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VERBATIM REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1970

SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE GEORGE W. CLARKE

The House met at 3 P.M.

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

HON. J. R. SMALLWOOD (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I believe I speak for the House and every member in it when I express a word of welcome to some twelve students from the College of Trades and Technology with their teacher, Mr. Stanley. These students are in course Forestry Technology Two. We welcome them here because, first because they are Newfoundlanders, and second, because they are at this great College; and third because they are taking a course of instruction in an extremely important part of Newfoundland's life and economy, namely, forestry.

I do not know if it ^{AS} their first visit to the House of Assembly - I do know how much they will understand of it. They have come on a very good day, Wednesday, which is private members day. And that is the day when the Government have to take a backseat. The Government cannot call business, the business of the House on Wednesday is called by the private members of the House, on either side - those who support the Government, or those who oppose the Government. But members who are not members of the Government. And so today, we are likely to hear some flaming oratory, and we are likely to be vastly inspired by stirring and inspiring thoughts. So the visitors have come at a very appropriate time indeed. And they and we will sit back and be informed and educated by some hon. members of the House.

I hope that the visitors will learn something. I am sorry that the Leader of the Opposition is absent - I think he must have the flu. Yes, the Minister of Health tells me that if any more people start getting sick, we may need a new Minister of Health. But I do not think I will ^{so} far as to blame the sickness of the Leader of the Opposition on the Minister of Health.

The Minister of Health is not here, and so he is not in a position to speak or express the welcome to the House. I am getting all confused - all I am trying to say is that the Leader of the Opposition is not here, and now we have an extraordinary position in the House today, where the Tories consist of two renegade Liberals, and one Tory who has always been a Tory I assume, and it is going to be a toss-up as to which one of them will speak for the Opposition. My guess is it will be a regular Tory, not a new-comer to their ranks.

However, I am sure that whoever speaks for the Opposition, he will echo and re-echo what I have said, mainly that the students in Forest Technology

Two from the College of Trades and Technology are extremely welcome here in the House with their instructor, Mr. Stanley.

MR. HAROLD COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the members on this side of the House, it gives me great pleasure to rise and welcome the students who are attending from the College of Trades and Technology in their course in Forestry. In Forestry Technology in fact - the twelve members and their teacher, Mr. Stanley.

Naturally coming from Central Newfoundland as I do, when one sees some students coming in here who are studying forestry technology, it certainly gives me a feeling of pride, because I have always thought that in this Province, where we depend so much on our forestry resources - we have so many paper mills etc., that we should pay more attention to courses of this nature in our University. However it is nice to see that the College of Trades and Technology are giving some attention to it, and I hope that the students, if we can call them students, I do not know if I can see them opposite, or whether they are behind me. I suspect that they are young men. I would hope that they will learn something in the House today. I would hope that they will certainly learn a lot more in the College of Trades and Technology, or whatever it might be, I do wish them the best of luck in their studies, and that the result of such studies will enable them to be able to assist the Government and industry in properly managing our forests, so that we can obtain maximum benefits for the people of Newfoundland.

Presenting Petitions:

MR. SMALLWOOD (W. R.): Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition on behalf of the settlements of Lush's Bight, Beaumont, North, Center and South. Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition is for the construction of a road across Long Island, linking up the four settlements I have just named. I strongly support the prayer of this petition Mr. Speaker, and ask that it be received by the House, and referred to the department to which it relates. I might say Mr. Speaker, that it has only been within the last week or two, that Long Island has received the benefits of electricity.

It is moved and seconded that this petition be received and referred to the department to which it relates. Those in favour "aye", contrary "nay".

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, before we put that, I would like to support this

petition from the people of Lush's Bight and Beaumont in the request for a road across Long Island. It is certainly a bit of surprise to me, knowing that those fine people have been represented in this hon. House for so many years, by a Liberal member that at this late stage, twenty-one years after Confederation, we have to sit here and listen to a petition from those people for a small bit of road to connect two settlements. Notwithstanding that it is certainly a pleasure for us to support that petition.

Those in favour of the motion, please say "aye", contrary "nay"

Carried.

Presenting Reports of Standing and Select Committees:

HON. E. N. DAWE (Minister of Municipal Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I beg leave in accordance with Section (34) of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, to submit the Annual Report together with the Financial Statement, as of the end of March 31, 1969, and for information of members, extra copies will be available at the Clerk's office.

HON. W. N. ROWE (Minister of Community and Social Development): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to table the Regulations and orders made by the Department of Mines, Agriculture and Resources since the Legislature was in Session in May 1969.

Notice of Motion:

Answers to Questions:

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, Question No. (149) on the Order Paper of today, although addressed to the Hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs, ought, I think, should have been addressed to me, as Minister of Economic Development.

Has the Minister any information that he can give this House concerning the continuation of the payments to homeowners on Bell Island by the Government of Canada on relocation?

In reply to that Question, I have to say Mr. Speaker, that the special housing arrangement made by the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland jointly, terminates at the end of this present month. This arrangement was one under which the Government of Canada contributed seventy-five percent and the Government of Newfoundland twenty-five percent. It comes to an end at the end of the present month. Question No. (151) again in the name of the hon. member for Gander - My answer is as follows: (1) Yes;

MR. COLLINS: Supplementary Question (149) The Premier tells us it is to

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terminate on March 31 - we are asking if there is going to be a continuation on it?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Government policy is not normally stated in Answers to Questions. When Government policy is determined, it will be announced in the ordinary and usual way in due course. But Government policy is never given in Answers to Questions in the Question period of the House. If the hon. gentleman is ready I will go on with Question (151) And the Answer to (1) Yes: (2) No: (3) Yes: (4) Yes, but; yes, but not structural defects. And the defects that were found were corrected. And that is the first part of the fourth section. The second part of the fourth section: Did such defects contribute to the collapsing of the pylons on February 27-28, 1970? The answer is: in no way, no in no way. (5) To give the reasons for the failure of the pylons during the February storm; Is that it was due to the quite unusual and quite extraordinary ice-loading that occurred on those dates. (6) They were of sufficient size, that icing conditions were taken into consideration. They were in fact, Mr. Speaker, designed to carry one hundred percent more ice than in any other part of the Canadian nation. And there was still not enough, as it turned out.

MR. COLLINS: If the hon. Premier will permit? I have not had too much experience with

MR. COLLINS: I have not had too much experience this particular type of tower, but I have had considerable experience with various kinds of pole lines. We have pictures, Sir, in "The Evening Telegram" showing that one tower -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Ask a question and not give information.

MR. COLLINS: Can the Premier indicate to the House, why it is that one tower is flattened, we have seen pictures of one tower is flattened, and an adjacent tower a few feet away is still standing with all three wires on it?

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is a sensible question, and a very practical one to which I figure I am not competent to give an answer. The answers I have given are those that I have received from the Power Commission. I have given these answers on my authority as Minister of Economic Development, but actually, after being briefed by the Power Commission. I have not been briefed on the matter that the hon. gentleman has just raised. And if he would like to give notice of it, and put it on the Order Paper, I will endeavour to get an answer to it. I cannot myself, of my own knowledge answer that question. I might guess. If one collapsed the strain would be greatly relieved on the other one. I do not know if that is the answer or not. I just do not know. And it is no use pursuing the matter, I do not know the answer.

But, if the hon. gentleman will put it on the Order Paper, I will endeavour to get the answer and give him.

MR. COLLINS: Well, Mr. Speaker, can we have the assurance of the hon. Premier that this whole affair will be thoroughly investigated? Not only by the Power Commission, but by a committee of this House?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not by a committee of this House, Mr. Speaker, I have no thought at all that there will be a committee of this House investigating it. But I have every confidence that it will be thoroughly investigated as scientifically and engineering wise, and in every other respect by the finest business organization we possess in our Province, the Power Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador, who have more reason to investigate than anyone else has, because their reputation is safe.

Question No. 152 in the name of the hon. the member for Gander - Has consideration been given to the supply to Bell Island of the necessary funds to complete the Island Centennial Project, if so what decision was made? I do not know what reference is here to decision. However, my answer is that Bell Island Centennial Project received every dollar it was entitled to receive plus, plus additional grants of a very substantial amount of money over and above what the

project was entitled to receive. And as I recollect, the amount runs to some \$50,000 or \$60,000 in excess of the amount which they were entitled.

HON. AIDEN MALONEY: (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the answer to question No. 119 on the Order Paper of Monday, March 2nd. asked by the hon. the member for St. John's West. The answer to (1) \$9,148,309; (2) \$36,804; Further to the first part of the question, the Government is not required to make payments of principle and interest on behalf of the fish plant.

Question No. 120 on the Order Paper of the same day, Monday, March 2nd. the answer to (1) \$13,454,777, and the Government is not required to make payments of either principle or interest on behalf of the shipyard. In answer to part (2) the \$2650. And in answer to part (3) For the year ended November 30th. 1968, \$1,010,959. And for the year ended November 30th. 1969 \$576,864.

MR. J. C. CROSSIE: Would the hon. gentleman permit a question, Mr. Speaker? The hon. minister said that the Government is not responsible to meet any payments of principle and interest with respect to Marystown Shipyard - Is any agency of the Government required to meet payments of principle and interest? Such as the Industrial Development Corporation or any other agency?

MR. MALONEY: The answer, Mr. Speaker, is "no".

HON. G. A. FRECKER: (MINISTER OF PROVINCIAL AFFAIRS): Mr. Speaker, Question No. 146 on the Order Paper addressed to the hon. the Premier. Strickly speaking it should be answered by the Minister of Provincial Affairs - Correspondence was received was referred to me by the Premier, Office. The question is - Has there been any correspondence between Government and Gander Town Council concerning the construction of a Golf Course at Gander? The answer to that part is "yes". The second part, if the answer to (1) is yes, please table the correspondence, since I only noticed this question when I came up here, I have not the correspondence, but I will table it. The answer, Mr. Speaker to part (3) and (4) is as that given by the Preimer to another question. Namely; that it is not normal to answer Government policy questions, to answers on the questions on the payment.

MR. COLLINS: That question was intended for the Minister of Community and Social Development. Where the error was made to the Premier, I am not sure. Has there been a reply to correspondence from the Town of Gander concerning this? And has recommendations been made to the Federal Government?

HON. ERIC DAWE: (MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND SUPPLY) Mr. Speaker, Answer to Question No. 130 on Tuesay, Order Paper, of March 3rd. asked by the hon. member from

St. John's West. The answer is "Yes". Regular inspection is taking place by an official of my department, while he is visiting other councils in the area. Inspection commenced on February 18th, and has not been concluded. Therefore, the second part of the question do not apply.

Question No. 144 on today's Order Paper of March 4th. asked by the hon. member from Burin. The first part of the question is "yes". The second part of the question by the Newfoundland Fishery Development Authority on behalf of Bay Bulls Feed Products Limited.

Answer to Question No. 147 on today's Order Paper asked by the hon. member for Fortune Bay. The answer to the question is "Yes". Further discussions are to be held with the Town Manager and the Council and the Fire Chief to determine what appropriate action should be taken, and for the information of the House, a delegation is calling on the official of my department tomorrow.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to Question No. 130 - Do I understand the Minister to say that there is no special investigation into any financial or other services of the Bay Roberts Town Council with just a normal regular inspection by the department?

MR. DAWE: The answer to the question - there is an inspection being carried on there at the time, and the official was out in that area, but he is carrying on a more detailed inspection in the Town of Bay Roberts.

HON. JAMES R. CHALKER: (MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS): Mr. Speaker, I have the answer to Question No. 110 on the Order Paper of February 27th. asked by the hon. member for Gander. (1a) What was the cost of the land purchased; this is in relation to the Provincial Building at Grand Falls, Mr. Speaker. Land purchased \$52,444.00. (b) Building Construction - \$2,056,890. (c) Furnishings - \$17,322.00. (2) Total office space - 47,385 sq. feet. 3 of this 40,668 sq. feet were occupied by the Provincial Government. (4) How many square feet are leased, to whom, at what rentals? 6,717 sq. feet. The Federal Department of Public Works annual rental of \$6,500. C.N.T. \$2,875.00; R.C.M.P \$21,789. I will table the answer to part (5) of the question Mr. Speaker, along with the number of departments that the Government has in this building. (6) What was the cost of operation of the building in they year 1969? \$82,240.00 (7) The total revenue for 1969 - \$29,300.00. (8) What was the amount of tax assessed by the Town of Grand Falls on the building for the year 1969? The answer is, property not taxable. (9) I will table that Mr. Speaker has it is quite lengthy. (10) What was the cost of furnishing the office occupied by the Member for the District of Grand Falls - detail cost of carpet, desk and other

equipment? I may say Mr. Speaker, this office is not put there solely for the purpose of the accommodation of the member for Grand Falls. Actually it is put there primarily for the use of the Premier, first of all. And any other cabinet minister may visit Grand Falls and will require the use of same. The answer regard to carpet - \$374.00 - desk and chair - \$342.50 - side chairs - \$360.00, a bookcase - \$130.00, table - \$90.00 - Filing Cabinet - \$99.00 - other miscellaneous pieces of equipment \$63.00. Question (11)

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, did my hon. colleague that is my office, that is for me?

MR. CHALKER: Yes I said it, yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is for me?

MR. CHALKER: Yes, you have first choice. Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has first choice, after that the member

MR. SMALLWOOD: I do not know how to answer that.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, in Grand Falls he has second choice.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Being the hon. Premier he should have.

MR. HICKMAN: This is Government policy for the future.

MR. WELLS: No matter who it might be in the future?

MR. CHALKER: It is definitely the Government policy in the future.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Will the office be available for a non-portfolio?

MR. CHALKER: I should not imagine so, Mr. Speaker. I should not imagine so.

MR. WELLS: He does not know what to do with the office he has got now.

MR. CHALKER: The answer to Question (11) Mr. Speaker, What is the function of the full time secretary in the office of the Member for the District? The secretary the full time employee of the Department of Education, and works for the regional supervisor and school attendance officer. And I assume that when she has to take dictation from any hon. minister that is there, that she is available to do such work.

MR. WELLS: And hon. members, as well.

MR. CHALKER: I said ministers, Mr. Speaker. They all want to get on top in a hurry those young fellows, they will have to wait, Mr. Speaker, for at least I think for another fifteen years, would that be suitable to you Mr. Premier?

MR. PREMIER: I will say from fifteen to twenty years.

MR. CHALKER: Well make it twenty-five years.

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Question (12) Is said secretary a civil servant? Yes. Question(13) What responsibility has contractor to make good defects in concrete and plaster finish? Answer contractor responsible up to a certain length of time. I think it is a year or two years, I am not quite sure, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will table those answers. And I will also table the information concerning who works there, and what Government Departments occupy the building.

HON. WILLIAM R. CALLAHAN: (MINISTER OF MINES, AGRICULTURE AND RESOURCES) Mr. Speaker,

I have the answer to

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Question no. 137: Mr. Murphy.

(1) Yes. (2) \$1.00. In respect to the first part again, Mr. Speaker, Mr. David Locke, Bell Island who is the purchaser. (3) No - second part of that question is no. (4) It was, Mr. Speaker, in the first instance and then I understand that at a meeting of the Bell Island Economic Development Committee, it was suggested that the building be allowed to remain in order that the respective purchaser might use it in connection with some agricultural pursuit and the decision was made to allow the building to stand and the gentleman has the use of it. The land, of course, is invested in the crown and there has been no transaction in respect of the land.

Question no. 138: Mr. Murphy.

I think I have to say in reply to the question, Mr. Speaker, that the Bell Island Guest House some months ago was transferred to the administration of the St. John's Housing Corporation and that the question might best be redirected.

Question no. 140: Mr. Hickey.

(1) Yes. In reply to the second, third, fourth and fifth part, I have to say that the law officers of the Government are pursuing a claim for damages.

Question no. 143: Mr. Earle.

Ten dollars a short ton on site at Bell Island.

Question no. 88: Mr. Crosbie.

(1) Under the legislation constituting the Health Resources Fund which, of course, Sir, as hon. members are aware is legislation of the Parliament of Canada, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador are entitled to receive in the first instance, \$17.9 million. This represents the total of the per capita grants and an agreed portion of the special grant for the Atlantic provinces. Additionally, Newfoundland is entitled to a share of the \$175 million portion of the fund which is to be spent at the discretion of the Governor-in-Council again of Ottawa, Canada. No payments have been made to any government out of this latter portion of the fund, Sir. Newfoundland's share, if it were to be divided on a per capita basis and I emphasize that our position is that it should be divided on a more generous basis to us, on a per capita basis, Sir, it would be \$4.3 million for a total of, if I arithmetic is correct, \$22.2 million.

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With reference to a second part of the first part of the question, Sir, the Government of Canada contribute toward the cost of postsecondary education in Newfoundland on the same basis, as they do for any other province. One of the methods by which the amount paid by that Government under this program is computed is by reference to the total cost of postsecondary education as defined. The cost of the faculty of medicine, if they are not covered under any other program towards which the Government of Canada contribute, would be included in the cost of postsecondary education in Newfoundland. Further Mr. Speaker, any hospital which might be built would receive payments under the Hospital Insurance Plan from the Government of Canada and any - Mr, Speaker, with deference it was asked, because I said that the question, any assistance towards the operating costs of the Medical School - any hospital which might be built and perhaps I should add in connection with a Medical School.

If the hon. gentleman will cast his mind back to the time, when he was minister, and the Government passed the point of no return on the Medical School, Sir, a hospital is an integral part of the operation. Any hospital which might be built would receive payments under the Hospital Insurance Plan from the Government of Canada. Any doctors rendering insured services within the scope of the Medical Care Insurance Plan would also attract payments from the Government of Canada. In each case, of course, this money comes from the Government of Newfoundland in the usual fashion as for any other hospital or for any other doctor in this Province.

MR. CROSBIE: Is there any special financial assistance proposed by the Government of Canada towards operating costs of Medical Schools; apart from the minor items you have already mentioned, which we all know about?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minor items to which I mentioned would total \$5 or \$6 million towards a total cost

MR. CROSBIE: That is the Medical School- University Hospital.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman will cast his mind back..

MR. CROSBIE: If you will cast your mind forward.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. ROBERTS: He will recall that a University Hospital is an integral part of a Medical School. You cannot have a Medical School, Mr. Speaker, without a

hospital.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. A question is being answered and it is not subject to any comment.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

If another hospital is to be used, then it will receive contributions from the Government of Canada.

The answer, Sir, to the second part is that this is a matter of Government policy and will be announced at an appropriate time.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, yes.

MR. ROBERTS: The answer to the third part, Mr. Speaker. In an effort to fill the hon. gentleman's cup to overflowing is as follows: The Minister of National Health and Welfare has already announced publicly that the Government of Canada intend to restrict payments from the Health Resources Fund for the 1970-1971 fiscal year as they have done for the 1969-1970 fiscal year. The total amount that that government will pay out of the fund in either of these years is \$37.5 million. Newfoundland is entitled to such portion of this payment as her population is to the population of Canada. Any monies which are not drawn and we have not drawn anything like our full entitlement, Sir, any monies which are not drawn accumulate to the credit of the Province; similarly, any overexpenditures by a province are debited against that province, and they are covered for future years.

Mr. Speaker, there is a question on today's Order Paper from the hon. member for Burin district.

MR. HICKMAN: Would the hon. minister permit a supplementary question on 81? Has there been any indication by the Government of Canada as to when a decision will be received as to the portion of the \$175 million still unallocated?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, this Government have received no indication, although we have continually, perhaps, - I do not believe any government in Canada have any such indication to add to that.

MR. HICKMAN: Then I gather that you are pressing for something other than a per capita distribution?

MR. ROBERTS: We most definitely are, Sir. We most definitely are. When the hon.

gentleman was in the portfolio I now hold, he expressed the policy of the Government that we are entitled to more than the per capita share and that is our policy and will continue to be our policy, Sir.

Question no. 139: Mr. Hickman.

(1) There are, Sir, two doctors in practice on Bell Island both of them employees of mine. They are each doing general practice work. One of them a Greek gentleman, whose name I cannot pronounce, Dr. Lathouris, I am told by my colleague, the member for Bell Island, is a qualified surgeon and I am told carries out a considerable number of surgical procedures. (2) I have received no such representation and my officials tell me that they have received none. (3) I am not sure I know what the hon. gentleman is driving at. There were formerly 14,000 people on Bell Island. There were three general practitioners with no hospital. There are now about 6,000 living on Bell Island. There are, as I have said, two doctors. They have a hospital with a staff of about fifty people including ten or twelve registered nurses. Is that sufficient, Mr. Speaker? I do not know if that is sufficient or not. I think we could use more doctors on Bell Island as we could in almost every part of Newfoundland. I think the services on Bell Island are the best they have been in a long time. There is still room for improvement.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister permit a question?

MR. ROBERTS: Of course.

