

Tuesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004

The House met at 1:30 o'clock in the afternoon pursuant to adjournment.

The Member for Grand Bank (Ms. Foote) made a Statement to congratulate Mr. Byron Monster of Fortune who won gold medals for his ability in various categories at the Canadian Powerlifting and Bench Press Championships held recently in Kitchener.

The Member for Harbour Main-Whitbourne (Mr. Hedderson) made a Statement to congratulate the participants, organizers and sponsors of the 2004 Newfoundland and Labrador Provincial Finals of the Great Canadian Geography Challenge, an annual national student geography competition. The Member also congratulated those students who took top honours in the competition.

The Member for Cartwright-L'Anse au Clair (Ms. Jones) made a Statement to congratulate seventeen year old Megan Pike of West St. Modeste who received a \$50,000 TD Canada Trust Scholarship for her outstanding community leadership in the establishment of and fund-raising for a youth centre.

The Member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Jackman) made a Statement to announce that the White Rose FPSO would arrive in Marystown today. The Member congratulated all those who have worked diligently and cooperatively to bring the project to the Province and those who will be involved in the successful conclusion of the topside work.

The Member for Port de Grave (Mr. Butler) made a Statement to congratulate the Ascension Collegiate Astros Girls Hockey Team who took first place in the Atlantic Provinces Confederation Cup held on February 8<sup>th</sup> at Mile One Stadium.

The Member for Bonavista South (Mr. Fitzgerald) made a Statement to congratulate second year medical student and engineer, Mr. Daniel Lodge of Catalina on being selected as Memorial University's Amazing Student of the Week.

During Oral Questions the Honourable the Government House Leader (Mr. Byrne) rose on a point of order to argue that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grimes) had used unparliamentary language. The Speaker stated that he would deal with the issue after Oral Questions.

After Oral Questions the point of order respecting the alleged unparliamentary language was debated. The Speaker reserved his ruling.

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The Honourable The Speaker (Mr. Hodder), in accordance with section 39(2) of the *Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Act*, tabled the RNC Public Complaints Commission Annual Report for the year ended March 31, 2003.

The Member for Burgeo & LaPoile (Mr. Parsons) presented a Petition on behalf of certain residents of his District requesting the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to direct the Western Health Care Corporation to maintain the current level of health care services in the area from South Branch to Rose Blanche without reduction or diminution.

The Member for Cartwright-L'Anse au Clair (Ms. Jones) presented a Petition on behalf of certain residents of her District requesting the Minister of Transportation & Works to release immediately the report on the Labrador Coastal Marine Service and to make a decision on the Coastal Marine Service.

Pursuant to order and on motion debate continued on the motion That This House Approves in General the Budgetary Policy of the Government (the Budget Speech).

Near the end of the sitting day during the debate on the Budget Speech, the Speaker (Mr. Hodder) ruled on a point of order raised earlier in the afternoon. The Speaker ruled that a certain word, lie spoken by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grimes) was unparliamentary and asked the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the word. The Leader of the Opposition stood and withdrew the word.

The Opposition House Leader (Mr. Parsons) rose on a point of order to argue that the Honourable the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board (Mr. Sullivan) withdraw his assertion that something happened which the Leader of the Opposition said did not happen. The Member for Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi (Mr. Harris) and the Government House Leader (Mr. Byrne) spoke to the matter.

The Speaker took the matter under advisement.

The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Grimes) rose on a point of privilege to allege that his privileges as a Member had been breached by the Honourable the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board (Mr. Sullivan) because of the insinuation in his remarks during Oral Questions that he, the Leader of the Opposition, was not telling the truth and that the remarks were offensive and not true. The Leader of the Opposition further argued that the Legislature could not function if Members did not accept the truthfulness of each others' statements. The Member for Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi (Mr. Harris), the Government

House Leader and Opposition House Leader spoke in the debate on the point of privilege

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by asserting that the Minister of Finance said that certain statements made by the Leader of the Opposition were not true and that the decorum, privilege and respect for Members of the House had been lost. The parties in the dispute alleged that the meeting referred to by the Minister of Finance had never occurred and that his total integrity was called into question.

The Speaker took the matter under advisement.

The Member for Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi (Mr. Harris) rose on a point of order to state that if the Speaker did not rule that the above-noted matter constituted a *prima facie* case of privilege then the Speaker should look at the comments of the Honourable the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board as causing disorder in the House. The Member for Signal Hill-Quidi Vidi stated that the Minister implied in his comments that the Leader of the Opposition was not telling the truth and asked that the Minister of Finance be required to withdraw the comments.

The Speaker took the matter under advisement.

The debate on the Budget Speech continued and on motion debate was adjourned for further debate on tomorrow.

It was agreed to stop the clock.

The Opposition House Leader (Mr. Parsons) rose on a point of order to seek clarification of the proceeding on the adjournment of the House on Wednesday and a proposed Easter break under the parliamentary calendar.

The Honourable the Government House Leader (Mr. Byrne) rose to explain that he would announce Government's intention with respect to the Easter break on Wednesday.

It was moved and seconded that when the House rose it would adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> at 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

On motion the House then adjourned accordingly at 5:36 o'clock in the afternoon.

**A. John Noel, Q.C.,**  
Clerk of the House of Assembly