader and the Member from Ferryland as well that we are not in the process of debating closure. That

is not what we are doing. The motion on closure was put at the beginning of the session, voted on, and passed. The motion on closure was then dealt with, now we are simply debating that Bill. Now, I understand how the debate goes but let there be no mistake about it, this is a debate on the Bill, not a debate on closure.

I would also like to respond in the sense that the Opposition House Leader got up on a point of order and seemed to be putting forth a lot of sincerity and truth and so on. The Member for Ferryland gets up and on the surface seems to deal with issues in the same way. And because of that I want to really tell the truth about closure. Okay. I will bare my soul on closure.

I would like to remind members opposite that I was in this House one time previously when an opposition was not cooperative. I was part of that opposition. I remember. That was the session, that while it was in progress or after it was over, it was a fall session, the Premier of the day said never again, and there were no more fall sittings.

An Hon. Member: That is right.

Mr. Baker: There were no more fall sittings. Now that is true. That is one way to deal with it. Perhaps I will even say that the Opposition today is not quite as obstinate as the Opposition was that fall. Perhaps you are being more cooperative now than the Opposition that fall was. But the point is that if we are going to have these legislative sessions, then we have to try to ensure the legislation that we schedule for that session, that at least some of the things we need in that

session happen.

So, our solution is not to call off the fall sittings but whenever necessary to use closure. That is our solution. We had a Loan Bill here, and that Loan Bill was a routine bill because in the Budget process there is a certain amount of money approved and it is kind of custom, routine, for that particular Loan Bill to come to the House before the borrowing is actually done. The House has already given approval to the borrowing so it is just a matter of routine, and we were faced with the condition where an Opposition was saying, and they have the right to do that, they were saying this gives us an opportunity to talk about everything, the Money Bill, the Loan Bill, therefore we are going to hold it up, and hold it up, and hold it up, with no indication that it would ever get passed. Now, we could not allow that to happen because, number one, if we do not have flexibility in our borrowing it might cost us millions of dollars, so we had to use closure after a certain period of time. There is no doubt about it, we had to. Now, this particular bill is a money bill and I realize on money bills again the Opposition can talk about whatever they want, and delay it, and delay it because there are no restrictions on what they talk about. I have pointed out to members opposite that there are other money bills on the Order Paper that are eventually going to come up that would provide them with the same flexibility. There is another Supplementary Supply one. There is no need to hang up any particular one. We will provide lots of opportunity for you to speak on everything you want to, yet there was no

indication of any co-operation, so what choice do we have? We have brought in closure on this second money bill. I simply say to the Member for Ferryland, and I have not talked to him about this, but there are a number of other bills, that for one reason or another, we should have before January 1. There are four or five of them, and if necessary, if we have to bring in closure on every one we will, but I would prefer to have the co-operation. We will provide a lot of time for debate, as much as we can. These bills will be adequately discussed, adequately debated, and if after a number of days, and everybody has a chance at it and everything else, then, if the Opposition decides, okay, we have made our points and now we will go on from Second Reading to Committee stage, fine. If there is that kind of co-operation we will go ahead to Committee stage and so on, that is if there is co-operation at these levels, but if the co-operation is not there the business of the Province has to go on. You cannot have it both ways. We have a lot of legislation there that you people say is not important, not important at all. If it is not important why hang it up? You cannot have it both ways. We have a lot of important legislation there that has to get through at some time or another. We are the Government, and when the discussion has taken place, when there has been adequate debate, it is our intention to govern. It is our intention, at a certain point in time, to do what we have to do to govern.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Baker: Who is the House Leader over there?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Baker: Well I mean now who is the House Leader over there? Who is the House Leader over there? The honesty I am talking about was stimulated by the House Leader, by the Member for Ferryland and I am just explaining it exactly as it is. The reason for closure, the reason I had to bring it in now and the reason I may have to bring it in in the future, and people will judge whether we have allowed adequate time for Members to express opinions, people will judge. Ultimately, of course, that is what has to happen. People ultimately will judge whether enough time has been spent by the Opposition in debate. I just say to Members opposite that our way of dealing with the problem is not to simply say no more fall sittings because we do intend to do a lot of legislative things. So we will continue to have fall sittings and we continue to hope for the co-operation of the Opposition. I am not saying that you have to let everything go through. That is not what I am saying. I am saying a degree of co-operation. I am hoping to get that and if we get it then we will have the Legislature open five or six months of the year, total. We will have everything debated. We will have a lot of legislation go through and everybody will be better for it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Chairman: The honourable Member for Fogo.