MR. CROSBIE: Are the two doctors on Bell Island working for him personally or for the Government of Newfoundland?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, as the Premier has said, when I said they were employees of mine, none of us sits in this House serves an individual. We sit here as a member for a district. Some of us from time to time hold the Queen's commission to be a minister. The two doctors on Bell Island are employees of the Government of Newfoundland. When I say employees of mine, because I, as his hon. friend the faithful follower the member from Humber West said a day or so ago, I answer personally for the act of any official employed in the department of which I am the political head, so does any of my colleagues, Sir, and we do it gladly.

Question no. 135: Mr. Crosbie.

The cost of construction \$2,215,086.37. Received from the Atlantic Development Board \$918,241.06 pending of Atlantic Development Board, \$32,819.70.

paid by Electric Reduction Company of Canada Limited \$500,000.

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. minister permit a supplementary question, on question 83 of yesterday. He left the Chamber shortly after answering it and I did not get the opportunity to ask a supplementary question. The question is concerning the road from Belleoram to Pool's Cove. The answer to that was that it was finished, construction was finished. What is the meaning of finished ?

MR. STARKES: Mr. Speaker, I will check for the hon. gentleman and let him know tomorrow.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Send him over a dictionary.

MR. SPEAKER: Further answers to questions.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, before your Honour calls Orders of the Day, may I have the permission of the House to make a ministerial statement to be followed by another very important ministerial statement as well.

I am pleased to be able, through the instrumentality of my colleague the Minister of Provincial Affairs to inform the House that the Government have invited the following persons to form part of a committee to be known as the Agrentia Task Force. From the Department of Community and Social Development, Mr. Z Sametz, the deputy minister with an alternate, if necessary. From the Department of Economic Development, Mr. Herman Batten, Mr. Edward P. Henley. From the Department of Fisheries, Mr. Cliff Russell, Chairman of the Fisheries Loan Board and Mr. Ross Young of the Fisheries Authority, if he can be made available and I think he can. From Memorial University, Dr. Angus Bruneau, the Dean of Engineering. From the Fisheries College, Dr. Ray Barrett, its President and to be secretary of the task force, Mr. Herbert Coombs, the deputy minister of Provincial Affairs. I understand from the member for the district, the Minister of Provincial Affairs that the Federal members of the task force are planning to visit the Placentia area this coming Saturday to meet with the local committee there and with representatives of the Newfoundland Committee just referred to.

The meeting is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Saturday and it is to take place in the town hall at Dunville. Mr. Speaker, I should like to announce also that

Mr. John M. Shaheen, the head of Shaheen Natural Resources of New York and Mr. Homer White the President of the Refining Company and Mr. Roy Furmark the financial adviser to that group and Mr. Wilson, the head engineer and some four or five high ranking officers of the Shaheen group are coming to St. John's on Sunday for meetings on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday with the Cabinet and with the Caucus, the Liberal Caucus. Monday, Tuesday, probably Wednesday.

Later in this present week, the Government are having a group of four lawyers, four solicitors go to Europe in legal capacity. Two, we hope from the department of my hon. colleague the Minister of Justice. Two we hope from there. One private barrister and solicitor of the city and one private barrister or one private solicitor from the English bar in London. A team of four lawyers who will go, I hope, tomorrow or the next day or Friday to Europe to confer there with lawyers of the corporations and other parties involved in Europe in the construction and equipping of the oil refinery at Come-by-Chance. The

MR. SMALLWOOD: This group of lawyers from Newfoundland are going in behalf of the Newfoundland Government to check over the agreements, to report on their condition, their status, their significance to this Government. They will do that on Saturday and Sunday and Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday of next week and Thursday. On Wednesday in all probability - Wednesday night probably a group of Cabinet Ministers headed by me and including the directors of the Provincial Building Corporation Limited, I think a total of four of us, or is it five? Five in all - am I director? A total of five of us Mr. Speaker, will fly to Europe to join that conference to sign the agreement for the construction. The construction and equipping agreements. We will then return to St. John's and on the Monday we hope, following, Mr. Shaheen and his whole group will come to St. John's and we will bring before the House here some amendment to the existing legislation passed I think two years ago. On that occasion Mr. Shaheen and his associates will appear before the members of this House. The occasion when the Government introduces amendment to the existing legislation, so that members of the House will or can inform themselves of the progress of the project as of that time.

I think perhaps I have made it clear that this week a group of lawyers will go to Europe for the Government to study the agreement, the construction agreement. That on Sunday Mr. Shaheen and his group will come here, that on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday they will be present in the Cabinet and in the Liberal Caucus. That on Wednesday night in all probability a group of Cabinet Ministers headed by me will fly to Europe to sign the agreement on Saturday. We too want a couple of days to go over the agreements and to be advised by our lawyers who are going ahead of us, for a week ahead of us, the best part of a week so that we may sign the agreements if the agreements are ready. Well they are ready now, but if our lawyers advise us that our interests as a Province, and as a Government are amply protected, then on Saturday the ministers will sign the agreement and then return to St. John's so that on the following Monday or soon after maybe it will not be on Monday, maybe even Tuesday or Wednesday, but the following week we will bring legislation before the House on which occasion or around that time Mr. Shaheen and his associates will be appearing before - appearing in a meeting of members of the House held partly in private and partly in public. In private to reveal information of a type that would not be good for Newfoundland to be made public, because, it would provide

ammunition to commercial competitors of the refinery, and in public for the rest of the time.

I ought to say in conclusion Mr. Speaker, that the agreements, the agreement to be signed on Saturday next week will be conditional. It will not come into effect until this House amends the existing agreement. If that amendment is not made the whole thing will fall to the ground. The amendment is of a technical character which does not change the nature of the arrangement. And then there is one other amendment which I think the House will have no difficulty whatsoever in passing, and in passing with pleasure. That is how it stands at the moment.

HON. L.R.CURTIS (President of the Council): Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do not adjourn at six o'clock today.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, before we vote on that, the hon. Leader of the House - is it his intention that we have Friday night off this week also?

MR. CURTIS: That is the plan Mr. Speaker

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, further, before we do vote on it- is it also the intention of the Leader of the House to close the House tonight after the Opposition matters have been discussed, or to bring on the Government business - if it should terminate before?

MR. CURTIS: I would plan Mr. Speaker, that we play it by ear. My present plan would be if these motions do not take too long, to proceed with the address and reply.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion 2, on today's Order Paper in the name of the hon. member for Humber East.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, before I say what I have to say it might be of some value to read the motion. The motion reads as follows:-

WHEREAS it is essential for all Members of this House to have reasonable office accommodation close to the House, to enable them to properly discharge their duties;

AND WHEREAS the Government has refused to provide suitable accommodation on either the 9th. or 10th. floors of Confederation Building for the Members for Bonavista North, St. John's West, St. Barbe South, and Humber East;

AND WHEREAS space on the 10th. floor assigned to the Honourable Minister Without Portfolio, the Member for Labrador South is neither necessary for nor used by the Honourable Minister;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House directs the Government to make available to the said Members the space on the 10th. floor

of Confederation Building presently assigned to the said Honourable Minister Without Portfolio.

I think Mr. Speaker, this House should discuss and consider the manner in which some of its members are being treated. The almost unbelievable contempt with which some of the members of this House are being treated. In order to demonstrate this I will give the House and anybody else who wants to listen some indication of why such space is needed. Being a member in this House involves not only sitting in it, and listening to all other hon. members when they speak from three o'clock in the afternoon until six o'clock, and then from eight o'clock until eleven - that is not all that is involved in being a member of this House.

Legislation and matters are brought before this House and in order for members to discuss these matters intelligently, and give them any consideration whatsoever there has to be a fair amount of work done in preparation for it. You cannot just walk in and discuss the principles involved and the details involved in the thirty odd Bills that are presently on the Order Paper without considering it before hand - and that does not mean just reading the Bills concerned. In most cases these Bills are amendments to other legislation. Legislation that are part of the revised statutes 1952. Legislation on which perhaps half dozen occasions have been amended since 1952, so in order to properly consider what is in these Bills if necessary to read, in many cases, not all cases, but in many cases it is necessary to go back to the original legislation and as well to consider every single amendment that there has been in the intervening years if the job is to be properly done, and very often to refer to other legislation that these Acts may have some bearing upon.

We have to consider the Auditor General's report - that is one of our most important functions as members of this House because, the Government cannot spend a single cent without the authority of this House, and the Auditor General is the servant of this House who reviews the public accounts and tells the members of this House whether or not the Government has spent the money in accordance with the directions of the House. And if they have not why they have not, and where they have not and by how much and so on. In order to review the Auditor General's report and the public accounts there has to be some accommodation - some accommodation is needed. The estimates will I presume be coming out shortly when the Budget is brought down. Work has to be done again on this.

The Government members do not have quite the same problem. The hon. members who sit opposite and smile or read poetry as the case may be do not have the same concern - do not have the same worries. They are backed up by several thousand civil servants. They rely on the ministers who present the legislation, the minister who brings down the Budget. They rely on those ministers to look after the interest of that side of the House. And behind those ministers are several thousand civil servants who do the work for them with - well I was going to say unlimited accomodation but I understand it is not entirely unlimited but with ample accomodation available.

Most members who sit opposite including those members who are not members of the Government do not have to concern themselves with the details of the Bill and what is involved in it. The Bill for example to - the Bill respecting private investigators and security guards. Maybe they have read it and maybe they have not - I do not know. But we on this side of the House Mr. Speaker, have to read it and have to consider it in the light of other legislation and have to consider what it means to this Province and how the rights of the citizens are being protected or interfered with or exactly what is involved. This is the duty that is upon the members who sit on this side of the House in particular, and I think Mr. Speaker this.....

Mr. Speaker, this gives the lie to the statement made earlier by the Premier that we worked only twenty-seven hours. Who should be worried about working only twenty-seven hours? There is a lot more than twenty-seven hours involved in the time that we have worked.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I have a thousand times said that it is a crime to accuse members of working only during the hours they spend inside this Chamber and that it is stupid to think that members only work for the five or eight weeks the House is in session and then only in the hours that they are in this Chamber. Four-fifths of their work is done outside the Chamber.

MR. WELLS: Now, that I have had the confirmation from the Premier, I withdraw my remarks. I must have misunderstood him, because I understood the other day, when the Premier was speaking, that this is certainly the impression that he left me with, when he was saying that it is only twenty-seven hours; we have only worked twenty-seven hours this week. My, that was a very definite impression he left me with.

However, I must have misunderstood him, and I am grateful now, for his acknowledgement that four-fifths of the work is outside this Chamber and I hoped he would be ^{sufficiently} concerned and has sufficient respect for that fact to accord to the members who sit where I sit, Mr. Speaker, some reasonable accomodation in which to do that work.

Proper preparation takes time and it takes, not only a matter of reading this little bill, it means having available to the person doing the preparation all the revised statutes and all of the amendments that have been passed in. The previous estimates of precious years. The previous auditors general reports, previous public accounts - all of this has to be available, and not only must it be available in the morning. It must be available when these matters are brought before the House because in the course of debate, or in the course of discussions on the Public Accounts or whatever the case maybe, matters come up and these little drawers in our desks, here, is convenient as they may be. They are certainly not adequate to accomodate all these things. So, the members concerned have to go somewhere and get it.

The Minister of Public Works thinks - if the member happens to be a member of the Independent Liberal group - there is nothing wrong with him running down to the third floor, but not so for the minister. He wants to be able to step outside, see anybody he wants to, still keep in contact

with the House and so on. But, we who happen to be members of the Independent Liberal group, the indication from the minister is, the minister has a common-room available to him fifteen feet behind him, as well as his office on the fourth floor. He has that as well.

AN HON. MEMBER: The hon. gentleman has the men's room available to him.

MR. WELLS: Yes, we have the men's room available to us. I try and avoid it after I have seen my hon. friend in it. I cannot always do that. We have to tolerate certain inconveniences and certain methods in the House on occasions and we are seeing another classic example of it here now. Brilliant remark. Really brilliant remark. Really, not much of a credit to the great people of Bell Island that he purports to represent.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman could be in there now, for that matter, for what contribution he is making to the House.

MR. WELLS: The Government members, Mr. Speaker, do not have to concern themselves. I seriously doubt whether there is a member who is not a member of the Cabinet, who has read through and gone through, for example, the bill respecting private investigators for an Act Further to Amend the Fire Prevention Act, for any act that any hon. member wants to pick out - the Act Respecting the Expropriation Act, because he does not have the same concern. He does not have the same responsibility in duty as the members who sit on this side of the House.

They have a particular duty upon them - to watch every single word that goes into legislation and comes out of this House; to obtain an explanation and to put forward points of view other than points of view offered by the Government and Government members.

There is a particular duty on the members who sit opposite to obtain these explanations, not for the members alone, but for the general public of this Province and to watch every single cent that is spent. That is the particular duty of the members who sit on this side of the House, and I do not think that anybody will deny it and they cannot very well discharge that duty that we have got to be running in and out of the clerk's office.

There is no room there, anyway. The clerk's office is overburdened as it is. Our responsibility is not to criticise for the sake of criticism, although this is a charge often levelled at members who sit on this particular side of the House. Oh, it is just the Opposition. They are always criticising.

It is the duty of the members who sit on this side of the House to criticise for the purpose of bringing to the attention of the people of this Province the varying points of view and the different aspects involved in every piece of Legislation that comes out of this House - to bring out the facts. That is the responsibility of the members who sit here.

Although, all members have a similar responsibility, the way it is worked out in practice, the members who sit on the Government side of the House, do not concern themselves with that and do not really have to, to be honest. They should be concerned with what is going through the House and what they say, yes and no to, but from a point of view of general principles, from a point of view of practice, they can rely on the ministers and the thousands of civil servants that back up the ministers to do this work, but those of us who sit here, Mr. Speaker, have the duty imposed on them to go over every word in it and every key and every eye in it and in particular, every cent that the Government has authority to spend.

It is that particular duty. We are not asking for anything out of the ordinary. Not asking for anything more than any other member has. Not a single thing. All Government members have available to them, a fairly large common-room immediately behind the Government side of the House, about fifteen feet directly behind the Minister of Public Works and only ten feet behind the Minister without Portfolio, the member for Labrador South, when he is sitting in the House. Only ten feet behind him or less than that. Immediately available. All the members who sit there have a place where they can go to discuss matters while the House is in session, where they can make telephone calls and still listen to what goes on in the House, where they can see people who come to see them and still listen to what goes on in the House.

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There is nothing wrong with that. That is the way it should be. That is the way it is in almost all Parliaments. That is the way it should be. I do not say there is anything wrong with that or that/^{it}is a waste of money. That is quite proper. That is the way it should be.

In what must be the good old days when there was not so much ill feeling and ill-will, when the Government were apparently reasonable, they provided similar accommodations for the Opposition and ever since the Opposition has had it. It is immediately behind us on this side of the House for any member of the official Opposition who wants to make or take a telephone call or consult with anybody who comes to see them or do any work that they want to do. They have only to step out there. That is all that is involved.

In the same good old days, when there were first independent members in this House, provision was made for them too, by taking a portion of the Opposition space down that end. It is ample for four or five, or six, or seven or eight or nine or ten independent members. The invitation is still there. There is no white line on the floor yet. No crosswalk, but I do not think it is really necessary. I think hon. members could find their way across when they are ready.

The space is there was made available, then for a number of years, there were no independent members. No members who did not belong to either the Government party or the official Opposition party, and so that room was taken and used by the clerk of the House. Probably properly so. I do not think there is a member of the House who can deny that it is quite convenient to have the clerk's office that close to the House. Quite convenient.

We have no desire to see that upset or to kick out the cler, although I hasten to point out, Mr. Speaker, that accommodation of the members of the House ranks before accommodation of the clerk. I do not think anybody can dispute that either, although the clerk must be accommodated.

The members of the House come first. The clerk is there to serve the members of the House. Not vice versa. We are not asking for any elaborate offices or anything else. All we are asking for is a room that we can use in common, the four of us, adjacent to the Chamber. That is all. Nothing more than that. Nothing more than the members who sit with the Government have. Not one thing more than the members who sit with the Opposition have. And it is not just one person asking for it as it was last year, although,

the member for Labrador South was --or Labrador West was mildly concerned with with the same matter last year. Not just one person asking for it anymore. And it must be adjacent to the House to be of any value, but what do we get when we ask for it.

It has been raised, I believe, Mr. Speaker, every single day since this House opened by the member for Bonavista South, the member for St. John's West, by myself, for the member for St. Barbes South, as the member for Labrador West. The matter has been raised.

On most of these occasions, the Minister of Public Works has been out of the Chamber and the hon. the Premier has always said the matter should be referred to the minister. He is out of the Chamber. That is what happened on yesterday and the day before. The minister was not in the Chamber at the time. Could not be answered, and there has not yet been an answer.

The Minister of Public Works did contact me, I believe, late last week, probably on Thursday or Friday of last week and said, "I would like to show you something", and guided me downstairs to the third floor to an office near the steps going up on where the mezzanine area is around the third floor. An office that was immediately off the mezzanine area, said, "Here, look at the nice office we have for you and your hon. friend."

It was a nice office. Nothing wrong with the physical space. Nothing at all. It was large enough. No question about it. The only thing primarily wrong with it - it was on the third floor. Not available to us as a common-room. We are not just asking just for an office. It was on the third floor and I know as well as every single member who sits in this House knows the reason for that.

It is called contempt. That is what it is called, Mr. Speaker.

As well, Mr. Speaker, I might point out, there were a couple of civil servants in there, at their desks. They were not working then, because they were hurriedly picking up their papers. They were about to be evacuated. They were in there doing their work and they were about to be moved out. Their filing cabinets in the desks and their typewriters and the papers.

So, I told the minister on behalf of all of all of us, to let the

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civil servants to go about their work and not to bother to disturb them.

I am not in this House to take the crumbs that falls from the minister's table. In this House, I am equal to the minister. I am an equal member of it. I do not have to settle for the crumbs that he drops off his desk.

The Government party has the accommodations. The official Opposition has the accommodation. There is ---

party has the accommodation, the official opposition has the accommodation, there is five other members that sit on this side of the House who have been told, go and play down on the third floor there is a few crumbs. I have no desire to disturb the Clerk's Office which is the proper place for it, I can see the value of having that out there. But there is other accommodations available either on the ninth or tenth floor and I am sure most members have a fair idea of what I am talking about. It is not the room that the minister for rehabilitation wants to keep talking about, The room was there last year, and it was unoccupied, last year, there was some steel filing cabinets with magnetic tapes from tape recordings probably the sessions of the House. That is what was in that House last year when I was looking for some reasonable accommodation. So, I spoke to Mr. Speaker, about it, the man I should contact. He said: "Of course I will take the matter up with the Internal Economy Commission." That was fine. And I believe he or I or both of us as well, discussed the matter with the deputy-minister of Public Works. That was empty. Not occupied by anybody, not ~~was~~ used for storage of magnetic tapes.

Sir, it was a logical thing to do, store the tapes elsewhere, and, use this room for the member for Labrador West and myself, the only two of us then who sat in this position, Mr. Speaker. I assumed it was being done, I saw the men moving them out. The next the men were moving the tapes out, moving the cabinets out, so I thought this was very good, we are going to get accommodation, it is very decent of them. The next thing I heard it was not going to be available. What were they going to do with it? There was an urgent need had come up, very urgent, could not be done without. could not be used for any other purpose. A very urgent need they had to have an office for the hon. the minister without Portfolio, the member for Labrador South. I still can not believe it. I still can not believe the audacity and the gall in saying, it is almost incredible, goes beyond contempt. Quite contemptible. Sudden urgent need, and I venture to bet Mr. Speaker, that that hon. minister has not spent one full hour in that office since then.

A year ago, I venture to bet that that hon. minister has not spent one full hour there since then. The thing was refurbished, refurnished, repainted, recarpeted, I do not know how much it cost, I have no idea.

MR. NEARY: What colour was the carpet?

MR. WELLS: Oh, flashy red. Some black in it I think, may be I am wrong.

MR. HILL: A little purple. Something like your shirt.

MR. CROSBIE: Psychedelic psychedelic.

MR. WELLS: Urgent need for the minister without Portfolio who had just recently become, succeeded to that great office of being a Minister Without Portfolio. My

hon. friend the senior member for Harbour Main, has been a Minister Without Portfolio for I believe, approximately fourteen years in that vicinity and he has never seen fit to require an office in this building.

MR.HILL: But the hon. minister owns his own office downtown.

MR.WELLS: Does not the hon. minister have office space available with the company that he works with?

MR.HILLS: I do not, it would be most unethical for me to use the office space.

MR.WELLS: Mr. Speaker, will forgive me for laughing, chuckling at it. That is almost unbelievable too Mr. Speaker. I too, as Your Honour may recall held that esteem office of Minister Without Portfolio. I did not find it necessary to have an office. Did not ask for one, it was not necessary, the House was in session I could use the offices next door right behind the hon. gentleman just a few feet away from him. All sorts of accommodation available. I do not think there is any member in this House Mr. Speaker, who doubts the proposition that that hon. minister has no need whatsoever for that office. Nobody believes that he does. Nobody anywhere believes that he does, not even the minister himself. There is no doubt about the reason for it. Bitterness and vindictiveness is the explanation for it. Not on the part of the hon. minister's part I would not for a moment accuse him of that. I have never seen any of it from him, and I do not expect that I ever will. But I do say, and I repeat that he has not spent in my opinion, one full hour in a year in that office. Ever since the House opened and we are now into our second week of actual work it opened February 18th. We are into our second week of actual work of this House I have been on this floor and the tenth floor every single morning since the House was opened. I come into the building around about 9.15 a.m. or 9.30 usually I work here at the desk, usually.

