

ies in its Interim Report on the Freshwater Fisheries, tabled in the Senate on the 2nd October, 1987, and on other matters arising therefrom.

He said: Honourable senators, in view of the fact that the Standing Senate Committee on Fisheries has produced its second interim report on the west coast fisheries, I ask that this item be removed from the order paper because it is redundant.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: Is it agreed, honourable senators?

Hon. Senators: Agreed.

Inquiry withdrawn.

NEWFOUNDLAND AND ITS PEOPLE

CONCERNS AND INTERESTS—DEBATE CONCLUDED

Hon. Ethel Cochrane rose, pursuant to notice of Thursday, November 19, 1987:

That she will call attention of the Senate to concerns and interests of Newfoundland and its people.

She said: Honourable senators, I had intended to make these remarks in late 1987; however, speaking engagements and other pressures both inside and outside this chamber prevented me from doing so. I did rise earlier to say goodbye to our colleague and friend, Senator Rowe, on the occasion of his retirement, and I moved third reading of a bill. However, I hope that this chamber will not consider those few brief remarks as my maiden address. I understand that senators are accorded a certain degree of freedom in their maiden address, and while this is a time-honoured tradition I will be as brief as possible. Before proceeding I want to join my colleagues in extending a warm welcome to an outstanding Newfoundlander who joins us today. Senator Ottenheimer has a long and distinguished career of public service in Newfoundland and Labrador, and I look forward to working with him.

I want to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to all senators and the Senate staff who advised and helped me during my first year on Parliament Hill. The transition from the teaching profession to the Senate was made much easier because of the very kind consideration extended to me by so many kind and helpful people here on Parliament Hill. In particular, I want to thank Senator Doody and his secretary, Mary Lascelles; Senator Marshall and his staff; and Senator Murray and his staff, for their patience and assistance. I am also grateful to the staff of the Research Branch of the Library of Parliament for the numerous articles they prepared for me and for their help with the statistics I will be using today. I also express my appreciation to Premier Peckford for his advice on the issues that should be raised.

Before I came to the Senate, and while I was a teacher back in Newfoundland, one would hear criticism about how teachers were overpaid for working only five hours a day. This type of undeserved criticism was really born out of ignorance. By far the vast majority of teachers that I know back in Newfoundland are very hard working, totally dedicated and totally

committed to their profession and to their students. Many work long hours, and many work six or seven days a week. Of course, there are a few who do only what they have to do, but, by and large, they are certainly in a very small minority. When I left the teaching profession to come to Ottawa I naively thought I would no longer have to listen to unfounded criticisms about my profession. It really came as a great surprise to me to discover that the Senate and teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador had a great deal in common. The perception that both groups are overpaid and underworked was, and is, unfounded. I am really appalled at this misconception, because, speaking from my own point of view, I have been extremely busy in the short time I have been a senator. I work between ten and twelve hours a day. Often I work six days a week, and sometimes I work seven. I have not had a week yet since my appointment where I worked only five days. I know of other senators who work equally hard or even harder than I. Perhaps we are guilty of not really keeping the public as fully informed as we should about what we do.

A couple of years ago the Newfoundland Teachers' Association was quite concerned about the negative image of teachers in our province and decided to do something about it. They recognized that a serious information gap existed, and they started a public relations campaign to inform fully the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador about the importance of teachers in the educational process. Criticism of the teaching profession has dramatically declined since the public relations campaign began, and an ongoing effort will always be required to keep it down to minimal levels.

In view of the constant criticism of the Senate, perhaps the time has come when the Senate should consider making a more conscious effort to inform Canadians of its role. I am not suggesting that a public relations campaign similar to the Newfoundland teachers' be launched, but I merely point out their strategy to show that a lot of unfounded criticism can be reduced once the public is informed. However, I did not rise to address that problem; I just mention it in passing, because senators and teachers had and have one thing in common: both groups receive a lot of undeserved criticism. The Newfoundland Teachers' Association addressed its problem, and it seems to have worked for them to a certain extent. Perhaps we need to assess our situation here and start letting the public know how busy senators are and the role the Senate plays in our democratic process.

During the past 12 months I have read several articles expressing the opinion that the Senate was no longer looking after the regional interests of the country, as it was intended to do. Today I intend to focus on some of the concerns and interests of Newfoundland and its people, and I would like to address six of the major issues facing our province. These are: regional disparity, transfer payments, regional and economic development, defence spending, resources and transportation.

As you know, joining Confederation in 1949 was not an easy decision for the people of our province, and there are those today who continue to debate the merits of that decision, just as there are similar debates in other provinces about the