Mr. Winsor: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I did not intend to take part in this debate on closure but the President of Treasury Board has forced me to

get to my feet(Inaudible)

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Winsor: Now having only been in this House 18 months I have started to think that closure is the only operative word that the President of Treasury Board has.

An Hon. Member: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Winsor: The President of Treasury Board has been told on several occasions that if he wanted this bill to get through let us know. And never once did the President of Treasury Board come to the Leader of the Opposition or the House Leader and say "Look I have got to have that bill by Friday". In fact the first time I heard it was yesterday on a CBC report that he needed the bill by tomorrow. Never once has he indicated to the Opposition that he needs the bill. If there is a problem and he has to invoke closure it is because the President of Treasury Board, the Government House Leader is not capable of negotiating a good deal. In addition to that perhaps the problem is that the Government House Leader does not know how to put together an agenda. He calls bills that he knows are going to be confrontational, he knows that we are not going to let slip through. We have twenty pieces of legislation on the Order Paper that we have agreed will slip through this House with virtually no debate in a couple of days. Twenty bills I think he said we got through 22 bills in the last session. We have 20 pieces that will invoke just passing comments, some suggestions, but what the President of Treasury Board does and Government House Leader is he brings in bills, this one on the

spur of the moment. We knew nothing about I think. I seem to recall it was introduced just a few days ago. The bill was sprung on us. We didn't see anything. It was not on the Order Paper. That was a new bill that came. Did not know if the Minister of Development was going to have all kinds of funds. The first time we saw the bill was about a week, a week and a half ago and that is the reason that the bills are held up is the Government House Leader hasn't had a good legislative agenda to get through and that is the reason this House has been into the disarray it has been for the last little while. Now I want to have a few words on the bill, Bill 66, because what I just see happening...I heard the Premier a couple of days ago say that I think it was 1500 jobs had been created and he was going to table the information. He said on another occasion that was going to be 2-thousand jobs and I think his quote was "Two thousand jobs or I will eat my shirt and I hope it's French" or something to that effect before I have to do it. I think that was the gist of his statement.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Winsor: We will have ten thousand jobs or you will eat your shirt and hope it is French.

Some Hon. Members: Hear!Hear!

Mr. Winsor: Now let us just take a look at some of the jobs that the Premier is talking about. The Premier boasted about the ERC and the Newfoundland Development Corporation or whoever they were opening the plant in Twillingate. Now that is good stuff except that that is the same thing that the different departments of

government always did. That is nothing new. Fish plants have been opened through government guaranteed loans through initiatives, the President of Treasury Board, the Minister of Development says no. He should recall that the reason that the plant had opened the year before was that Oceana-

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Winsor: If you want to get up and speak. It is unfortunate you have had your time up, you have had your time up. We know all about what happened there and we see the plant is up for sale now. And what the workers think about it.

But anyway, the Minister of Development should not be boasting about that kind of thing because that is only putting back in place jobs that another Department of Government always did. That is not new initiatives. The 75 jobs in the plant, a new initiative, but interestingly enough one of the sponsors in this is ACOA the Federal Government agency that the Premier lambast every opportunity he gets from one end of the country to the other and says that it is no good. If that is not the height of hypocrisy, here you are out boasting about the jobs you are going to have and half of them coming from the Federal Government from an agency that the Premier wants to disband.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: No the Premier is getting good at using courtroom jargon in the House of Assembly that everything has to be perfectly in line, well that is not what I said. Let me correct the misstatements and so on, we

are kind of getting used to hearing these statements. What we are waiting for now is the Economic Recovery Commission to come up with some real new jobs, some real new initiatives. Not opening fish plants that would have opened anyway under the former Department.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Pardon? Not paper cups and tongue depressants and all that stuff things that have been in the system for years, let us see some new ideas, some new initiatives. We are not seeing any. We waited and waited. The only new initiative that I have seen is that the Minister of Development might be launching a career in the movies or something, strutting down with his -