MR.HILL: I work from 8 to 9.

MR.WELLS: And I have yet to see the minister in that office. And I have yet to speak with anybody else who has seen the minister in that office. That Mr. Speaker it gets beyond contempt, borders on the criminal, certainly an incredible abuse, of public power and office, an incredible abuse and waste of public funds, an-unbelievable contempt, I have not yet seen the door open in that office this year. I have never seen him there morning or afternoon.

MR.HILL: You do not come early enough.

MR.WELLS: A recent observations indicate Mr. Speaker, that in the last five for six days the hon. minister has taken to hanging his coat in that office when he comes in at three o'clock, or shortly before three. But if one is watchful one can always

see too about quarter of six the hon. minister will go out and upstairs and get his coat and put it in the government's common room so that he does not have to waste the time after six o'clock going up to the office and getting it. One is watchful, one can see that too. Is that tolerable? Is this House, can this House really tolerate that kind of contempt for it and the rights of its members? Hon. members should not be so contemptuous of the members who sit here at the moment, their turn may not be too far away, even if it is not the next time, and I expect it will be, it may not be too far away. The rights these hon. members are playing with are their own, Their rights as members of this House that is what they are playing with, and laughing at and snickering at. They should not be too contemptible, Mr. Speaker, and should not consider the things, the matter so lightly, and consider it a source of amusement which they obviously do.

I am shocked Mr. Speaker, that the hon. minister can really walk in the door of that office, perhaps that is why he is never there, his conscience will not allow him to do it. Perhaps so, I have a high regard for the man personally and I must admit that frankly. Mr. Speaker, but perhaps that is why the hon. minister does not ever go in that office. I expect he has got a conscience and he can not face it. It is rank discrimination, that the hon. member's opposite take so lightly. It is their rights. Because if we are not to discriminate, if all members are to be equal before this House Mr. Speaker, it is their own rights they are playing with and their dreams and their laughter may soon come back to haunt them one of those days in the not too far distant future. It is a contempt Mr. Speaker, not only of the members of this House but the people whom they represent I, as the member for Humber East represent the people for Humber East the same with my hon. friend St. John's West, and Bonavista South, and St. Barbe's North, St. Barbe South. When the minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation laughs and snickers and says there is a room out there, which he refers to the men's toilet-room he is saying that to the people of those districts, and I hasten to warn him not to forget it.

MR. NEARY: The hon. member should have stayed on this side of the House where he had all the facilities he is now looking for.

MR. WELLS: I also had principle, that is what brings me over here.

MR. NEARY: That is a matter of opinion.

MR. WELLS: In my opinion it is principle, and it brings me over here, but it does not in any way diminish my rights as a member of this House, or the rights of any other hon. member here. Incredible contempt of the people and the members of this

House and the people of this Province and the House as a whole, Not just the four members I am talking about but the House as a whole. It is not new that kind of contempt and it is not the only instance of it. We saw it here last night during the time when the Premier was speaking and he told his little joke, and he turned around to this side of the House and offered his posterior and said here bite.

Contempt, that is disgusting Mr. Speaker, it is almost unbelievable, that the Premier of this Province who should be accorded respect has sunk so low perhaps though Mr. Speaker, it was the most intelligent thing we have seen all night.

MR. SPEAKER (Noel): The hon. member is not supposed to refer to any other debate when he is speaking.

MR. WELLS: I was not referring to debate Mr. Speaker, but I will not refer to what went on last night again, it speaks for itself and makes noise for itself. The Premier keeps saying I hate him, I, in particularly my hon. friend for St. John's West, we hate him, nothing could be further from the truth, it is totally untrue. I accord to the Premier, every expression of gratitude, that he is due by the people of this Province and I have no hesitation whatsoever in saying it is substantial, very substantial, I could only hope that before I die I have made a contribution to this Province the equal of that hon. gentleman. I do not deny that. I do not expect too. I am honest about it. But I also hope that I never sink to the depths that he sunk either, Mr. Speaker, in doing so, I give him the credit he is due and I respect and admire the efforts he has made, and the hon. gentleman's sincerity on occasions. One can not help but do it if one is going to be honest. Mr. Speaker, and I do that. I meant what I said, on the first speech I made in this House and I repeat it again now: "I did not get elected to this House on my merits alone. I have no illusions about that, none at all!" The Premier trotting out in his speech the other day did not bother me in the slightest Mr. Speaker, that is a fact I am certain of. What I do not know is the degree. I do not know how much I earn on my own or how much or what proportion came from the fact that I was running for the party headed by the Premier. But I have no illusion that I could not have won the seat running as an Independent. I have no doubts about that and I say it honestly.

But Mr. Speaker, today is a different question. A lot has passed under the bridge since then. Oh, yes, the hon. minister does not know much about the Humber East District Association to ask that question.

MR. WELLS: Yet Mr. Speaker, I find myself standing before Your Honour and having to use the time of this House to ask for a basic courtesy, basic decency. I do not hate the man, and I never will. I would like to think that he does not hate me either, but I ^{have} not much ground for coming to that conclusion. I would like to think that he did not. I would not like to think that differences of opinion on policies and politics, no matter how deeply one is involved, could engender hate amongst any two men. I do not think it should. And I can assure this House that it does not on my part. So I have to look for some explanation as to why I have to stand before Your Honour today and say this. We are the only four members here, with my hon. friend from Labrador West, who do not have accommodations. Is there any way in heaven's name that can be justified? Any way? Can any hon. member who is sitting opposite right now say, that is okay. That is the way it should be? And then look in the mirror at himself? Can he do that?

I do not think so Mr. Speaker. I do not think so. The member for Bonavista North stood in this House a few days ago - he is ill with the flu and is still ill with the flu, and was ill the day he was in here. And he said, "I have been a member for this House for fourteen and a half years, and I walk in here today, and I have no place to hang my hat, no place to speak to anybody, no place to make a phone call. That is courtesy - he knew of the office on the third floor. The House is on the ninth floor. That is courtesy Mr. Speaker, that is decency.

A loyal colleague of the Premier for fourteen years, treated that way. How or what can be said in justification of that? I cannot see anything. See it for a moment. The Minister without Portfolio, a pleasant a man as he may be, needs that office like I need an igloo with the northpole. Perhaps he has been used as a pawn, I do not know, I do not know. All I can do is guess. There has been no reasonable logical explanation whatsoever - all I can do is look at the facts and guess. I am not sure how that hon. Minister can face the House - how he can face the members in these circumstances. How any member opposite can face the members and say, that is okay, that is the way it should be. The member for Bonavista North who has been a member for fourteen and a half years, an old man, who has made his contribution to public life in this Province. That is okay for him - that is the way he should be treated. Can any member sitting opposite say that? I do not believe Mr. Speaker, I do

not believe they do say that, I honestly believe they think differently. I know every single one of them rather well, and I do not think that ill of them. So I have to find an explanation elsewhere. The only thing that I can think that is the Premier's decision - that is all I can think. I cannot accord that kind of feeling to most of those hon. gentlemen sitting opposite. I know them too well. I know the kind of men they are, and I cannot assign to them that kind of thought, including the hon. Minister without Portfolio. Perhaps it is right. Perhaps that is the way they do things. But my opinion is no - I may be wrong in that. Perhaps Mr. Speaker, they will be men enough to support this Resolution. I cannot see that they can do less. If they have any respect for decency and fair play. If they have any respect for honesty, or respect for this House, or respect for the members of this House. I do not see how they could do anything less than support the Resolution. Supporting this Motion Mr. Speaker, will not bring about the downfall of the Government - it is not a motion of confidence in the Government - it has nothing to do with confidence in the Government. All it is Mr. Speaker, is a Motion based on fair play and decency.

I ask nothing more, and I assure hon. members that voting for this Motion by them will not bring on from myself or any hon. member who sits here - any great guffaws of we beat you, or we got what we wanted. All we ask for Mr. Speaker, is decency and fair play. And if those hon. members are the decent honest men that I personally think most of them are, if they are, they cannot but support the Resolution. And I ask for this support.

HON. J. R. CHALKER (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, in reply to the hon. member for Corner Brook East, Humber East - a few days ago I was requested, my department was requested to find space for the hon. gentlemen for Corner Brook East, St. John's, Bonavista North and St. Barbe South. They requested on the ninth or tenth floor, knowing quite well, Mr. Speaker, that no such space is available. I did find them commodious accommodation on the third floor, much larger than I found for the hon. member for Corner Brook East last year. Humber East (well it is not too far off). And I do not know if he disliked it, he told the other day that he has never used it - well that was a loss of money.

MR. WELLS: Was it not a waste of money to have the Government put that office there?

MR. CHALKER: And in the same office, I made another office Mr. Speaker, for

the hon. member for Labrador West, who I think was pleased with it, who used it I assume, I could check into that anyhow Mr. Speaker. But my job as I say Sir, is to find ~~the~~ possible good accommodation. And the accommodation that we have found in this building on the third floor was used by the Bond section of the Department of Finance, who I asked the hon. Minister to my left if he would vacate it for the hon. gentleman to use as a Commons Room, and he did so. I took the hon. member from Humber East, and the hon. member for St. Barbe South, reviewed it, and Mr. Speaker, they were ^{not} inside that office three minutes before they condemned it. As a matter of fact, as my hon. friend I thought at the time, he was practically a minister - he gave orders to the then Civil Servants not to move it. Stay where they were - they had no authority to do that, but I took that as a matter - more or less as a joke. However, Mr. Speaker, the only accommodation that we have available in this building that is close and available to this Hon. House, is on the third floor. It is not a small office Mr. Speaker, it is a good office. We will set the requirements that the hon. gentlemen have, and I am quite sure Sir that if they use it, they will find it comfortable and not too far distant. Everybody would like to have an office Mr. Speaker, close to the House of Assembly, that is only normal.

But as we have not that accommodation, I would say it would take them possible a minute and a half Sir, by elevator to go to that office from this floor. I have no other accommodation in this building to offer Mr. Speaker, as none is available. I am sorry, but that is the case. Mr. Speaker, the office in the corner is presently occupied.

MR. T. ALEX HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in support of this Resolution. There has been a great deal of talk about accommodation, and the lack of facilities on this floor for the hon. the Independent members to my right. But I submit Mr. Speaker, that the members on the Government side of the House, have completely lost sight of one very fundamental principle involved in this issue. For some reason hon. members have come to the conclusion, that this floor, and the next floor are part of the Government administration - that this is a Government building - nothing could be further from the truth Mr. Speaker. This floor and the next floor belong to the House of Assembly and no one else, but no one else. Ministers are just as subservient to the House

of Assembly as is any other member - they get no special rights the minute they walk to that door Mr. Speaker. And what I say to hon. members is this - that this House does not have the right - if we are going to rely on the great tradition that has been established in the Mother of Parliament - if we are going to rely on the precedencethat has been established in Westminster, then the issue is not debatable. No hon. Minister of the Crown has the right to take precedence over any hon. member of this House insofar as the area that belongs to this House is concerned. And that office up there belongs to this House, just as much as the center of this floor, just as much. We are all equalled the minute we come within the shadows and the confines of the House of Assembly, and that office up there is. And the hon. member for Humber East, and St. John's West, and the other hon. members are equalled within this House.

There has been some suggestion Mr. Speaker, that Ministers without Portfolio deserve some special treatment, some special care, but again it is a well established fact Mr. Speaker, that hon. Ministers without Portfolio are not administrators. They do not administer departments, they are not part of administrative process of Government. I do not want to get into the practice of quoting from all sorts of authorities, but we might as well get clear the position of hon. Ministers without Portfolio once and for all.

I would refer hon. members to Robert MacGregor Dawson's book, "The Government of Canada" where he deals with the three types of Ministers who go to make up a Cabinet within Canada, or within the United Kingdom. He said, "a third small group and one which has been steadily growing smaller" (he has not been around here) made up of Ministers without Portfolio, those who are in the Cabinet, but who have no department to administer, the modern Cabinet almost always contains at least one member in his class who is usually the leader and spokesman of the Government in the Senate (that refers to Ottawa) and one or two others who may for a variety of reasons be similarly honoured. A Minister for example may not have sufficient ability to warrant giving him a portfolio. Yet his presence in the Cabinet may provide desire provincial or sectional representation. He may be unusually able and experienced, but no longer capable of needing the heavy demand of departmental work. He may be very confident, yet wishing nothing more than to sit in the seats of the mighty and be available for special ministerial duties whenever needed". Mr. Speaker, I do not need to

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read this dissertation or statement of facts from Mr. Dawson to convince this hon. House that Ministers without Portfolio are not administrators - that they have nothing to administer. But we cannot, no matter how we approach this get back to the fundamental principle that this House of Assembly is erected and built and maintained for the convenience of hon. members as members of the House of Assembly. It might be very regrettable if some day the Clerk would have to move off this floor. It might be very regrettable if the Editor and his staff of Hansard would have to move off this floor. But there can be no doubt at all, no doubt at all, that if the needs of elected members of this hon. House dictate that they must have accommodation on this floor, then the principle is so loud and so clearly and so long established, that I for the life of me cannot see how this could be debatable?

Could you imagine the great Sir Winston Churchill tolerating a situation like this in the House of Commons? Why did right after the war, demand that the first government expenditure, that had to be made in Great Britain that took priority over everything else, but everything, was the establishment of accommodation for every hon. member of the House of Commons - within the confines of the House of Commons, not across the street, not down in the basement, but within the confines of that great institution.

Now if we are going to rely on the Mother of Parliament and the great precedence that had been established in Westminster, Mr. Speaker - it is a two-way street. It cannot be turned on one day to suit government's purpose, and turned off the next when it does not. And I say that in support not simply for the convenience of the hon. member for Humber East or his associates. He has outlined the inconvenience and the insult to his constituents, and the insult to the voting public of Newfoundland. He has done that very well. But over and above all that, is this other fundamental principle - an attempt to take away from the people's elected representatives, a right that they have to stay within the confines of this floor. For that reason I support this Resolution.

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HON. STEPHEN A. NEARY: (MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF WELFARE) Mr. Speaker, we have all paid very strict attention to the debate so far. And how the hon. members on the other side of the House who have spoken on this debate so far has tried to make martyrs out of themselves. Mr. Speaker, if they want to make martyrs out of themselves, I am afraid that they are going to have to pick a more serious issue, than looking for the office that suits them. Not the office, Mr. Speaker, that suits the Minister of Public Works, or the engineers in his department, or the advisors of his department, but the office space that suits the hon. ministers.

MR. C. WELLS: Now we are hearing something.

MR. NEARY: Now, I ask you Mr. Speaker, I ask you in all honesty to tell me, and I know Your Honour can answer this question, but these very same hon. members were elected to sit on this side of the House. Now we were told yesterday, Mr. Speaker, by the hon. the Premier. and I think we all knew it anyway, that one hon. gentleman that crossed the House three times in less than two years. Now, Your Honour, what do you do in a case like this? Where do you put the hon. member? I mean the next thing, Mr. Speaker, maybe the hon. gentleman should be on roller skates; he has been going back and forth so often. But, Mr. Speaker I ask you, if the two hon. gentleman that are seated together almost directly in front of me now decide to split up, and then they come back to the Minister of Public Works, and they want another office.

PREMIER SMALLWOOD: They have not split up yet, so they are not asking yet.

MR. NEARY: When they do split up, Mr. Speaker, and I have no doubt the day of reckoning is not too far away, and then the hon. member for St. Barbe South, he will be looking for a private Common Room, and the hon. member for St. John's West will want his own Common Room, and the hon. member for Humber East will want his own Common Room, the hon. member for Labrador West is a little bit more considerate Mr. Speaker, he seems to be at least half pleased with his office on the third floor.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to the attention of the hon. members, that in the House of Commons in Ottawa, they also have limited space. And Ministers, Mr. Speaker, not only have to go seven and eight, and nine floors to get to their offices. And Opposition members have to do the same thing. But they have to walk right across the grounds in front of Parliament Building, Mr. Speaker, and go to a building on the opposite side of the House of Parliament. And I would venture to say, Mr. Speaker, that there is scarcely a Province of Canada that does not have

a shortage of space near the Legislature.

And my hon. and learned friend there from

MR. HICKMAN: Burin.

MR. NEARY: Burin, Mr. Speaker, who is such an expert on the Mother of Parliament.

MR. HICKMAN: Oh! no, I only listened.

MR. NEARY: I do not know, if he has ever had the privilege Your Honour to attend a Session of the House of Commons in England. But, I have been there on several occasions. And my hon. and learned friend, Mr. Speaker, might be interested to know, that of all the members of the House of Parliament in England came to the House on the same day, that there would not be room enough to accommodate them in the House of Parliament, in the Chamber. In the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, not alone in a Common Room.

MR. HICKMAN: Oh! yes, they accommodate in a Common Room.

MR. NEARY: They cannot be accommodated either in Common Rooms or in the Chamber itself, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WELLS: Let me correct, they cannot in the Chamber, but in the Common Room they can.

MR. NEARY: So, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. members are not going to drum up very much sympathy from their constituents on these issues. I am sure Mr. Speaker that they are patiently waiting for their representative to start discussions more pressing matters in this House, than trying to get their own separate Common Room.

MR. WELLS: We know one member who does not have a conscience.

MR. CROSBIE: It is always a treat to hear a dissertation on Parliament History, by the hon. the Minister of Social Services who needs to be rehabilitated. It is always a great treat and pleasure to hear him on these subjects. And the hon. minister certainly displays his arrogance, and the arrogance of his colleagues or some of them, when he says, that members of this House who were elected to serve in this House of Assembly on behalf of the people of Newfoundland should accept office space that suits the Minister of Public Works. He was shocked, he was horrified. He was flabbergasted. He was dumb founded, he was bamboozled. He practically dropped with the shock, when he heard that members of this Hon. House would not accept, whatever crummy space, the hon. Minister of Public Works choose to offer to members of this House. The hon. member for Burin, Mr. Speaker, has put his

thumb right on the issue. That this floor and the tenth floor of this Confederation Building do not belong to the Government at all. It belongs to the House of Assembly. So one must ask the question, how did the hon. minister without portfolio the member for Labrador South, how did he get this space on the tenth floor of this building? Was it given to him by the Speaker, or the Internal Economy, the Economy Commission? Who gave him the space? Who authorized him to have the space? Who showed such contempt for the privileges, the members of this House, as to authorize the hon. Minister to take that space, he being a member a member of the Executive Council?

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. minister without portfolio needs space in this building, which we seriously doubt, his colleague the hon. senior minister from Harbour Main, not having had it for the last fifteen years, and that hon. minister himself had an office space in the city. If he really needs it, why does not the hon. minister take the office space on the third floor, that the hon. minister of Public Works offered, or the space in the legislative library that was prepared for my colleague from Humber East last year. He does not need to be on the tenth floor with any office space, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WELLS: He has a Common Room available, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: There is no need. He is in that space for one reason only, to fulfill the spite of one man, who was determined last year that the hon. member for Humber East was not going to have office space anywhere near the House of Assembly. The hon. member for Labrador South, Mr. Speaker, was appointed to the Cabinet as Minister without Portfolio in the summer of 1969, when this House met last winter, six months later he had no office in the tenth floor of this building. But, when our colleague the member for Humber East requested space - what happened? Overnight the tapes were moved out of this office on the tenth floor, and the hon. Minister was moved in.

Now, the hon. minister knows in his own heart, mind that he does not want that space. That he does not need that space. That he is occupying that space for one reason only, to keep the hon. member for Humber East and his colleague from having office space near this Chamber.

MR. WELLS: That is contempt.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, we repudiate the offer, the measley offer, the crummy offer from hon. minister of Public Works for office space. Arrogance on his part to offer it down there. It is arrogance on part of the Government Mr. Speaker, to have this issue even created or kept alive. Twenty-one years in power, creates arrogance. P72

And we have seen it in this session in the question period. The arrogant way of answering questions, when this Session started, a week ago, it is improving a bit now. Arrogance in refusing to answer questions properly. Arrogance in refusing four of the members of this hon. House of preventing them from having space near the House, near this Chamber. Arrogance in the matter of setting hours to this House to meet, starting afternoon and evening, right from the start of the Session. Arrogance in not instructing members of the House about what was proposed for private members day last week. Arrogance, everywhere you look, arrogance. Arrogance, arrogance.

MR. WELLS: And more of it.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, members of this House are entitled to have a room where they can do research, where they can go and have a break, where they can put their statutes or their reports or whatever they are working on at the moment, and still be able to listen to the debates in this Chamber. So, if they are planning to speak, or need to speak they can rush in, for only a few seconds away.

The official Opposition's Office has it. The Government Common Room has it. The four independent Liberal members do not have it. Nor does the member from Labrador West. We need a place to hang up our coats, that is only a minor thing. Our coat and our rubbers, to leave our rubbers.

We are here, Mr. Speaker, six hours a day, all afternoon and all evening, and we have to prepare for the next day's session. We cannot do any of that here because we have no space here to do it in. Now there were a lot of authorities quoted in this hon. House in a recent debate, on the Question Period, for example, and on Cabinet responsibilities and all the rest of it, what people learned in the art of Political Science say. Here is McGregor Dawson, who was cited earlier in this debate, Mr. Speaker. No, I have no Chinese authorities, but this is a Canadian one. Here he says: "The House of Commons will almost invariably give its consent to all the measures which the Cabinet has submitted but in the process it exercises what is easily one of its major functions, namely, criticism."

Then he goes on to what private members should do - "...a vital aspect of the critical function of the House of Commons is its power of general supervision. The House asks the Ministers interminable questions, it conducts investigations into the administration of the departments, it draws out the activities of the Government into the light of publicity, it scrutinizes the financial statements and proposed tax expenditures, it checks, to a limited degree, departmental orders and Orders in Council....."; and so on.

All the functions of the House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker, in modern times, have devolved upon the Opposition - because under our Party System, naturally, the members of a Government Party are not going to spend their time in the House of Assembly or the House of Commons, in scrutinizing the estimates, scrutinizing the public accounts, scrutinizing the legislation - they do not want to criticize the government even if they do come across something.

The whole function of Houses of Assembly and Houses of Commons, Mr. Speaker, has devolved, in modern days, in political party politics, on to the Opposition: and they should be at least given the basic requirements so that they can try to attempt to do their job.

And one of these requirements is a proper office, near the House of Assembly, where they can work, when they are not involved in a debate themselves, where they can keep atuned to the business that is going on in the House and be ready for votes and the rest of it.

The hon. the Premier, a night or so ago, said at one point that when he was looking for information on a classification study in the Department of Health: "they did not give me what I asked for."

"They did not give me..." Who did not give him all he asked for, all the information he asked for? Members of the Civil Service had not given it to him.

So the members of the Government, Mr. Speaker, have thousands of civil servants doing their job - which is quite legitimate and right - getting information together for members of the Government and Cabinet Ministers, for them to use in the debates in this House. But there is no one employed to do that same kind of thing for the members who are sitting on this side of the House. And if we are to perform in any way at all our function of criticism, of looking for the weak spots, of keeping the Government on its toes, of seeing whether the monies are being spent as they are supposed to be spent, we need these facilities. It is not just for us, we are not doing it just for ourselves - it is our job to do that here. We represent the people in our own districts and we represent the people of the whole Province.

Beauchesne, Mr. Speaker, whom we often hear quoted in this House, Beauchesne, page 14: - "Every member, as soon as he is chosen, becomes a representative of the Whole Body of the Commons, without any distinction as to the place 874

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from whence he is sent to Parliament. Every member is equally representative of the whole has been the constant notion and language of Parliament. Every member, though chosen by one particular district, when elected and returned serves for the whole realm, for the end of his coming thither is not particular but general, not merely to advantage his constituents but for the common weal."

He quotes Blackstone, Page 16 -

We use the word quote, House of Commons, quote, very often without pausing to reflect upon what those words mean. The word, Commons, means the people. This is the House of the people sitting on both sides of this House and on both sides of the Speaker are representatives of every constituency in Canada. Collectively, those of us who meet in this Chamber represent all Canadians. That is our responsibility. That is our duty. Our rights are important, only to the extent that those rights represent the rights of the people themselves.

If the traditional rights of members of this House are released, limited, or arbitrarily curtailed in any way, it is not our rights and our concern. What is vitally important is that in that curtailment of rights, there is a limitation of the rights of the people themselves.

That is what I say, Mr. Speaker. What I submit is an issue in this debate today. Not whether several of the members of this House should have an office or should have to throw their coats in the corridor, etc. It is whether there is any independence in this Legislature from the dictates of an arrogant, all powerful executive that is being in power for twenty-one years. There is space in this House of Assembly properties, this ninth and tenth floor, for the hon. member of Humber East, the hon. member of Bonavista North, from St. Barbe South, Labrador West, to have a room to use within reach of this Chamber.

Yet, the space has been arbitrarily given to a minister of the Crown who has no departmental responsibilities who can be accommodated elsewhere in this building and who arrogantly holds to that space, if not of his own volition, under instructions from somebody else, and he can satisfy us on that point, himself, that hon. member.

We want, Mr. Speaker, to perform our work affectively and we are going to ~~try~~ to do it, in any event, whether we get this space or not. We are not speaking just of our own rights in this house. The hon. the Minister for Social Services and Rehabilitation, hopefully, says all the hon. members, he says, were elected to sit on the Government side of the House.

So, no matter what the decision we came to later; Mr. Speaker, no matter what points or principle arose, the hon. minister suggests that we

just have to take our medicine if we decide to leave the Government side of the House, that we can then be treated by the House with contempt. This is what he suggests. He likes - that hon. minister likes the exercise of naked, unrestrained power as other members of the Government do. He says - that hon. member says, " You were elected to sit on the Government side of the House. If you choose to cross the House on any point or principle, or whatever the point is, you will be dealt with as we think fit and if you do not except the space offered you by the Minister of Public Works, it is too bad. You constituents are not going to worry about."

I agree, Mr. Speaker. Our constituents do not worry about it at all because they do not know enough of what is involved. They will worry about it if they see much further trampling on the rights of members of this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: It will be made clear.

MR. CROSBIE: We intend to make it clear to them, that their representatives are being treated with contempt.

All the hon. minister said was that one hon. member, namely myself, crossed the House three times. Yes, Mr. Speaker, you can put it that way and one hon. member of this House has not crossed the House but has changed his mind about fifteen times, at least as to when that hon. gentleman is going to retire and resign.

Like a whirling derby, she whirls in one spot, changing his mind but the whirl - we are all watching the whirl and do not notice how often the mind is been changed.

So, who is the hon. minister to talk about crossing the floor. It could happen in the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in in Newfoundland today, because, Mr. Speaker, I have been convinced for the last two years, that if we do not have a change of administration in this Province, we are headed for disaster no matter what the gush and flow of words and the athsma is. We are headed for disaster.

Last year, we hoped that that change would come within the Liberal party. It did not, so that change would have to come some other way and I having no confidence in the present administration have no choice, but to sit where I am today, and I would not care whether it was a twenty-fourth

time I had crossed and recrossed the House, I would do no different and I do not care, Mr. Speaker, whether it is a political blunder, and I do not care whether it is political suicide.

It is what I think is the only course to take now, that all other recourses have been tried and failed; that the only course a true Liberal can take in Newfoundland today, is to try to get a change of this Government and if it has to be done through a general election, then it must be done that way.

There are two kinds of Liberals in Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. - Smallwood Liberals and Liberals and we are Liberals and there must be a change in our view.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is why I happen to be over here. I am proud of it and I do not care, Mr. Speaker, whether I ever get another vote in my life. I will have done in this session of this House, since 1966, what my conscience and my beliefs force me to do.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. CROSBIE: Now, to get back to the office space, Mr. Speaker. It would be a tremendous gesture on behalf of the hon. minister who has been a friend of mine for some years, if he stood up and threw off the shackles and admitted he does not use that space, that he does not want that space, that he respects the rights of members of this House, that he is going to strike a blow for the rights of the ordinary member of this House of Assembly and vacate the space tomorrow.

We do not want him to leave any Cabinet minutes behind. Stand up and throw off the shackles.

Mr. Speaker, on the other side of the House, there are eighteen Cabinet ministers, I believe; all with offices in the building. All with civil servants to help them carry out their duties and their work.

There is the Speaker, Your Honor, has an office, the Deputy Speaker. I think the Chairman of Committees, the Opposition, the clerk.

Yet, four members of this House are not provided the space.

The hon. gentleman opposite does not think, you see, that the public of Newfoundland cares whether there is any space for us or not. They think it is a minor issue. They do not think that public opinion polls are going

to show that the Government might topple on this issue. Well, we agree with them. That is not the point. We are not raising this point, Mr. Speaker, thinking of votes in an election ahead.

We raise this point because we refuse to be treated with contempt in this House. As members of it, we have the same rights, or should have, as members opposite, and we are being made to function in a desperate manner because of the arrogance and contempt in particular of one hon. gentleman opposite.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister without Portfolio is one of those ministers I suggest who has got that new red dispatch box that was purchased for all hon. members of the Cabinet - \$48.00 item. They have all got these nice red dispatch boxes.

I suggest to Your Honor that all the space that the hon. minister needs in this building is contained within that red dispatch box for carrying his Cabinet papers back and forth to the building. No other space does he need. Certainly not in our House of Assembly Chamber, Mr. Speaker. The nice red dispatch box.

Even two of the ex-ministers have got them. They did not have them in our day. We could not afford priorities like that with those red dispatch boxes. We had to use our own little briefcases.

Mr. Speaker, I think there is no point in talking on this issue too long. This is part of a pattern of arrogance and contempt for the rights of the members of the House and therefore, for the public that has been established since this session started.

We oppose it now. If the hon. members opposite join with us in favouring that resolution, the Government will not fall. It will not be the downfall of the Government. It might be, Mr. Speaker, the downfall of an ego. The downfall of an ego but it would not be the downfall of the Government and hon. members of this House would be standing and saying, although eighteen of them are that Cabinet, eighteen out of the forty-two and although another seven or eight have some connection with the administration, one way or the other, we have more respect for the House of Assembly and for our rights as members ^{of it} than to continue ^{to} show utter contempt for any of the members of this

House and therefore, we will vote on the affirmative of this resolution.

MR. MYRDEN: Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this motion. First of all, Sir, I would like to apologize. Last night, I understand that my whistling almost interrupted this whole session, but actually I did not know the House was in session and if I had had a room, I would have whistled there.

The dignity of this House, Sir, to my mind, is very, very high indeed in my estimation. I had intended, actually, to bring in a clothes hanger from Corner Brook. We do not, yet, have any space available and from the sound of it, it does not look like we are going to. I will not, as I stand here, blame the Premier.

The hon. gentleman, the Minister without Portfolio, is the only one I will blame because I do not think that this hon. gentleman and I know he is a gentleman, can honestly and truthfully use this room when he knows that with rank discrimination, as far as we are concerned, on this side of the House, we need some place to sit down.

We need, Sir, some place to telephone. I have been here, almost two weeks, Many of the people from my constituency have been trying to get hold of me. We have no number to give them. There is no possible way that we can get back and forth for some of those problems and I feel, Sir, that I cannot blame one man except for the minister himself and I know if he is any type of man at all, and which I know he is, he will probably turn in the keys right after this speech.

The hon. Minister of Public Works, a very personal friend of mine, and I know, very highly thought of in his district of St. Barbe North. It is actually very, very close to my district. I know many of his people and I know he feels the same way. In St. Barbe North, I do not suppose, I suppose there is a second finest people in Newfoundland, next to St. Barbe South and I know that many of those people up there will understand if I say that the minister has done everything possible he will to give us the possible room.

I feel, Sir, that most of my constituents before the next twenty-four hours will know how we are being treated. I feel I will tell them personally, publicly and I feel also that I must support this motion because it is only common sense actually. I cannot see coming in here for a few more weeks, at least, because according to the Premier, there will be none of us left after that, so at least the courtesy just a few weeks to have a room to sit down.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that I must support this motion and I know that many of our hon. friends on the other side are going to do the same thing. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question on the resolution?

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, I did not speak on this motion but in listening to the debate, there are one or two things which come very quickly to mind. It would seem that when one crosses the invisible barrier in this House, this side of the Chamber, one becomes a second-class citizen of Newfoundland if we are to believe everything we hear.

AN HON. MEMBER: A second-class member anyway.

MR. EARLE: Opposition is representing our districts is apparently not recognized as the members have just said, they are humiliated and downgraded immediately because they are on this side of the House.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that apparently, it starts with comfort assassination. Their comfort has been assassinated and then it ends up with character assassination. People on this side of the House by all means at the proposal of some gentleman, are accused of being everything detestable and deplorable and if this sort of tactic ---

MR. EARLE: And if this sort of tactic is the means by which our districts are supposed to be impressed with the kind of people we are, I think that politics in Newfoundland has come to a level lower than it has ever been in history.

The members on the other side have apparently looked at this particular issue with some amusement. It is not a big, hugh issue that everyone can get excited about. I do not suppose it will carry very far outside the walls of this Chamber, but the principle behind it is very vague. The principle behind it - the fact that we are all equal and all equally represent our section of Newfoundland cannot be down-graded or disputed in this Chamber. I think the very evidence of this - just the way in which it has been handled would make any thinking person realize that there is an attempt in Newfoundland to create two types of citizens. One type that supports the Government, the other which opposes it. We are here to do our job which ever side of the House we sit on. We will do it to the best of our ability and the very least any Government with any gumption, any courage, or any ethics could do, would be to make the facilities available that we can do our jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this resolution not because it has been moved by an hon. member on this side, but because Sir, as it has been outlined there is a principle involved here. I find it rather difficult to understand why this House which has so much important business to attend to have not gone along with the normal, reasonable, request by the hon. members in question.

It seems to me Sir, they have not asked for anything great, they have asked for a place to hang their coats, they have asked for a place to be in a position to interview their constituents should any of them want to see them, or indeed any member of the public. They have asked for a place to be able to sit down to prepare for the various speeches they might intend to make in this House. As it is pointed out Mr. Speaker, there is a great difference in having an office on any other floor of the building where one cannot hear what goes on in this House. It is just not enough to offer an office on some other floor where one if he goes in there has no idea of what is going on in the House. For this reason Sir, I think their request is quite reasonable and I think that the Government would be well advised to go along with their request.

I am rather surprised that they have not already, and I am rather surprised that this issue has reached the point that it has.

I would hope Mr. Speaker, that we do not hear any grumblings from the other side about wasting time, because surely Sir, this is a waste of time. This should never be - this resolution should never be on the Order Paper. This matter should have been settled long ago. We are termed martyrs on this side, well I cannot say that I really agree with that.

MR. NEARY: Feel like a martyr

MR. HICKEY: I certainly do not feel like a martyr Mr. Speaker. I feel as though I have a free mind to support or reject any measure that comes before this House. I think if all hon. members look at this issue on the basis of what is involved I cannot see for the life of me how they have any alternative but support it. I think it is time Mr. Speaker, to remove personalities from those issues and especially this one. I think that we can all get over heated from time to time and maybe forget where we are when we utter some phrases, but surely, one can carry this kind of thing too far. To deny an hon. member of this House office space or a place to sit

MR. WELLS: The same as other hon. members

MR. HICKEY: Exactly, the same as other members. To deny Mr. Speaker, an hon. member that right I think borders on the ridiculous. I do not particularly like the word "arrogance" I do not know of any other word that fits this situation. I would hate to think at the same time that this Government whether it be because of any personal feelings on the part of the Premier or any or all of those hon. members. I hate to think that he controls the other side of the House on an issue such as this. Surely, I will believe that when I see it. I do not think he does, I do not think it is his intention to use this kind of control.

As it has already been stated Mr. Speaker, we are not about to - we are not about to see the Government fall if this motion passes. The Province will not be in danger of having to go back to the people tomorrow, in an election, for we are simply asking that four hon. members or five be given reasonable accommodations on the ninth or tenth floor. How much more reasonable can one get? It has been said Mr. Speaker that this situation points up discrimination on the part of Government or on the part of some members, but hon. members on this side. It looks that way, I for one am prepared to reserve judgement on that until I see the results of this vote. And I will say this Sir, and I mean it quite sincerely - I have sat here for the past couple of weeks since this session commenced, and I have

seen the dignity and respect of this House brought to an all-time low, on various issues and various exchanges. I will tell you Sir, if this motion does not pass, now that this resolution is officially on the Order Paper before this hon. House - it is no longer a question that has been asked, or a point of principle, or anything of that nature - it is now a motion before the House giving each hon. member an opportunity to debate it - to express his views and to make up his own individual mind. If this motion does not pass Mr. Speaker, I think hon. members of this House who do not support it are telling the people of this Province just how arrogant they can become. Just how petty they can become, and just how unconcerned they are over much greater issues, much more important issues that should indeed, have been discussed here this afternoon.

It might well be said that Mr. Speaker, that this is the hour of decision insofar as what this hon. house has come to. If we are going to let personalities interfere to the extent where we are going to point the finger at four, three, two, or one hon. members of this House and say "I do not like you, I do not like you for what you have done, because you have crossed the House, I do not like you because of what you said, I do not like you because you have made it public that you disagree with me." How low can we get? Is there any dignity left? Mr. Speaker, more important I would raise the question having just gone through "Brotherhood week" is there any respect left for hon. members who disagree, who are of different political persuasions? Is there any respect left for ones fellow man? I think Sir, that the Government would be well advised - or whoever is responsible, be it an individual to pull in their horns and call a truce. Let us get on with the business that confronts this House. Let us get on with the more important business that confronts this House, and let us acknowledge at least that we are supposed to have a free Province whether it is freedom of expression. We are supposed to have some rights which are protected. If this motion do not pass Mr. Speaker, I would be inclined to think it rather funny, or smile to myself if I heard someone refer to those four hon. gentlemen as members of Her Majesty's Opposition. For if they are and if they are considered as hon. members with equal rights as all other hon. members then certainly they deserve a place to sit.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I cannot let this opportunity pass without contributing one or two short remarks. Being a member from a district outside St. John's I can readily appreciate the inconvenience and the difficulty with which the hon. member from Number East is faced, and certainly the hon.

member from St. Barbe South is faced with. I do not know how they can operate at all because, since I have been in the House of Assembly for just one week and one half now, every day I receive a considerable amount of mail - a very considerable amount of mail I might say Mr. Speaker, and I also receive a considerable number of phone calls. Very often I have to originate the phone calls to different the ~~people in my district~~ people in my district, and certainly without the facilities of an office, a telephone, and a desk, and typing facilities, and secretarial help, I would find that my task would be rendered nearly impossible. I do not know what the arguments are on this particular case. It seems to me that from comments I heard from across the way, and comments I have heard from the hon. members involved it would seem to indicate to me that the fact that they have crossed the floor of the House - the Government looks upon this as being a crime of some sort and they are going to take it out on them one way or another.

I would suggest Mr. Speaker, that those gentlemen still represent the constituents of the districts which they represent and I would also suggest that if there is going to be any discipline or any other views taken against them - then it is up to their constituents to make such a move, and of course that opportunity will present itself in due course.

MR. WELLS: And the rest of Newfoundland

MR. COLLINS: And the rest of Newfoundland as the hon. member points out Mr. Speaker. Not only does he represent the people in Humber East, he represents the people from all over Newfoundland and has a responsibility certainly, a great responsibility to all of the people of Newfoundland. It seems strange.....

It seems strange to me, Sir, that at a time when the House of Commons in Ottawa and other parliaments, certainly the House of Commons have taken the position and there is no reason why they should. They have a fairly large majority up there. They have taken the position that the individual member, the backbencher where ever he might be sitting has got a ^{very} important role to play in the Government of Canada, in representing his constituents and indeed all the people of Canada. They have taken steps to make fairly substantial grants available for hon. members to do research work. Certainly I would like to have better facilities in the Opposition Office than we have. I am not criticizing the quality of the staff we have there, but I would certainly very much like to be able to employ additional staff to do the very necessary and the very time consuming research which is necessary, if a member is going to do the job he is supposed to do in this hon. House. I would suggest to hon. members, Mr. Speaker, that regardless of what side of this House they might find themselves on, that responsibility has not diminished.

It seems rather curious to me that we can find monies to provide office space and cabinet rooms in Corner Brook and in Grand Falls, as we saw today in answer to a question which I had placed on the Order Paper. Still we seem to find some difficulty in providing a very worthwhile service for members of this hon. House. In my estimation, Mr. Speaker, we probably reached an impasse. I would say to hon. members opposite, the Premier included, let us forget this nonsense and recognize once and for all that those members do have a very serious responsibility to perform and certainly if it is within the powers of Government to make that task a little easier, then I believe they have a responsibility not only to those members but to all the people of Newfoundland to do what they can to ensure that those people do an effective job for the country which we all love so well.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I do not know - we have used up so much time, I suppose we might as well waste another few words, and another few minutes. It has been a sheer and disgraceful waste of time. The ten hours I spent, Mr. Speaker were not wasted. The ten hours I took of this House to discuss the problems of this Province and the people of this Province were not wasted, but the last two hours have been a shameful waste of the people's money and the people's time. What

are we talking about? We are talking about the need of five hon. members of the House, out of forty-two, to have a room all to themselves, where they can hang up their hats and their rubbers and their coats. Where they can use the telephone. Where they can listen to the proceedings of this House, and be near the Chamber. They were offered such a room on the same floor, Mr. Speaker, with the Library of this Chamber. It is part of this House, not the Confederation Building, but the House of Assembly. On the third floor, the Library of the House of Assembly is on that very floor and in that very Library there are two offices now for members sitting on the other side. The hon. member for Labrador West who uses it for the last two year's or what ever it is since he left this side of the House and another office was put there for the hon. member for Humber East. He says he does not use it. On the same floor, the third floor. The Minister of Public Works found a splendid office, a splendid room for these hon. members and the minister already has an office. He does not need it. He does not need it. He has an office now. The hon. gentlemen across have not got an office now and the office was offered to them by the Minister of Public Works. The room is sixty feet away from here. Sixty feet away! For two hours this House was held up, while they complained that their office offered them is sixty feet away. Five floors. Sixty feet.