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: No, I would not say that. But I see him strutting across the t.v. screen into the living room of everyone with his new science and technology ad. Perhaps that was some money from the ERTC to promote that and promote the Minister's debut on screen. I do not know if that was a new job or not. But I do not want to take a lot of time, but I want to just ask the Government where is this Economic Recovery Team taking us? Is it doing something that was not previously done to 52 or 53 development associations who are now under the umbrella of the ERC? Is that 52 jobs going to be included in the Premier's 2,000?

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible).

Mr. Winsor: Yes, and besides that the gag order is on these people as well. But is that a part of it

and the secretary who works - then create a 100 jobs. The 300 seasonal jobs in Twillingate in the initiative of the Government and their Budget that we had to get away from the resource base fishery and diversify and so on, is that where the ERC is taking us? Because if it is, I feel the ERC will not deliver Newfoundland into the economic mainstream of Canada in the next 10, 20 or 30 years.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I will sit down.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Chairman: Shall the resolution carry?

Some Hon. Members: Carried.

Mr. Chairman: Carried.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. the Member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

Mr. L. Snow: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered the matters to it referred and has directed me to report that it has adopted certain resolutions and recommends that a bill be introduced to give effect to the same.

"That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain additional expenses of the public service for the financial year ending 31 March, 1991, the sum of \$30,935,800."

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

Motion, the hon. the Minister of Finance to introduce a bill, "An

Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending The Thirty-First Day Of March One Thousand Nine Hundred And Ninety One And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service," carried. (Bill No. 2

On motion, Bill No. 2 read a first, second, and third time, ordered passed and its title be as on the Order Paper. (Bill No. 2)

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

Mr. Baker: I move that the House now adjourn.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Before you put the motion, Your Honour.

I just want to clear up a couple of items because of some discussions the Government House Leader and I have had. First of all dealing with the sitting. We talked one time about waiting until ten in the morning but, I think, since that time it has been agreed we will sit at nine, the same time as normal. The other thing is, for the information of the public, who might be interested, obviously, there are a number of pieces of legislation that he and I have discussed, and which we have discussed in our caucus, which we are quite prepared to co-operate on, about twenty of them, I guess, on a list, and I just want to indicate publicly that we will be going through this. That is my understanding in the agreement we had, and it might be beneficial for the Government House Leader to perhaps indicate the first five or

six bills anyway in case there might be somebody interested out there in listening to what the debate might be, if any. The understanding is that over the next few days we will be dealing with these nineteen or twenty pieces of legislation, unless there is something catastrophe that might interfere, and I do not mean closure.

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The first bill I intend to call tomorrow is Bill No. 49. Then, if we get through that I have indicated to the Ministers that Bills No. 22, 51 and 35 are next on the list.

An Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Mr. Speaker: Bill No. 49 is the first one. Bill 49 is a Justice Bill, 22 is a Municipal Affairs Bill and 51 is a Social Services Bill.

The hon. the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Simms: Presumably, if things go well tomorrow morning and there is the normal co-operation that we often supply from this side of the House, if we get through those four, can he confirm then he is going to follow that list, and the next one would then be in order, assuming Ministers are around, or whatever?

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

Mr. Baker: Thank you.

I am assuming that there will be debate on the bills. The

Ministers will introduce them and there will be responses by the Opposition, or responses by the Opposition critic and so on, so I am assuming that in this process we can get second reading of three, four, or five bills in tomorrow's sitting. At the end of tomorrow's sitting I will advise members as to what happens on Monday.

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

Mr. Simms: If we finish Bill 35 which is the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act, the last one he mentioned, if we finish that at 11 o'clock, just for argument sake, he will follow on with Bill 10 and Bill 3.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, at 9:00 a.m.