Now members of the House of Commons in Westminster and members of the House of Commons at Ottawa and members of the House of Assembly in the other nine provinces have three, four, five, six, eight, ten times greater distance to go. Sixty feet! A fine office, a fine room, telephones and easy enough to install the sound system, the sound system, Mr. Speaker, as your Honour knows carries the voices of this Chamber in the common rooms around this floor and in the Press gallery. It also carries every voice here down to the Library and - no, not in the Premier's office. It does to the Library, which is on the third floor and it is a simple thing to put the sound system into this office that was offered these five hon. members. So there in that office they would have a room sixty feet away, rather commodious and which is on the third floor, in a very dignified position on the front of the building, with telephones and the public address system. All that for them sixty feet away and three elevators to bring them rapidly up and down. Now what is all this talk about? Utter, utter, shameful disgraceful waste of time.

MR. WELLS: If anybody doubted, Mr. Speaker, my calling the Government's position contempt that nobody doubted after this last few minutes, sixty feet away. It might

just as well be six miles away. It might just as well be six miles away. It might just as well be the Premier's suite in the office in Corner Brook. We heard the Minister of Public Works, Mr. Speaker, stand and say last year how he went through the trouble of providing, building office space, spent some public funds to build office space for the member for Labrador West and myself. We heard him explain that. He did not however, Mr. Speaker, explain that as soon as the minister proposed it to me, I said, "for Heaven's sake, do not waste public money desecrating the Legislative Library." That is what they have done. They made a ridiculous mess for anybody who walks in and sees those cubicles down there. All they have to do is look at it. A mess they have made of the Library with paper thin walls. No matter where you are in the Library, you can hear any conversations anywhere in there. Perhaps that is the purpose. Perhaps there is a spy system going. I do not know. That is what he offered and I told the minister last year, for Heaven's sake have the decency not to desecrate the Legislative Library and have the good sense not to waste public money. But he had neither nor the Government had neither.

We heard the member for Burin, Mr. Speaker, - can you imagine Winston Churchill putting up with this, the great Winston Churchill. Can you imagine the great Premier sitting over here in this position and putting up with this? There would be no end of the hissing and spitting and the madness and everything else. The place would rock. The place would rock, Mr. Speaker. Nobody can imagine it. Nobody could even think it for a minute. Of course nobody else

MR. WELLS: Imagine it, nobody could even think it for a minute. Of course nobody else would do it to any other member of the House I am convinced of that. Nobody else would demonstrate such vicious vindictiveness, and hatred, and contempt, and bitterness as been demonstrated by the Premier in this respect. It is the only explanation I can offer for it, I am only guessing, but it is the only thing that I see. Maybe I am wrong, I sincerely hope that I am Mr. Speaker but I do not think so. It is the only logical explanation for it.

And the hon. Minister for Social Services and Rehabilitation, with honesty I could ^{call} something less than a brilliant address to this House, something less than the most brilliant address ever given in this House stands and says these four hon. members who sit here were elected to sit on that side of the House. Well if that is his view of his duty as a member of this House, and his duty to his constituents, and the people of this Province he can be the automaton that he appears to be. I do not propose to be. His duty is to exercise his own independent freely held opinion in the best interest of the People of this Province, that is what his duty is - not to be an automaton. That is what I have done, and that is why I am over here. I was not elected to sit on that side of the House, I was elected to come into this House of Assembly and to consider the matters brought before it, and to exercise my own judgement on it - to decide on what I thought was in the best interest of this Province. That is the duty of every member who sits here - that is what his duty is - not to mouth what his constituents want him to say. If he thinks something entirely opposite to what his constituents want - if he thinks the opposite should be done in conscience it should be done - it is his duty as a member of this House to do that, not mouth the views of his constituents. That is the duty of the members of this House.

Perhaps the hon. member was not aware of that.

MR. NEARY: The hon. member will find out in the next election

MR. WELLS: I thank my lucky stars Mr. Speaker, even if I do not have an office to thank them in that I am no automaton. A mindless head-nodder

MR. NEARY: A zombie

MR. WELLS: That is right, something less than a zombie - a zombie appears to have some independent direction. An automaton has none, it does what it is programmed to do. A ludicrous comment "elected to sit on that side of the House."

MR. NEARY: Here is the legal garbage and nit-picking again

MR. WELLS: But Mr. Speaker, it points out one thing, it points out the clear reason behind this. It points out the clear reason behind this - of the apparent view of the members who have spoken at least, I do not know if it is the view of all of them, but of the members that have spoken that in order to be treated fairly and properly in this House you must support the Government. Is that democracy? It is not the democracy that I know. It can only be Smallwoodian democracy. It is not democracy in the ordinary political sense of the word - but that is what the minister's comments point out. He says it just as clearly as if he had not been an automaton and had spoken those words.

MR. CROSSBIE: Programmed

MR. WELLS: The ministers in Ottawa he says, have to walk distances to their offices.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I did not say no such thing

MR. WELLS: I am talking about the hon. minister. The ministers in Ottawa said - he says have to walk distances, even outside the building or down in the basements or somewhere to their offices, sure - but they have a common room immediately available to them, immediately adjacent to the Chamber.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The parties have

MR. WELLS: Sure they have

MR. SMALLWOOD: No one else has

MR. WELLS: Other members have too

MR. SMALLWOOD: Only the parties

MR. WELLS: Other members have too

MR. SMALLWOOD: Only the parties

MR. WELLS: Other members have too

MR. SMALLWOOD: Only the parties

MR. WELLS: All of the members have too

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not common rooms

MR. WELLS: They have rooms available to them adjacent to the Chamber

MR. SMALLWOOD: A quarter of a mile away, not sixty feet

MR. HICKMAN: Oh no, most ministers have two offices, one in the department

MR. WELLS: Of course they do, and one in the House of Commons

MR. SMALLWOOD: And rightly so

MR. HICKMAN: Right

MR. WELLS: A good question has been raised - before I say that, if that is liberalism the hon. minister can have it. He can take it to Bell Island or

wherever - to the Funks if he likes, it has no place in a democracy.

MR. NEARY: Put it with the mushrooms

MR. WELLS: Yes, it might help them grow

MR. NEARY: And we will get the manure on the other side

MR. CROSSBIE: No we had that last night and the night before

MR. WELLS: Another point to consider Mr. Speaker is who gave that hon. minister the office? This was raised I believe by my hon. friend from St. John's West, or the hon. member from Burin - one of them. These floors are for the House of Assembly. Who gave that space to the minister? Who authorized him to use it? He is not properly in there as nearly as I know.

MR. CROSSBIE: He was ejected

MR. WELLS: Yes forcibly

MR. CROSSBIE: Præciptatory

MR. WELLS: Who allowed him to use the office? And if he has such a great need for such an office, all other ministers have offices on the other floors and then access to the Government members common room, all other ministers have offices on the other floors, even the Premier has his office on the eight floor not very far away, but at least it is not in the House of Assembly area, but he does have access to the Government members common room as does the hon. minister without portfolio. So let him use this magnificent office down stairs on the third floor and why not - if he has the need for it. But I suspect his conscience would not allow him to do it. I like to think his conscience would not allow him to put civil servants out, civil servants who are properly using it out and just lock the door behind him as he has done up stairs.

It was carpeted, furnished, and the door has been locked and that is it. Now if that is not a display of contempt that no words can adequately describe I do not know. You have to stop and think about it - you cannot really put it into words. It is that arrogant and contemptuous. The office maybe does not mean that much as the hon. member from Fortune said, but the principle does. It is not my rights as an individual that are being trampled on, it is the rights of a member of this House. Not me as an individual, or the member from St. John's West as an individual, it is the rights of the members of this House. That is what is being trampled upon.

What are we to do, desecrate the House and hang our overcoats over the microphones or across the rail? No Mr. Speaker, it might be a great show - it might be a great display, but I and my colleagues have better sense that to do that. We have a greater respect for this House. Although the House as it is

presently constituted in my opinion does not deserve it. But I do have a greater respect for the history of it, and for what it stands for than to do something like that.

How hon. members can even sit here and listen to it and not get sick I do not know. They cannot have any consciences. Last night the Premier - or yesterday afternoon when he was speaking I thought was about to have a seance when he was talking about bringing back the dead - or a number of gentlemen who have been dead for some time. Look around the walls at the pictures of former great Newfoundlanders, Speakers of this House. What would they think of that contempt if we want to have another seance?

The great men that the Premier has admired and stood here in this House.....

The Premier was admired and stood here in this House on numerous occasions and spoken about in glowing terms and properly so. The fair minded men. The men with a sense of decency and honour and democracy. That is what he is talked about. What do they think of this? What would they think of this, if the Premier had another say on it? How many times, Mr. Speaker, have all of us heard the Premier explain to school students who come here to listen that this is the people's House. I do not believe him anymore. He has turned it into the Premier's private house to do in what he wants in it, and if that is not disgusting and contemptible, I do not know what is. I hope I do not hear him say it again. Call it the people's House again.

This is not Russia and not Poland, Mr. Speaker. People who have political views opposite to the views of the party in power in this country of Canada are supposed to be tolerated and accorded the respect and rights of all other members. That is what is supposed to happen in the Canadian democracy. That is not what happens in Russia or Poland. It is not tolerated. There is not allowed a view. That is obviously what the Premier wants here. He wants everyone of us to bow down and kiss his feet; otherwise you are punished. You might just as well be in Poland as here under the administration of the present Premier. I can hardly believe, Mr. Speaker, I can really, hardly believe that we are standing here this afternoon debating something so fundamental and the Premier stands up and says how disgusting it is. An office was offered on the third floor. Let the truth be known, Mr. Speaker. Let the truth be known. It is a clash ^{of} wills. That is right. Let the truth be known.

The Minister without Portfolio has no more need for that office than I do for an igloo in the North Pole. None, not a tiny bit more. But still it is taken to bar myself and my colleagues from making use of. We might just as well be in Poland or Russia. I can hardly believe that we are here in this House debating that issue. When I heard the Premier, as all other members have stand in this House and talk about the great traditions of Parliament and how he wants to see them maintained and he does not want to see them degraded in this House. He will not tolerate any noise whatsoever from the gallery or laughter, even when the House is doing nothing but cracking jokes back and forth. He will not tolerate it because it defends the dignity of Parliament. It defends the dignity of this House. I with Mr. Ray Guy asked, what dignity? The Premier can do what he is doing

now and get away with it and have the members of this House support him on it. Yes, he is right. Dignity? He should not use the words that he does not know the meaning of. If what he is doing is what he calls dignity, it is not the same dignity I am talking about, Mr. Speaker.

If he is asking us to plead with him, alright I will plead with him to be decent and show some sense of fair play. Forget political ill-wills, the exchanges that arise in heated debates. I hold no personal animosity toward him. I would hope that he holds none, but I have seen nothing to indicate that that is so. We can have good, sensible men, honest differences of opinion and differing views on policy and differing on the direction which Government should take or why they should not be supported. Surely in any democracy you will accord to any man that right without holding ill-will, animosity and even if you do - even if you do hold ill-will and animosity, surely you have shame enough not to let it be manifested in your action and treatment of people. The Premier does not. The Premier does not care. Who are the people of Newfoundland? He is the Premier. He does not care. Who are they to tell me what to do? Arrogance!

Mr. Speaker, I cannot really hate. I can only pity him that after what is unquestionably a great contribution to this Province, no denying that, the man should now in his latter day sink so low and have his reputation so coloured, because of this kind of ill-will. I cannot find it in my heart to hate him, Mr. Speaker. I pity him. Life is not worth it. Life to any man is not worth that kind of hate. All I ask of the hon. gentleman opposite from the comments that have been made, I do not think I can expect it. I regret that that is so. A sense of fair play and decency to indicate that they still have within them a sense of fair play and decency without it how can they face people? How can they go back to their constituencies and say, "elect me, I believe only in the rights of people who support me or support the point of view I have?" How can they go back to their constituencies and ask that? How can they look in the mirror and the mirror, Mr. Speaker, in the mirror you see a physical manifestation of conscience. People should realize that. How can they ~~have~~ in the morning and I remind them of one further thing before I sit down before this vote is taken that the debates of today are recorded in Hansard for History

to assess of those hon. gentleman and for history to assess how they voted and what they think of fair play and decency. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Those in favour of the resolution please say, "aye." Contrary "nay." In my opinion the "nays" have it.

MR. WELLS: Let the House divide, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: On division. Call in the members.

Will all those in favour of the resolution please stand? Mr. Hickey, Mr. Collins, Mr. Earle, Mr. Hickman, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Crosbie.

Will all those against the resolution please stand? The hon. the Premier, the hon. President of the Council, the hon. Minister of Labour, the hon. Minister of Highways, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. Smallwood, the hon. the Minister of Labrador Affairs, Mr. Hodder, Captian Strickland, the hon. Minister of Public Works, the hon. Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister of Mines Agriculture and Resources, the hon. Minister of Community and Social Development, the hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs, the hon. Minister of Public Welfare, Mr. Canning, Mr. Barbour, the hon. Minister of Health, the hon. Minister of Fisheries, the hon. Mr. Hill, Mr. Mahoney.

I declare the resolution lost.

It now being 6:00 p.m. I leave the Chair until 8:00 p.m.



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VERBATIM REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1970

SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE GEORGE W. CLARKE

The House resumed at 8:00 p.m.

MR. T. ALEC HICKMAN: I rise to support this Motion, notice which was given by me, and for the record, I would like to read the Motion which is very short:

WHEREAS it is in the interests of good government to have a Standing Committee of the House to examine the Public Accounts of the Province and the Report of the Auditor General;

BE IT RESOLVED that this House recommends the appointment of a Standing Committee to examine the Public Accounts of the Province and the Report of the Auditor General, and further recommends that at least one member of the Official Opposition be appointed to this Standing Committee.

Now Mr. Speaker, this Motion or a Motion somewhat similar to it, has been coming before this hon. House - I can only speak for the past three years, but I believe long before that, and with each year on each occasion, it has been summarily dismissed. Mr. Speaker, I submit to this hon. House with each passing year, the need for the adoption of this Resolution becomes more and more acute. We have heard during the various debates that have taken place in this hon. House during the past two weeks, a suggestion from some hon. members from the Government side of the House, that members in Opposition have to be very, very careful as to what they say - that they would be doing a great disservice to this Province if they should say anything which might conceivably affect the credit of the Province, or do damage to the Province in the eyes of the lending institutions in the financial world in North America and elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, this Motion I submit, if adopted - this Resolution if adopted will have the effect of restoring in the eyes of the financial institutions in the eyes of those to whom governments, this Government in particular is obliged to go from time to time to borrow monies that are required. You will have the effect of restoring the confidence in the Province of Newfoundland.

There has been a suggestion to from some hon. members that some members on this side of the House have been unkind enough to say, and irresponsible enough to say that the Province is in a mess. Mr. Speaker, I have heard a number of hon. members say that the Government is in a mess. But it would be quite wrong to equate the two - to suggest that the Government is in a mess, so is the Province. That Mr. Speaker, does not necessarily follow, and I for one, am not prepared to say that this Province is in a mess. Indeed I believe that there is in this Province at this time, particularly amongst our younger people, a feeling of optimism, a feeling of involvement, and an anxiety to become involved in the

political activity in the governing of this Province that we have not seen before. And this Mr. Speaker, is a very healthy sign, and it ill behooves anyone to discourage these young Newfoundlanders, these bright Newfoundlanders becoming involved in the scheme of things. This Resolution simply calls for the appointment of a Standing Committee of this House to examine the Public Accounts and Report of the Auditor General. We have been told time and time again in this House, when it suited the purpose, that in such and such a Province, or in practically every provincial legislature, for instance we find that sitting night after night after night - and that has been held to be good reason why we in this House should have sittings four nights a week. Good reason why members should be tied to their desks in their House, one of the reasons, and this precedent has been cited almost ad nauseam.

We point to Westminster as an example of a precedent that should be followed in this House insofar as night sittings are concerned - and time and time again with reference to other matters coming before the House. Now Mr. Speaker, if that reasoning is sound, and I can see no reason why it is not sound - if it is sound, if it is the sort of precedent that should be followed by this House, then Mr. Speaker, I draw to the attention of hon. members the fact that in Canada, out of ten Parliaments - the Parliament of Canada, and the provincial legislatures - of all these Parliaments, only the Province of British Columbia, the House of Assembly of British Columbia, and the House of Assembly of Newfoundland, have the dubious honour of not having a Standing Committee to examine Public Accounts.

I think it was Sir Stafford Cripps said when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer that the Standing Committee of the House of Commons in England to examine Public Accounts or the wording might be slightly different - they do call it the Public Accounts Committee - was a great bulwark that protected the public against the spending or the misspending of an extravagant government - If all Committees but one, the House of Commons had to be abolished - the one that he would insist on retaining would be the Standing Committee of the House to examine the Public Accounts. And for a very good reason. It does two things Mr. Speaker. It gives the backbenchers on both sides of the House an opportunity to question, to examine the report of the Auditor General - to examine not only the Report of the Auditor General, but many other Reports that come forth year to year before Parliament when it is in Session. It gives the members of the

House of Assembly, the backbenchers a feeling that they too are contributing to the process of government where they reside, and to the House which they have been elected. It also which is equally important, probably even more important Mr. Speaker, it gives the public a feeling of absolute confidence in the spending of the Government of the nation. And this Mr. Speaker, is absolutely essential and vital to any government that is in power anywhere - it is just as essential to the Government that is in power in Newfoundland as it is to Government that is in power in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing subversive about this type of Motion. It is simply that hon. members in their anxiety to protect the credit of this Province, not simply the credit of the Government, but the credit of Newfoundland, should be prepared to have these accounts submitted to the scrutiny of the Committee, and I am told that the Standing Committee in most jurisdictions, most houses of Parliament consist of backbenchers only. It takes away any suggestion of mispending, any suggestion of impropriety - it allows the Auditor General, it allows officials of the Department of Finance, it allows the Minister of Finance if he so desires to appear before this Committee, a non-partisan Committee, if the Committee so decides within the confines of the secret meeting, and to furnish the explanations that may be very valid and may dispel the fears and worries of the people whom we serve.

Mr. Speaker, last year, when a Resolution similar to this was before this hon. House, regrettably it was amended and carried that the Auditor General and the Deputy Minister of Finance be brought before this House, and questioned by the whole House in open forum. I submit Mr. Speaker, that that was not a very commendable action at the time. The results of that consultation did nothing to improve the status of the Province in the eyes of the people, nor did it do anything to improve the credibility of the Province in the eyes of whom we have to turn for funds.

What is far more effective, and what Mr. Speaker, has been proven over the years by many Houses of Parliament that follow the same procedures and the same rules as we do. Is it within the dispassionate proceedings and meetings of a Standing Committee that the accounts of the Province, the reports of the Auditor General are scrutinized carefully, and when the report comes into the Whole House, that the Auditor General's Report has been examined, that satisfactory

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explanations have been found under item so and so, and so and so, but that recommendations are made to resolve or correct certain discrepancies or certain procedures, everyone dealing with that particular House and that particular Province or jurisdiction has a feeling of absolute security and not concerned at least about the actual spending or dispensation of public funds.

Now Mr. Speaker, I am sure that hon. members on the Government side of the House must have been just as concerned as I was when the latest report of the Auditor General was tabled in this House and made public. To once again hear over radio stations and television and in the press comments concerning - comments and insinuations and innuendoes that all is not right insofar as the spending of the people's money is concerned. I would think that the hon. the Minister of Finance who is responsible for all the acts of his officials whether he knows about them or not must have been deeply concerned over this type of report and review. And as the hon. the Minister.....

of finding from the Auditor General and the staff of the Department of Finance not simply the amount of money that has been spent, but what the future financial commitments of the Government will be with respect to that type of industry. And what amounts can reasonably be expected to be called on for payment next year, or the year after, and whether or not corrective action should now be taken to try and reduce or indeed eliminate Government being called upon to meet these commitments. Because presumably when these loans are made in the first instance and presumably after feasibility studies have been made the Government must have been of the opinion that it was a sound investment and through no fault of their own this has turned out to be otherwise. Mr. Speaker, this surely is a whole purpose of Committees of the House. This is why I believe that not only should we have a Standing Committee on Public Accounts but many of the other Standing Committees that we find in other jurisdictions have a great place to serve within the scheme of things in the House of Assembly. I can think of nothing more disconcerting or discouraging to hon. members of this House who find themselves on the backbenches, to simply come to the House, they are on the Government side, vote for the legislation as presented by Government, participate in the Address in Reply and participate in the budget debate and then go home.

Surely they must leave here with something less than a sense of accomplishment. Surely they must leave at the end of this session with a feeling that they were not given the opportunity to participate in the governing of this Province. And why if every other Province sees fit to use the Committee system, sees fit to give all members of the House an opportunity to participate? Why is it so wrong to ask for the same thing in this Hon. House?

Mr. Speaker, again within this report of the Auditor General there is a situation referred to with respect to the payment of the Sinking Fund of the sum of \$7 million \$7 million some odd thousand that had been paid out of Capital Account when apparently good accounting practise in so far as Government is concerned demands that this money be paid out of Current Account.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if there is a good explanation for this, if there is some reason why our accounting system and our system of meeting these redemptions is superior to that of other Provinces then let a Select Committee, a Standing Committee but by far and away Mr. Speaker, the most serious as I see it at least, the most serious statement found in the Auditor General's Report is that contained on page 20, paragraph 60, there the Auditor General says, that during the course of the Audit of the Accounts of

the Newfoundland Liquor Commission for the year ending March 31, 1969, it was ascertained that the Commission's profit on sales of beer collected by Atlantic Brewing Company Limited amounting to \$173,352.13 had not been received by the Commission." (still quoting) "I was informed that the company claimed that it was permitted to retain this profit under an exemption or concession granted by the Premier for the purpose of encouraging the establishment of new industries at Stephenville."

In subsequent discussions with the Department of Justice I have been informed that no legislative authority for this exemption where concession exist and that in consequence the commission has caused a writ to be issued against the company in an effort to effect recovery of the amounts owing. Profits of the liquor commission are (quote) public money and the non-receipt of the amount as well as the doubtful value of the writ which has been issued constitute in my opinion a potential loss of public funds.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, I am quite sure that no hon. member of Government that the Hon. the Premier, that no member of this House would like for that statement to stand unchallenged. I am quite certain that if this type of report which has to be bound with the Public Accounts and which will find its way into the hands of all of our financial institutions, not only financial institutions, the Government of Canada I think keeps a fairly close watch on what provincial governments do with monies. If that is allowed to stand unchallenged then the Province is in real trouble. Yesterday in this Hon. House in answer to a question from the hon. the Member for St. John's West, the Hon. the Premier said, "in effect no I did not give this concession." Now obviously, an explanation something more than an answer to a question is needed if the credibility of the Province of Newfoundland is going to be maintained. And obviously, indeed, I would hope, I would have expected that as I stood almost in my place here tonight, the hon. the Premier would have gotten up and said, the hon. the member need not proceed any further because the Government side of the House will support this resolution." Because he, too, must be just as anxious as I am to see that this Standing Committee is appointed, that our credibility is maintained, that our credit is maintained, that if there are any improvements that can be made to the accounting system of this Province that then a Select Committee is the proper organization to proceed with the rectifying of this situation. That if explanations are needed, then Mr. Speaker they can be given quietly, dispassionately, and if the interest of the Province dictates secretly.

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Without that Mr. Speaker, I would think that hon. members on the Government side of the House if they do not support this motion, will forfeit the right to ever again point the finger at any one in public life and say you, you are affecting, you are discrediting this Province by saying the Government is in a mess. This is the time to find out whether hon members of this house is genuinely interested in preserving the credibility of the Province of Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, I for one do find myself in some sympathy then I hear the hon. the Premier reading last night a statement from the editor or the owner of one of the Halifax newspapers, and where he asked for the same type of treatment in this Province. But Mr. Speaker, if the Government of this Province is prepared to come clean with the public of Newfoundland and with the press then it has nothing to fear. Nothing to fear at all, it does not have to worry about unfavourable editorial comment. It does not have to worry about press reviews which may not show the Province in the best light. But rather Mr. Speaker, so long as we continue to refuse and persist in this determined effort to keep a Standing Committee on the Public Accounts out of this House then I say Mr. Speaker, this is an open invitation to people to be curious to be concerned to be suspicious and may be to even suggest that all is not right with the world in so far as Government is concerned. To me it is a very simple proposition, if the Government has nothing to hide then it should welcome this resolution and unanimously support it. If it has something to hide well I am wasting my time moving this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat in conclusion that in my opinion when we have a Province that as of the end of the last fiscal year had a direct and indirect debt of \$667 million that every man woman and child in Newfoundland at the end of last year owed \$1300 each on account of money borrowed for them by Government. That when our whole social services can be in danger and restricted and curtailed if the confidence of the lending institution should ever be lost in the Province of Newfoundland then this is not the time for

this is not the time for chilly partisan politics. This is not the time for Government members to say simply because this Resolution has come from the other side of the House, it must be defeated. This is not a vote of confidence nor non-confidence in the Government of the day. This is purely and simply a request that this Honourable House benefiting from the experience of every other Parliament except the Parliament of British Columbia, which for some reason follows Whacky, and continues to follow him. Every other Province has this type of standing committee, it was not something that was dreamt up by an opposition member. It was not something that any Government slipped in because they thought they were being smart. It was simply because responsible legislators concerned about the future of their people were prepared to come clean with the populace, and to disclose to them all of the facts surrounding the spending of the peoples money.

Mr. Speaker, may all of this is a waste of time, I for the life of me cannot see any hon. member on the Government side of the House, I cannot think of anyone over there, who is not very, very concerned over the financial position of our Province. And this is an opportunity for hon. members to prove their concern. Because, Mr. Speaker, let me repeat, that whilst some people may suggest that when an hon. member expresses concern over the finance of the finances of this Province, he should be psychoanalyzed. That whilst it may suggested that when members talk about finances and monies and budgets and all that sort of thing, that they are not getting down to the real issues that confront our people.

Mr. Speaker there is no greater issue confronting the people of Newfoundland today. I do not remember, and may it is good, that I do not, but I do not remember the days of some unhappy disturbances during the dying days of the Squires Regime. But some of the people who were alive at that time, were telling me, and I have heard them repeat the story of how the lady went in with the axe looking for the so and so budget. Now, she did not know, what the budget meant. But what she did know, was that because of that budget, the little tiny bit of social help that she was getting, and it was so small that today, you would not even consider it worth talking about. She did know that because of that, she was losing that tiny bit of help that she was getting from the Government. And this is where budgets are important. This is where, Mr. Speaker, if we do not maintain the confidence of the financial institutions of North America and Europe and our Province. If we do not assure that every cent is spend properly

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that has sure as you are sitting in that chair, eventually Mr. Speaker, the time will come when the budget will be so important, will be so drastic, will be so unpleasant, that many of our social services that we have today, will either be withdrawn or curtailed.

This is not a very pleasant thing, this is not the sort of thing that you want to hear in 1970 in Newfoundland. Any Government worth its salt, should not be struggling to hold on to what we have. Any Government worth its salt, should be trying to improve the lot of our people. But, this will not be possible, Mr. Speaker, indeed it will be an uphill struggle to hang on to what we have, unless we have prudent management of the peoples money, and not only prudent management of the peoples money, but confidence of the people in the spending of every cent that they collect from it.

And I have great pleasure, therefore, Mr. Speaker, in moving this Resolution.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, twenty feet make a great deal of difference. A year ago, the same hon. gentleman, who just sat down, sat about twenty feet away from where he is sitting tonight. He sat over here. Right here. He sat twenty, twenty-two, twenty-three feet away from where he is tonight. The same motion was brought in last year, and he voted against it. The same motion was brought in here before and he voted against it. The same motion was brought in here before that, and he voted against it. And now he is twenty feet away, he has become a Tory, and now he has advocated the very thing that he voted against. Now, I frankly, do not think, that the people will take that too seriously. He is the wrong hon. member to make this motion. Almost if it had been from an old time Tory. Someone who had been in favour of this sort of thing all the time, and had been moving it, and voting for it, and speaking for it, and supporting it right along, then there would be some consistency. But, a motion like this, and an argument like this coming from an hon. member, who has been voting steadily against it, until he crossed the floor a week or two ago, does not I suggest impress people too deeply.

Sir, in this Province we have had for a hundred years a way of dealing with the Public Accounts. They have the same way, the hon. tells us in the Great Province of British Columbia. British Columbia is one of the three great provinces of Canada. The other two provinces are Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. Oh! in the other order, Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta. That great province has been doing its work

in the same way exactly as we do here in this Province, in connection with the Public Accounts and the reports of the Annual Reports of the Auditor General.

Now, Sir, what is the in fact, the situation? The situation is that the Government have, and they have always had, a Department known as the Department of Finance. And the Department of Finance consists of bookkeepers, and chartered accountants. And that department, those bookkeepers, those accountants under the Minister of Finance and under the Deputy Minister of Finance, and under the associated Deputy Minister of Finance, and under a number of heads of divisions, and at the present time, a staff of twenty-six accountants, chartered accountants and masters of business, and masters of commerce, graduates, university degree men, do the Government's bookkeeping. The Minister does not. The Minister does not happen to be a chartered accountant or a certified public accountant. And I do not know, if we ever had as Minister of Finance in our History in Newfoundland in a hundred years, a Minister of Finance, who was a bookkeeper or an accountant, a chartered accountant, certified public accountant, or any kind of accountant. At the present time, Canada's Minister of Finance happens to be a chartered accountant. But, Canada has not had many Ministers of Finance who were themselves bookkeepers or accountants. Sometimes she has, sometimes not. The bookkeeping, the accounting about half a million entries a year, half a million separate bookkeeping entries every year is done by the bookkeepers, the accountants. Bookkeepers and accountants, and especially chartered accountants, have different ways of doing their bookkeeping, in some respects. I suppose ninety-five percent is common and uniform throughout the world I suppose. Throughout the world. But, there are variations two, or three, or four, or five percent of their work will vary from one accountant to another. They see and interpret in different ways.

Now, it is not just left to those bookkeepers, it is not left just to the Deputy Ministers, and it is not left to the Ministers. What happens is that there is another department again, known as the Department of the Auditor General. The Auditor General is an officer of this House. Not an officer of the Government. All the bookkeepers in the Department of Finance are officers of the Government. They are employed by the Government. They are answerable to the Government. In a sense they are part of the Government. They are the bookkeeping side of the Government. The Auditor General is not an employee of the Government. The Auditor General is an employee of this House. And so the Auditor General, who himself is usually a chartered accountant in recent years. The Auditor General has a staff of

chartered accountants, and others who are not chartered accountants, a staff of bookkeepers, and accountants whose job it is simply and entirely and exclusively to check the bookkeeping of the bookkeepers in the Finance Department. That is their job.

The bookkeeping of the Government is done by the bookkeepers in the Department of Finance. But, they are audited by the Auditor General. The Auditor sends his men into this department, into that department, up in the other department of the Government, every department of the Government, the Auditor General sends his auditors in there, and audits the accounts of all the individual departments. And they report back to the Auditor General. And before the year is over, the Auditor General writes a report to this House. Not to the Government. He is not reporting to the Government, he is not responsible to the Government. He is not answerable to the Government. He reports to this House, which employs him. He is an officer of this House, just as much as is the Clerk of the House, with this difference, he is a statutory person. His position is statutory. And he can be removed from his job, only by this House. Not by the Government. Not by the Internal Economy Commission, which runs this House. The Internal Affairs of the House, the business affairs of the House, employing the servants of the House, fixing their salaries, that is all done by the Internal Economy Commission of this House of which, Mr. Speaker is the Chairman, I am a member, the Minister of Finance is a member, the President of the Council is a member, that is the Internal Economy Commission, which employs all the officers of this House except one, that one is the Auditor General. And he is employed by the whole House, by the Government in fact. I personally selected Mr. Howley, as Premier of the Province, when I received the resignation of the former Auditor General. I was confronted by the fact that Newfoundland now had no Auditor General, so I sent for Mr. Howley, who was a prominent and highly respected chartered accountant, and a Newfoundlander. I sent for him and asked him, if he would accept the position of Auditor General of Newfoundland. And he considered it, and said, yes, he would be honoured to accept it. We discussed the matter of salary and so on, and he was appointed. Now from that moment on, he ceased to be answerable to me. He became answerable to this House, only to this whole House, not to the Government. And so the Auditor General with a staff of bookkeepers and accountants not large enough, he always complains of that, always did, and every Auditor General across Canada always complain, that he has not got enough staff. But, he through his staff, checks and audits the accounts that are kept by the Government's bookkeepers in the Department of Finance. And the reports

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are brought in from all the departments by the various auditors to the Auditor General, the top Auditor.

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auditor, the servant of this House and our servant, this House's servant, which is not a very, in the modern sense of the word, servant, is not a very flattering description of an auditor-general but I use the same word servant, in the same sense in which it was used in years gone by when men would sign their letters, 'I have the honour to be, sir, your humble, obedient servant.' And then maybe, the Prime Minister of England would sign his name, 'I have the honour to be, sir, your humble, obedient servant.'

In that sense of the word the auditor-general is the servant of this House. He reports to the House on what his own officers, his employees, so to speak, have found throughout the year in checking over the half million bookkeeping entries that are made through the year by the bookkeepers in the Department of Finance, and he is getting these reports coming in constantly. I suppose, every day of the year, every work day of the year, so that at the end of the year, he has got a pretty good picture of all the bookkeeping of the Government for the year and then he makes his report to this House and by law, his report has to be tabled in this House very soon after the House opens for the first time within so many days after that, the law requires that his report shall be submitted to the House by the Minister of Finance.

AN HON. MEMBER: Fifteen days.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Fifteen days, is it? And my hon. friend across here who is the Minister of Finance for a year or so was the one last year who submitted the auditor-general's report and a very angry minister he was. He was furious and I hold to this moment he was right to be furious. He was fit to be tied. He will remember, he was fit to be tied and I never admired him so much. The hon. gentleman, the hon. member for Fortune Bay. I never admired him so much as I did when I heard him say within recent days that the newspaper accounts, reports of the auditor-general's report were grossly exaggerated.

I took my hat off to him because he has had some personal experience.

Well, Sir, this particular auditor-general's report, this year, this particular report of an auditor-general, this year's report is the mildest - the mildest report, I believe, of an auditor-general that we have seen for many years in Newfoundland.

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Out of half a million entries in the Government; Accounting Department, the Finance Department - out of half a million entries, there are ten or twelve or fifteen items that the auditor-general's men, as they go around, have fallen on. Of course, they report back immediately to the auditor-general and he puts it in his annual report to this House, which is his duty. That is his duty - to report to this House anything in the accounting, the book-keeping of the Government, which in his opinion, is not correct to begin with, or not proper and this he has done.

Now, Sir, this is not only this year. This was last year and every year for a hundred years. That is gone on every year for a hundred years. The Government comes in here, brings in laws, asks the House to pass the laws to allow the Government to collect taxes from the people. This House gives the Government the right to collect the taxes. So, the Government collects the taxes and the Government spends the money and the Government keeps an account of it. But, so does this House which gave the Government the right to collect the taxes and to spend them, so that this House that gave those rights, may check on how the Government did it.

There is the auditor-general to do the checking and to report to this House and for 100 years, this has happened. Every year, there is the report - the annual report from the auditor-general. In the same way, exactly, as Bowring Brothers; the Royal Stores; Bowaters; every company does it. It has its bookkeepers and the auditors are brought in once a year to audit the accounts of the bookkeeper and they submit their report to whom? To the owners of the business, the shareholders.

Now, we are the shareholders. This House. All of us. The whole lot on both sides. This is the House. The Government is part of the House. The Government has been given the right by law to collect the taxes and to spend the money and to keep an account of it. But, the House says, we want an independent check on what the Government have done in the year.

So, the auditor-general makes that independent check and brings his report to us. Now, Sir, what do we do with the report. What we do is this. And we have done it for 100 years, except last year. Last year we had a departure. We invited the auditor-general to come in on the floor

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of the House and he sat at the desk over there and we also invited the Comptroller of Finance and the Deputy Minister of Finance, the high ranking official of the Government, who is in charge of the bookkeeping. The Deputy Minister of Finance - we invited him here as well and the various criticisms of the accounting system, the bookkeeping system, the various criticisms of that system that the auditor-general made in his report, he was questioned about. And he would give his explanation of why he made that criticism and then Mr. Groom was asked, "What is your comment on that?" And he would give his answer. This is what we did last year. We brought the two men in a sort of confrontation because, remember, the auditor-general was criticising Mr. Groom and his whole accounting department and his whole accounting system - criticising him pretty harshly.

Mr. Groom felt unjust. So, we brought them together, so we could all question them. We could all hear the answers. This was the procedure we followed last year and it was a departure. First time and the only time this was ever done.

I am inclined to agree with the hon. gentleman who just sat down, when he says that he would not repeat that and I feel much the same way about it. That is not perhaps the right way to do it, but the House here, once it receives the report of the auditor-general, and the public accounts, because remember, remember that the public accounts have to be tabled in the House, and they were tabled here, what, two or three days before the report of the auditor-general.

One day the Minister of Finance tabled the public accounts - big, thick volumes, audited by the auditor-general. Every page at the bottom page has the signature of the auditor-general saying, "I have examined these accounts. All the information I desired was given to me and I find that they are correct." And he signs his name at the bottom of practically every page of that thick book. That is the public accounts.

Then, apart from that, he makes his report and this is brought in a couple of days later.

Now, except for last year, the way this House has always dealt with the public accounts and the auditor-general's report, is as follows;

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1. Questions are asked by the Opposition. They pour the questions in to the Minister of Finance or to whatever other minister is concerned. Shower the questions and they appear on the order paper. They appear on the paper. Questions are put in today are on the order paper tomorrow and the minister concerned, is expected to answer and he does to the best of his ability.

2. That is one way. That is one thing we always did with the public accounts and the auditor-general's report thereon. We have a budget brought down and that budget together with the reports of the auditor-general, together with the public accounts, taken altogether, are the rendering of our accounts, the rendering of our stewardship each year. There is a debate on that and every member of the House on either side can get up and debate it for weeks if they want to. For weeks - they can do it for weeks because they can bring in one amendment after the other and they could keep the debate going for three weeks or five on the budget, easy, simple. If they want to do it, it is there - the technique is there. The rules of the House provides the way to do it. It is just a matter of knowing rules which is every member's duty to know the rules.

Now, that is No. 2. Number one - you can shower questions on the Government. Number two, in the budget speech debate, you can bring out all kinds of information and No. 3, the estimates.

3. The estimates are tabled here in the House and I suppose they amount to as many as well, several thousand items, printed in a book and distributed to all the members. This is a book giving the Government's estimate, the Government's estimate of what it will want for the coming year, for this and this and this and that and that and that and the other and the other and the other, numbering thousands of items. Everything the Government is going to want to spend for the next twelve months is there in that book which all the members have. Now, what happens on that is, that the House goes in the committee of the whole - the committee of supply. Mr. Speaker, leaves the Chair. The Deputy Speaker, ... table and any member then in the House can speak a thousand times each if he wants to. There is no limit to the number of times that a member can speak.

There is no limit to the number of questions he can ask - no limit, no limit. If each individual member of the House wants to ask 1000 questions, all he needs is the interest to do it, the desire to do it, That is all he needs. He has the right to ask as many questions as he likes.

I remember one year when the House was in Committee of Supply, debating the estimates, I started to keep count of the questions that were asked, most of them, of course, by the Opposition. Not all. I forget the exact number now. I think it was 1700.

The questions were asked, "Why is the Government doing that? How much did you spend on that last year? What did it cost last year? Why are you asking for more for the coming year?"

Questions in hundreds and they can be asked in thousands.

Now these are the three ways this House and presumably the House of British Columbia have used to deal with the public accounts and the auditor-general's report.

1. Endless questions tabled in a formal way to be printed on the order paper. Each day.

2. A debate on the budget which can take weeks as long as the House wants to debate the budget.

3. In committee of the whole where thousands can be asked, each member, having no limit - the sky is the limit - he can ask for whatever information he wants to ask and/^{an} enormous amount of information is thereby produced on the floor of the House.

The press are in the press gallery. They can report any question that is asked or/^{any} answer that is given. That is their job to report to the public through the radio, television, and newspaper.

Now, these are the three ways, Mr. Speaker, in which this House has for 100 years, in more than 100 years, treated the public accounts of the Government, whatever Government there were in power. This is what has happened for over 100 years. I do not suggest that ----

I do not suggest because this is the way it has been done for a hundred years, it must, therefore, follow. It is, therefore, inevitable. That it has got to be that way for another hundred years, I do not suggest that. I am saying only that for more than a hundred years the public accounts of this country, now this Province, the public accounts have always been thrown wide open. (1) to the Auditor General; (2) in a printed form where they are tabled here in this House; (3) the report of the Auditor General on them; (4) the right of all members to debate them in the budget speech debate; (5) to ask an endless number of questions, when the House goes in the informal fashion of committee of supply with, Mr. Speaker, out of the Chair and no limit being put on the number of times that any member may rise to his feet and ask a question and there has been a tendency for years for members not even to rise. Just sitting in their place without standing up at all. Just lean forward and ask the minister this question or that question or the other question. These are the ways we have dealt with the public accounts.

Naturally, here in Newfoundland, as in every other Province as in Ottawa, as at Westminster, as everywhere, we have the parliamentary system here as everywhere. The Opposition always look with great delight for the Auditor General's report knowing that the Auditor General, if he is worth his salt, if he is worth his salt, the Auditor General is going to criticize. He is going to find in the accounts of the Government some errors, bound to find them. They are going to be there. I say they are going to be there, Mr. Speaker. What I mean is that the chances are that they will be there unless you can get archangels as your chartered accountants and your bookkeepers. If you can get perfect men to keep the accounts of the Government, the Auditor General after four or five years, seeing that he is dealing with perfect men, he might not be out of a job, he might hold on to the job and all he would do is get a rubber stamp - okay, okay okay. Stamp everything - okay, okay, knowing that there is no need of his checking because perfect men are keeping the accounts, but so long as you do not have perfect men keeping the accounts, the Auditor General is going to find errors and mistakes and he is going to put them in his report. So forever the Opposition wait impatiently for the public accounts to carry them home, read them, take them to be with them, and to be even more bitter after than they say, "good Lord, look what they spent on that!" My goodness look at that. I must ask a question about that

They hug them. They turn them over and they nurse them and they coddle them and they say, I bet the Auditor General is going to give them hell for that and then they wait then for the Auditor General's report. It is a great annual delight for the Opposition and rightly so. I will come to the hon. gentleman in a moment. I am not ignoring him. May be now is the moment.

MR. HICKMAN: Would the hon. the Premier regard paragraph 60, the comment of the Auditor General on Atlantic Brewing Company Ltd..

MR. SMALLWOOD: I do not recall what paragraph 60 is?

MR. HICKMAN: The one on Atlantic Brewing Company Ltd.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes.

MR. HICKMAN : Does he regard that - does the hon. the Premier regard that as an accounting error?

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, I regard that as a misstatement of fact.

The Opposition naturally enough sitting over there. They are not running the Province. They are just to criticize the fellows that are running the Province. They think they should be running it. Certainly they would like to be running it. You will always get two or three or four hon. members, each one of whom thinks he should be the Premier. So their job is to criticize the crowd that are the Government. That is their job, I said. That is their job. That is their job to criticize the Government, and to pounce on the Government where ever they can find something to pounce on, so they are continually question asking, questioning, probing, trying this, trying that and nine times out of ten or may be ninety times out of a hundred getting disappointed. Disappointed, disappointed, disappointed, but they keep on trying, keep on trying, keep on trying, asking questions, asking questions, and getting answers that do not give them what they want. What do they want? They want to catch the Government in a mistake. They want to catch the Government in a blunder. They want to catch the Government in having done something wrong or something crooked. That is what they are out for to try - a good thing, we know that. The Government know that and always in taking our decisions and conducting our business, we always have in mind, the fact that there is a House of Assembly. That on the opposite side, there are hon. members who would love to get something on us. We know that

So we act accordingly. The common thing to say - well suppose there is a question asked on this. What is our answer? Have we got a good explanation? Have we got a good defence? Always you know that there is an Opposition, always you know that there is an Auditor General, always you ^{know} that the public accounts are going to be tabled here, always you know that the Auditor General's report is going to be tabled here, always you know that there is going to be a debate; always you know that the House will go into committee of the whole on supply and thousands of questions may be asked. These are the things that keep the Government in check. These are good things. It would be terrible, if these things were not so, if they did not happen. It would be terrible. The Government would have no one to check them, no one to criticize them, no one to try to trick them, and prove them to be wrong. There were be nobody to do that. The Government would go wrong. It is bound to go wrong then. It could not help going wrong with nobody to check them.

That is why under the British system, it is good to have an Opposition. An Opposition is almost as necessary to good government as government itself is. A good Opposition makes a good government. Very often, very often. Now, the motion is, coming from the new Tory, the recent Liberal..

MR. HICKMAN: While the light hangs out to burn.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes the Tories found that out.

MR. HICKMAN: That is what you always use to say.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, I always said that the vilest sinner may return, but the saints do not turn sinner.

MR. HICKMAN: The saints are not coming marching in anymore.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No.

MR. WELLS: The saints are marching out.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The new Tory....

MR. HICKEY: Dirty sinful Tory.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Dirty what?

MR. HICKEY: Dirty sinful Tory.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Dirty sinful Tory. Whom is the hon. gentleman describing now?

Whom is he describing? The dirty sinful Tory of whom is he speaking? The Tories

that are over here are dirty sinful Tories. I would say that they would be dirty, deceitful Tories.

Mr. Speaker, we are beginning to have participatory democracy again, participatory democracy. I will continue to object as long as I hold a seat in this House to anyone being heard who has not been elected to a seat in this House. No one has any right to be heard in the House, no one, whether it is laughing with me or laughing at me - it makes no difference, whether it is applause for me or condemnation, no one has a right to be heard in this Chamber except those whom the people of Newfoundland have elected and sent here, no one else. In other Houses a member would stand and say - he would utter the classic cry, "Mr. Speaker, I spy a stranger." Then, Mr. Speaker, has no choice but to order the galleries cleared. No arguments. No debate. Any member says, "I spy a stranger." The public must leave then. The public love to come here. The more they come the better I love them, but they must listen and not make any demonstration even by as much as a laugh. They must not be heard, because if they are allowed to be heard, then they would be heard a little louder and then a little louder again, and if they are allowed to laugh, they would be allowed to clap. If they are allowed to clap, they would be allowed to stamp and the next thing they would take over. I have seen it done. I have seen a House taken over. I have seen the Speaker say, order, order in the gallery, and I had been present and heard the man say, oh, order me - I will not repeat the other word. The man in the gallery shouted back at the Speaker, oh, order me a I saw that. The ladies and gentleman here tonight will never act like that, but these ladies and gentlemen laugh, other ladies and gentlemen will laugh a little louder, other ladies and gentlemen do a little hand clapping and the next thing, what is this House? It is a beer garden .

It not only can happen. It did happen. I am very jealous of that. I want this House to be a place where every hon. member in it can speak freely of what is in his heart and in his mind without any interruption except from each other, from each other. We do that a little more, perhaps, than we should do. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the way we have handled the public accounts all down through the

years; evidently this is the way British Columbia does it and I daresay there are other parts of the world, and I will tell you this, Mr. Speaker, that there are provinces across Canada with public accounts committees that never function. How many committees have we got in this House that never function? At the beginning of every General Assembly, four or five committees are appointed and you never hear of them again for the next four years. They never meet even once, not even once do they ever as much meet. Year after year, after year, after year and in other provinces, there are public accounts' committees that are appointed and are never heard of again. Just like many of our committees. This does not have to follow. The public accounts committee, if it does exist can meet. It is up to itself to meet and how efficient it is is up to itself, once it is in existence.

Finally, I have to say this that my hon. colleague the Minister of Finance was not quite ready today, but will be ready tomorrow to make a very important statement to this House on the Auditor General's report. The Minister of Finance tomorrow is to make a very important statement on the report of the Auditor General. At the opening of the House tomorrow, when the House meets, he will make a ministerial statement to this House and the ministerial statement will be on the Auditor General's report, and he will after making a statement, he will give notice of a motion. I am not privileged to say what is the nature of that motion, though I know naturally, I know, and he will move it with the knowledge and concurrence of his colleagues. He will move it. He will give notice of it and then when the moment comes for him to move it, he will move it with the concurrence and support and knowledge of his colleague and of caucus, because before he moves it, caucus will consider it. I ask my supporters in this House to reject the present motion and defer judgment, defer judgment and decision until they hear the statement of the hon. the Minister of Finance at the opening of the House tomorrow and hear the motion of which he will give notice and about which members of caucus will know tomorrow morning, when they hold a caucus, so I ask my hon. friends to vote against this motion, to withhold judgment, to suspend judgment until the Minister makes his statement tomorrow.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker

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MR. CROSBIE: What we have just heard of course is another vintaged performance in connection with this very important resolution. Before putting a Public Accounts Committee in the proper perspective Mr. Speaker, No, perhaps before dealing with the remarks of the last hon. speaker perhaps I should put the motion in the proper perspective. The hon. member for Burin has already advanced very sound reason for having a Public Accounts Committee of this House.

Now Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I referred to this text, and I want to refer to it again to night, because, the Public Accounts Committee of any Legislature or Parliament is essential if that Legislature or Parliament is to operate at all effectively. I have quoted from MacGregor Dawson, that any political science student will know - the Government of Canada - R. MacGregor Dawson. And since it has become the fashion of this House to quote from authorities, I see no reason why he should not be quoted from. Page 360 " The House of Commons will almost invariably give it's consent to all the measures which the Cabinet has submitted, it is going to because the government has a majority. But in the process it exercises what is easily one of it's major functions namely, criticism."

As I pointed out this afternoon Mr. Speaker, in modern days the function - the very important function of a Legislative Assembly such as this one - that of criticism, that of taking a critical look at what the Government is doing has to be performed by the Opposition. Because, under our political party system the supporters of the party in power are just not going to spend their time looking for things to get after the Government about to keep the Government on their toes. They are not going to do it, so it falls on the Opposition. "A vital aspect of the critical function of the House of Commons is it's power of general supervision. This takes many forms to be discussed later at some lengths. The house asks the minister interminable questions it conducts investigations into the administration of the departments, it draws out the activities of the Government into the light of publicity, it scrutinizes the financial statements, and proposed taxes and expenditures. These are some of the things that the House is supposed to do."

On page 411 Mr. Speaker, the learned author points out that there is a Standing Committee in the House of Commons on the Public Accounts. That Standing Committee Mr. Speaker, has a chairman who is a member of the Opposition. The chairman is a member of the Opposition. The members of the Public Accounts Committee are all private members. Naturally a member of the Cabinet cannot be on the Public Accounts Committee because, the Auditor General is reporting to

the House of Assembly on what the Government has been doing or not doing that it should have been doing in accordance with the law. So you cannot have one of the Cabinet Ministers on the Committee.

At page 433, MacGregor points out "The office of Auditor General was established in 1870. He is an official of Parliament not of the Cabinet, subject to removal only by a joint address of both Houses of Parliament." Now here are his functions Mr. Speaker, "his functions are to check on all receipts and payments of the consolidated revenue fund. To ensure that money has been or is to be paid for the purposes intended." He just check the accounts to see if two and two makes four. The hon. the Premier has made a great point about their 500,000 entries in the books, and that these are done by the accountants in the Department of Finance, and the departments make these entries. Yes we all know that we have bookkeepers to do that. But bookkeepers Mr. Speaker, do their entries in accordance with what they are directed to do by their employers. They are not just independent people deciding how they are going to make an entry, or what they are going to do with a few hundred thousand dollars. Not at all, they have to take directions.

Their job is not just to what was that, I had the quote here. The hon. the Premier suggests that anything in the bookkeeping or accountancy of the Government that is wrong it is the function of the Auditor General to check that. "To check on receipts and payment, to ensure that money has been or is being paid for the purposed intended, and generally to investigate every aspect of the Public Service as it affects finance." In his report he is bound to call attention to any irregularities, any exceptional procedure, any special payments by warrant, any refund of a tax or simialr payment under statutory authority, or any matter which he feels he should bring to the attention of Parliament." That is what his job is. He is a watch-dog, and a trained one Mr. Speaker for you and I, and for the whole public of Newfoundland, in our case.

He is not a cracky, no Mr. Speaker, he is not a cracky, or if he is a cracky he is an official cracky who has lots of teeth, if this House is properly organized to investigate what he is reporting on. In another address just several days ago, the hon. the Premier was giving the House some basic principles of Cabinet Government, collective responsibility, question period, and he referred to a work by W. Ivor Jennings.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That debate is finished

MR. CROSBIE: Oh we know the debate is finished Mr. Speaker, am I directed now - do you direct me - I will not mention that the Premier referred to him.

I have here Mr. Speaker, a work on Parliament by W.Iver Jennings who is well regarded by some of the people sitting in this House. The Parliament of England Mr. Speaker, is often quoted by the Hon. the Premier as being the great example for us all. Well the Parliament of England is a great example Mr. Speaker, of a Parliament that has a Public Accounts Committee, and an Auditor General, and in the book Jennings describes the result of the reforms that brought about the appointment of an Auditor General. "He audits the accounts on behalf of the House, and reports direct to the House. Page 319. He has in fact, the status not unlike that of a judge. He is appointed by the Crown, but unlike other servants of the Crown, holds office during good behaviour."

He discusses the history of the institution of the Auditor General. "Honesty and public administration involves primarily financial probity, and that has been attained." That is in England. Then he goes on - on Page 321.

"These reports are submitted, (that is the Auditor General's reports) to the judgement of the Public Accounts Committee and every irregularity which in former days would have been judged and buried within the walls of a department is examined and reported on, and the financial administration of the civil departments is then subjected to public criticism. The Comptroller and Auditor General has for his primary task - to see that the rules are kept whether they are Acts of Parliament, resolutions of the House, decisions of the Public Accounts Committee, or whatever. If in the course of his audit he becomes aware of facts which appear to him to indicate an improper expenditure or a waste of public money it is his duty to call the attention of Parliament to them." That is his job, and on Page 329, Mr. Speaker the learned author deals with the Public Accounts Committee.

Under the reform Act of 1832, this committee was established in England. The Author says "The House itself however, is not a convenient body for discussing the comparatively unimportant questions raised by the Auditor General. No doubt if some great scandals are unearthed there would be debates in the House." And then he goes on to explain - now Mr. Gladstone the great liberal Gladstone as part of a series of reforms - reformed the Public Accounts Committee in 1861. "By convention a member of the Opposition is always elected chairman" Why? Because naturally he is anxious to look into it all and report back to the House. If you appointed a member of the Government he would not want to be very active at all. The committee has power to send for persons, papers and records, and it's proceedings usually take the form of the examination of witnesses. Occasionally the committee sends for a minister

but more often it examines his witnesses, senior officials from the departments." Accordingly the procedure is as follows:- This is the properly functioning Public Accounts Committee. " The Committee has before it the various accounts with the reports of the Auditor General thereon. The appropriate departmental official is present to answer questions. If members of the committee find something in the accounts which they do not understand they ask for an explanation." and so on. " The committee reports to the House from time to time. It publishes also most of the evidence which it receives. It does not publish all because, certain information is given the committee in confidence.

The Select Committee on expenditure reported in 1903 every witness bore testimony to the increasing value of a committee as a check on wasteful expenditure. That is how it is done, in the United Kingdom Parliament. Mr. Speaker, the mother of Parliaments, that we are supposed to emulate here and to be guiding ourselves on. Yes, we are supposed to be emulating it and guiding ourselves on it when that position favours the Government. But, when it raises some possibility of some committee of this House being able to do some effective work, of really looking at what the Government is doing then we do not emulate the House of Commons at London any further.

Last year Mr. Speaker, there was a circus in this House, a circus performance. The Auditor General and the Comptroller General were brought into this House and pared against one another as though they were gladiators in the Roman Circus. It is not correct that what the Auditor General is doing is reporting just on the Comptroller General, the Deputy Minister of Finance. He is reporting on the whole actions of the Government for one particular year. He is not making any personal criticism of some official of the Government such as the hon. the Premier wants us to believe. That is not so. And an official who gets led astray by that should be more careful. That is not the position - it is not "in this we have the Auditor General weighing 170 pounds, and in the other corner the Comptroller General weighing 165, and they will now come out spar in this House, on who is right and who is wrong about accounting details." Both in red trunks or blue trunks. That is not the position Mr. Speaker.

We have tabled in this House the Public Accounts, this volume here and we have the report of the Auditor General. In that report there is some very damaging pieces of inquiry or criticism. The criticism may or may not be right we do not know, we can only read the report. We certainly will not find out by having the Auditor General come up before this House as happened last year. And that kind of scandal take place in the Chamber when no sensible

investigation or enquiry can be made at all. Star Chamber kind of thing, is not the answer. The answer Mr. Speaker, is to have a Public Accounts Committee which if the House will give it the time goes off for several afternoons, calls in the Auditor General, calls in the officials of the departments concerned that he had something about in his report and the Comptroller General and if it wants the minister invites the minister, and they sit quietly and calmly and they spend the hours checking this and checking that - seeing if they think there is any substance to it or not - they meet as long as they think they need to meet and then that Committee chaired by a member of the Opposition, composed of private members, can report back to the House whether or not they have found anything in the report that needs further enquiry or whether they have looked in and found that it is satisfactory - it is a minor mistake - it is something that has been adjusted, not a witch hunt. This is what happens Mr. Speaker in other jurisdictions and should be happening here.

Now until the last several years I do not remember any Auditor General's report being made in the Province here. If it had many controversial sections in it, is last years and now again this year. Is there a Public Account Committee needed this year? Well certainly Mr. Speaker, we do not know of course what is going to be suggested tomorrow, but Mr. Speaker, that is no reason why our motion, (when I say our the hon. member for Burin made the motion which should not be discussed tonight)

MR. SMALLWOOD: Our was the right word, that was the right word

MR. CROSBIE: We certainly supported it - one hundred percent support

MR. SMALLWOOD: Our motion, that is the right word

MR. CROSBIE: The hon. member for Burin made the motion I do not want to take the credit from him. It should not be considered

MR. SMALLWOOD: He wanted to take this that and the other, I know something he wanted to take

MR. CROSBIE: For example, the Auditor General's report page 23.

He says, in my opinion there does not appear to be a recognition that the Department of the Auditor General is a separate department established by and responsible to the House of Assembly. And he outlines how his predecessor and him had protested the fact that they are included in subheads of the estimates for the Department of Finance, that should be considered. They should have independent status. Independent status, they should not be part or come under anyway the Department of Finance. The auditor General refers to staff shortages Mr. Speaker. How can the Auditor General perform properly his function for 92

the people of this Province and us the members of this House if he does not have sufficient staff. He says on page 23, I regret exceedingly the necessity of reporting to the House of Assembly that audit programs during the current year have had to be restricted or deferred because of staff shortages." "At April 1st.1969, there were seven vacancies in the total of thirty-nine established posts in my office, some of these were tolerable being due to normal

the first of April '69, there were seven vacancies and a total of thirty-nine established posts in my office. Some of these were tolerable, being due the normal turnover of staff but three were the direct result of rejection by treasury board of recommendations received in the approved manner through the Civil Service Commission and accepted by me in the preceding September.

And then he reports on salary treatment that two senior members of his staff, received which was not accepted by the treasury board. I attribute the loss of two qualified chartered accountants on my staff in large measure has been due to treasury board's resistance of these recommendations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, treasury board is a committee of ministers of the Government and here is an auditor-general who has to report to this House on the actions for which these gentlemen are responsible having to go before them to get sufficient funds for his staff or to hire staff that he considers ample and sufficient and the treasury board says to him, "You do not need the staff or we will not give you the higher salaries", and he loses two chartered accountants. That seems to me ridiculous.

This House should settle this matter, not the treasury board. The people who he is reporting on, being in the position to keep him short of staff or without adequate salaries.

Page twenty-two of his report, he questions the whole system of accounts. He says that it is only possible to certify the accounts of the Province by stating: (1) the statements are substantially correct; (2) the statements fairly disclose the financial conditions of the Province in accordance with principles of Governmental accounting as interpreted to me by the comptroller and the statements are correct in accordance with the books of accounts of the Province.

And he goes on to say, "It is unfortunate down below that neither the Legislature, the Governor in council, nor the treasury board appear to have issued instructions for the adoption of fundamental principles of accounting and financial reporting."

At the beginning of his report, he states he cannot certify the public accounts in accordance with the Revenue and Audit Act. Now, it may be that wording in Revenue and Audit Act needs to be changed, but surely, Mr. Speaker, the auditor-general who reports to this House should be now discussing with a standing committee of this House, just what he means in this report and what this means so that this House can be satisfied, that the Government

has got some kind of accounting system that sees that money is spent in accordance of the way we appropriate it for them to spend.

Wherever you turn in his report there are comments or criticisms which prima facie need investigation.

Page 10: Temporary investment. This amount is \$9.496 million represents demand notes issued by Newfoundland Industrial Development Corporation to the Province for advances made to the corporation under authority of section nineteen of the Revenue and Audit Act.

In my opinion, the amounts due from the Corporation are not capable of reasonably prompt liquidation and should not be classified as temporary investments in the balance sheet of the Province since 31 March 1969.

Well, the question naturally arises. Why? And this is the kind of question that a public accounts committee considers, gets-the-answer: There is probably quite a satisfactory answer the Department of Finance could have and report back to the House on.

There ~~are~~ deferred payments re: R.C.M.P. Service-Rental Contract. According to the Auditor General's Report. For the year ending March 31, 1969, we had arrears on the R.C.M.P. Service-Rental Contract of \$1,035,963, almost a total year's payment for the service of the R.C.M.P. in Newfoundland was in arrears in that year. Is not that an item that the Public Accounts Committee should inquire about and report to the House on?

Section 29, Investment Shares of Newfoundland Asbestos Limited, shown in the schedule as having a value of \$75,000 are actually worthless. The company has not filed a return with the Registry of Companies since 1964 and it has no assets. Yet it is shown as having a value of \$75,000 on the balance sheets of the Province.

There is a Telegraph Tax, page 11, that the Auditor General says: near the end of March 1968 it was discovered that the tax on messages, thought to be not leviable after union with Canada, was leviable with effect from January 1, 1962. The amount of arrears owing as of March 31, 1969 is unknown. That should be enquired into. Why for six or seven years did we not know that that tax on messages was leviable.

Then there are other items such as inventories and a number of other points that he makes. He points out our provincial debt and liabilities as of the 31st of March, 1969 totalled \$677,883,000. He outlines various

Heads of Expenditure which seem to be peculiar that the Head of the Expenditure does not seem to relate to what happens under it.

On page 15 under miscellaneous grants, this shows a payment of \$35,000.00 to Hotel Holdings Ltd. under the heading of Grants. The payment represents a loan to the company as approved by Order of Council rather than a grant. The amount is not recorded in the accounts of the Province alone to this company. That needs explanation.

A cheque of \$10,000.00 paid to Wabana Recreational Commission is questioned.

On page 16 under paragraph fifty the auditor-general reports in the regular charge to the sub-head in the amount of \$40,837.00 and he says that a cheque was issued payable to a contractor for this amount although the work to which the payment relates, have not been performed. The cheque was issued by the Department of Finance although, their acquisition in the department had not certified it as required by the Revenue and Audit Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, quite likely there is a similar explanation for that item. Something to do with issuing a cheque and use up the balance in the account before the end of the financial year or some departmental reason like that.

But, all of those items point up the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the proper way to have these matters checked out is through a standing committee of this House. There are many other, many other comments made by the auditor-general in this report which needs to be dealt with properly.

Failure to transfer costs- Page 19 - effectively conceals the actual overspending of the amounts appropriated for a Head of Expenditure and those cases where the unexpended balance in the Head is insufficient to absorb them. In other words, if that practice is carried on, there can be overspending without this being shown.

There are at least another - well, there is page 21. The auditor-general refers to a section of the Revenue and Audit Act which states that if some person owes the Government money and the Government owes that person money, then one should be balanced off against the other if that person is in arrears with respect to the Government. If that person owes the Government money in one hand when that person owes you money and ~~the Government~~ you may not be able to collect it from him.

He says, "In reply to my enquiry on the matter I have been informed by the Department of Finance that there is no adequate masterlist of Government debtors which may be used to intercept payments to debtors who are in arrears! Why not? It is twenty-one years the Government has been in power. Why would they not have some kind of a list like that so that matter can be checked?"

The report of the auditor-general this year, Mr. Speaker, and last year, amply demonstrates the need for a public accountant committee in this House and why should the Government oppose it, Mr. Speaker.

Look at some of the arguments that have been advanced. The first irrelevant argument, the hon. the Premier advanced, was that last year the hon. gentleman who moved this motion, he said voted against the motion. Well, last year, actually, the motion was amended to bring the auditor-general up here, but supposing the hon. gentleman who moved the motion did vote against it last year and suppose he voted against it the year before. I know that I did.

You may very well ask, why did you vote against the motion to appoint a committee on the public accounts two years ago, and you are going to support. I will tell you why, Mr. Speaker, because this year, I am free to vote as my conscience dictates and to vote in a way I think is best for the Province, whereas two years ago, I was subject the party discipline and the discipline of being in the Cabinet --

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is the only reason now.

MR. CROSSBIE: and had to vote against it because a power that big wanted it voted against.

AN HON MEMBER: Do not be hypocritical.

MR. CROSSBIE: I am not being hypocritical at all.

This year, Mr. Speaker, and I think I have said this before, I am free to vote on the issues that come before the House as I see them and on this issue, I certainly feel strongly that this House of Assembly should have a public accounts committee and the only reason I can see for the Government being against it, is that it fears that a public accounts committee might find out more than the Government cares for it to find out.

They argue that we have had this system for twenty years in this Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, I did not.

MR. CROSBIE: 100 years - it was argued that we had had it for 100 years, in this Province and what is wrong with the system we have had for 100 years. Well, if we have had it for 100 years, Mr. Speaker, that is 100 years that we should not have had it. The 100 years during which we should have been involving the public accounts committee. That is 100 years during which the Government of this Province had too much power and the members of this House of Assembly had too little and that is the case, now.

We should have had this system twenty-one years ago, if the hon. the Premier emulated the House of Commons and Parliament of England in practice as well as in theory.

We are told that the Department of Finance has accountants, bookkeepers. Of course, it does. What else are they going to have? Naturally, they have to have them, but the auditor-general is not just reporting on the bookkeepers and accountants of the Government. He is reporting on what the Government has done.

Some poor little bookkeeper in the Department of Finance, does not on his own hook, change entries or do any one entries of hundreds of thousands of dollars in any particular way without being directed by somebody to do it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Comptroller of Finance directs them and no one else.

MR. CROSBIE: The Comptroller of Finance directs the people in his own department and the Government directs the Comptroller of Finance.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He does not. He is a statutory person, just as is the auditor-general.

MR. CROSBIE: The Deputy Minister of Finance is a Civil Servant of this Province, and he takes his orders from the Government except in certain statutory respects.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is an officer - he is a statutory officer. He gets no salary as Deputy Minister. He is a statutory just as the auditor-general is.

MR. CROSBIE: And the auditor-general, Mr. Speaker, is not reporting on the auditor-general is not reporting on the comptroller general and that is a dangerous idea to try to put across. He is reporting on what the Government has done not of what the comptroller general has done.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is reporting on the work of the comptroller of finance.

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MR. CROSSIE: He is reporting on this Government and how it has spent the three hundred and million dollars it spent in the year ending March 31, 1969. Not on Mr. Groom. Nonsense.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Reporting on the accounts.

MR. CROSSIE: He is reporting on this Government's actions how it has spent the people's money \$300 million of it, in the year ending March 31, 1969. And to say that he is reporting on Mr. Groom is fantastic. The Auditor General in Ottawa Mr. Speaker, have you ever heard anyone suggest that he is up there just reporting on the deputy-minister of Finance up in Ottawa.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Do not twist and distort.

MR. CROSSIE: The hon. member who just suggested twisting and distorting is an expert in that line of work and I am not twisting and distorting. We have had this system 21 years Mr. Speaker it is time we changed it. The Minister of Finance has pointed out, is not a bookkeeper, so what, the minister of Economic Development is not an economic developer, the minister of Highways is not a highway engineer, the minister of Health is not a doctor, the minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation has still to be rehabilitated. The minister of Mines, Agriculture & Resources is not a mining engineer, not an agronomist.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Do not be too sure. Do not be too sure they have received an awful lot, millions. In 21 years they have received 60 millions.

MR. CROSSIE: So that is quite irrelevant Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance is not supposed to be a bookkeeper and it is never suggested that he was a bookkeeper. Or that he should be a bookkeeper. The minister of Finance does not have to make the entry. He is responsible along Mr. Speaker with the rest of the members of the Cabinet for what happens, the spending of the Province's money, and that is what the Auditor General is reporting on. The hon. the Premier suggests that there are complaints, every Auditor General across Canada is always complaining about staff. This is one of the usual sweeping statements of the hon. the Premier absolutely unsupported by evidence. What evidence is presented to this House to show that every Auditor General across Canada this year has complained about the staff and said he is short-staffed and that he had not sufficient money for staff as our Auditor General has. If that proof exists let us see it. It is an unsubstantiated statement.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Sounds like a lawyer in court.

MR. CROSSIE: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to set aside sweeping statements made by the hon. the Premier without some proof of what the statement states. That the

ten Auditor General's of the Provinces of Canada this year and the Auditor General of Canada .

MR. SMALLWOOD: I did not say this year. I did not say this year. Do not misquote. I did not say that. I did not say that. Do not misquote. Do not twist. Do not distort.

MR. CROSBIE: Complain that they do not have sufficient staff, is nonsensical Mr. Speaker.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I did not say that. do not misquote, do not twist, do not distort.

MR. CROSBIE: I am almost without words. I will certainly pay attention to what the Premier says, I will not twist and I have not been. Our Auditor General reports that he is short-staffed and he has lost two senior chartered accountants because he was not able to give them sufficient increases to keep them. And he is our watchdog and the people of Newfoundland. When the Government wantssa Controller General or a deputy-minister of Finance they are prepared to pay for it, \$30,000 a year. The Auditor General and his staff ought to get the same or better treatment better actually they should deal only with this House and the question of salaries and staff.

The hon. the Premier suggested that this was the mildest report of the Auditor General in years, this particular report of this year. If that is a mild report Mr. Speaker, we have had hurricane reports in former years, we have had tornado reports, we have had cyclones, if this is the mildest report. Last year's report and this one are not mild. They reveal things that need investigation, we hope or will not turn out to be as they look or seem to be.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is the hon. gentleman shre he hopes that?

MR. CROSBIE: I would be the only one that would know that p Mr. Speaker, and since I have just said it I would assume if I was the hon. gentleman that I meant what I said. The hon. the Premier suggested that the House has always dealt with the Auditor General's Report. I have never heard this expression explained in the House before, how? This is how our House has always dealt with it we are told a splendid system. (a) Questions from the Opposition, they can ask questions, they go home to bed night time with their public accounts thinking up questions. and they can ask questions. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they can ask questions. But what kind of answers are they going to get? We have seen the kind of answers that the questions can get in this House. So just asking questions, and on the Order Paper of this House with this Government is no assurance that they are going to get any kind of an answer and if you get an answer it is going to be any

kind of a sensible one. So much for tabling questions.

(B) We have a budget brought down the Hon the Premier says. This is how we render our stewardship. The members can speak for weeks they can move amendments Well, Mr. Speaker, the ordinary member has 90 minutes time limit on him when he speaks. And true enough amendments can be brought you can make amendments all the rest of that. But when the House is meeting afternoon and evening and later on Mr. Speaker, later on we will be meeting morning, afternoon and evening. When the hon. the Premier or the Government really decided to get his ramrod in through that they are going to clue things up, morning afternoon and evening. Where they are you going to get time to prepare your speeches, your amendments, your motions, yes, then you will hear the cries of obstructing, Obstruction, that cry is not going to be heard much for a few days now, because a certain party just finished speaking for ten hours in the House. We will not hear about obstruction from the hon. Minister of Mines Agriculture & Resources for a few days. Until we get a chance to speak for a few days and then we will hear that the business of the House has been obstructed ~~filibustering~~. Well, we have got the hours noted, I think, thirty-six hours up to last night Mr. Speaker, that the House has spent in debate and of the thirty-six hours, who do you think has spoke for twelve hours? It was more than that, two hours in one debate and ten in another. The hon. the Premier. There is a Governmental filibuster going on. So the budget is going to be brought down.

(c) Thirdly, the third method of this House is always used according to the hon. the Premier. The estimates are tabled in the House, yes, we know Mr. Speaker the estimates are tabled in the House, and the estimates are for the year to come, commencing April 1, 1970. not for the past year, and we know you can stand up and ask questions.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They are for the past year. They are indeed. The figures for the past year are also given.

MR. CROSBIE: The figures for the past year are also shown.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes. And they can be questioned just as they can -

MR. CROSBIE: And when the hon. members refer to them, refer back, wait and hear what is said then. So the estimates are tabled, and these are the estimates for the next year, for the coming year. Then we will hear the cries of obstruction Mr. Speaker, The estimates have nothing to do with the fact that we need a public accounts committee. They have estimates in Ottawa Mr. Speaker. They have estimates in Nova Scotia, they have them in New Brunswick, they have them in Prince

Edward Island. They have them in Saskatchewan, Ontario, they might even have them in Quebec. That does not stop them from having public accounts committee to go with the Auditor General who reports to the House and go with him through the accounts, and to question officials and to see is there substance or have changes been made that should be made in the substance of some of the criticism what is the Government doing to report back to this House. what could be wrong with that Mr. Speaker??

Nothing. Except as the hon. friend from Burin has said, the only reason he could see anyone being against the motion was that if they felt there was something to hide. The Government feels there is nothing to hide, let us have a public accounts committee we do not care Mr. Speaker, this motion is defeated and the Government brings one in on its own. It does not matter, but let us have a public accounts committee with the chairman and member of the Opposition, This hon. House Mr. Speaker has committees that have never met since 1906. Well if committees have not met it is because it is not the policy of the Government to encourage them to meet, that is all Mr. Speaker. And they are chaired by members of the Government or the Cabinet in any event.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No they are not.

MR. CROSBIE: Most of them are.

MESMALLWOOD: Most of them are not.

MR. CROSBIE: All of them except perhaps one or two if there are that many. The Government does not encourage committees in this House. The Government would not even agree to a Select Committee to look into the One by Chance operation and to report back to the House. No, we are going to have a technician speak here in the Chamber before all the members. He will be loaded down with documents one day and reports and everything else and in will come a certain party and his assistants and we will be supposed to go through those in a few minutes and start to question him in this House. That is not the way this House should proceed Mr. Speaker. This House should use committees more for that kind of an operation where the House wants to check out the facts and to get information. It is the same with the report of the Auditor General. Now the hon. the Minister is to make a statement tomorrow, of course we have no way of knowing what it is. But, when he makes his statement of course it can not be debated tomorrow. There is no reason why the whole issue should not be debated tonight Mr. Speaker, we can not debate a ministerial statement and he is going to give a notice of motion and I hope he gives a notice of motion to set up a Standing Committee of this House on the Public Accounts. So that we can

do our business here as it should be done. We do not want any more unedifying spectacles like we have had last year. Where either Mr. Howley or Mr. Groom or both have to suffer in their reputation because they are pitted off like gladiators against one another. That is wrong and unfair. They can both be right in their own way, on what they are doing. What we want Mr. Speaker, is a Public Accounts Committee, who will report back to the House and whether there is substance to any of these matters, whether changes have been made, whether the points are substantiated, so we can go properly about our business. Mr. Howley is not and I repeat not reporting on Mr. Groom. He is reporting on the financial stewardship of the Government and whether the Government has expended its funds in accordance with the laws of this Province in the directions of this House, and whether it is over-spent, bookkeepers do not overspend Mr. Speaker, and bookkeepers do not permit, for example, Atlantic Brewing Limited not to pay the commission on beer for a number of months. That is not a decision at the bookkeeper level. That has to be at a ministerial level.

So the Auditor General is reporting on far more than the bookkeepers and accountants of this Government. It is reporting on the Government. How they have spent money the people of Newfoundland in that particular year, have they abused the law or not are they using proper accounting techniques or not. Are they overspending? Are they not doing their duty of collecting their taxes? Are taxes too much in arrears? Have people been paid monies that should not have been paid them? That is his job. He is not reporting just on the bookkeeper and accountants of this Province, so Mr. Speaker, I am happy and I am delighted to be able to support this resolution and in no party discipline to incline me to not to do should be done that is why I say the political party system while it is necessary Mr. Speaker, to operate in a ^{modern} democracy has many other side effects which are not too desirable. And it is therefore up to the Opposition members of this House and every House across Canada to press for Public Accounts committee to be scrutinized what the Government is doing and report on it. That is a job the House of Commons used to do. The House of Assembly used to do, but the House of Assembly is now the captive of the party in power and it rests on the Opposition to do. I hope all hon. members will vote in favour of this resolution which is not a motion of non-confidence it may be, it might be if carried a motion of non-confidence that it would have affect on some persons ego but that is all. It is not non-confidence in the Government. So Mr. Speaker, I trust that all members on this side of the House and those on the other side who want to vote in accordance with their conscience will support this motion.

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MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, there is one thing that this motion stands for and that is a motion to appoint a standing committee on the public accounts. It is the desire to have truth in this House, to get the true statement of fact. Opposition to this motion can only mean some kind of a fear of truth. We have seen other examples of it in recent days. I will not refer back to the debate, Mr. Speaker, but this is just another example of fear of truth. That is all this motion means. The members sitting in the Opposition carrying out their duties to get at the truth of the public accounts for the people of this Province; so that this House and every individual member in it can without fear of being wrong or without any doubt whatsoever assure the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, that their \$300 odd million has been spent properly and in accordance with what this House has decided. That is the purpose of this motion. The simplest way that it can be put. The hon. member for Burin who moved the motion, the hon. member for St. John's West all gave excellent reasons why there should be such a standing committee. The Premier, when he spoke gave all the reasons why he thought there should not be, because of all the opportunities to question the Government on the contents of the Auditor General's report, and when the budget is brought down and the estimates are brought before the House and considered - this is true. There is some opportunity to do that, but what the member for St. John's West did point out, is the contempt of this House and the contempt of the people of this Province shown in answering questions, that amounts nearly to a refusal to answer or to give the information that is clearly desired and clearly wanted.

Members of the Opposition who do put forward questions often do not have sufficient information available to them to give, to make the question in complete detail so that all the i's are dotted and all the t's are crossed. They do not have the information available to them often on the names of companies, or whether the Government's interest is in the form of shares and so should receive dividends or in the form of bonds or what it is? This information is not always available. The answer is given no. There is no dividends. Very often there was some kind of money received or something. The Opposition cannot be expected to have this kind of information because it is not readily made available.

What we get in answers to questions, Mr. Speaker, is not very much. I do not propose to repeat most of what the other two hon. members who spoke in favour of the motion said, although much of it could bear repeating for emphasis. Nevertheless, I feel, Mr. Speaker, that there is a couple of things in particular that speak very clearly for themselves as to the reasons why we should have a standing committee on the public accounts.

A glance at the Auditor General's report makes that very clear. There are conflicts between what is contained in the Auditor General's report and the information forthcoming from the Government. These conflicts should be resolved for the good of all and in the interest of the people of this Province who are footing the bill, and I am delighted, Mr. Speaker, I must say really pleased tonight to hear what the Premier said that he did not propose for he agreed that we should not have a repetition of what we had in this House last year of pitting the Auditor General against the Comptroller of Finance. I am delighted to hear that that is not going to be done, because I expect that none of us who are members of this House, who were members last year will ever be forgiven for what we did to both these men last year and none of us deserve it. All of us share some degree of responsibility and guilt for what was done last year and I am delighted to hear that there is no indication that it will likely be done again. I will say no more about it. That distasteful episode speaks for itself.

How then are we to resolve it? If the Government comes out and makes further statements. If the Minister of Finance on tomorrow makes a further statement and says that is wrong, this did not happen, we are still left with a conflict. We still have the Auditor General saying yes. We still have the Minister of Finance saying no. That conflict must be resolved. May be they are perfectly good, logical reasons for it. Nobody is trying to claim that the Government is appropriating funds under themselves or under anybody else improperly. These discrepancies are pointed out to us by the Auditor General in carrying out his duties. He has pointed out these discrepancies. Why does he answer to the House? Why does he not just make a report to the Government? Because we in the House can take some action upon it. That is why he answers to us. That is why he reports to us and we, Mr. Speaker, would be derelict in our duty, if

we did not take some action upon it. What is the best way to do that? We have all agreed that it is not to bring the Auditor General and the Comptroller of Finance back into this House. The only sensible, logical way is to have a standing committee meet, if necessary discuss the matters with the Auditor General and the Comptroller of Finance, but not in a public circus, discuss the matters with anybody else who is concerned and then report back to this House. That is a sensible thing to do and in that way we get at the truth. The House is given the truth elicited by its own members. That is the way it should be.

Nearly every other British, Parliamentary system has it and we do not and the Premier who stands and so highly recommends the British Parliamentary system can stand tonight and say, no, it is not necessary. Every thing we got looks after. All of those other legislatures and parliaments, Mr. Speaker, they, too, have all these questions. They, too, have estimates. They, too, have a budget speech. They, too, ask questions. Yet they find it necessary to have a public accounts committee. What is wrong? Does not the Government trust its backbenchers to sit on a public accounts committee? Is there a fear of truth? Is there a fear that the House might be enlightened? There should not be. The Government should welcome a public accounts committee so that there will be no doubt that what they are doing is right, that they are doing what they are supposed to be. They should be delighted to have a public accounts committee, so that I and other members who sit on this side of the House could not then raise doubt about the propriety of the Government's activities in the financial field. There would be no reason to doubt, the committee would examine it and report the truth back to this House. Truth that is all we want, Mr. Speaker. We are asking for nothing more than truth. There is one very significant fact or comment in the Auditor General's report that speaks louder than all the words that have been said here tonight in favour of a public accounts committee, and that is contained in item (60) and has nothing to do with \$400,000 typographical errors that appeared in last year's budget, or clerks adding up figures or any such thing as that. It is clearly a matter of policy involving executive decision. Well the decision of this House is what it should have. The

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is item (60), Mr. Speaker.

It has been referred to before, I think, by the other two hon. members on this side who spoke and that is Atlantic Brewing. During the course of the audit of the accounts of the Newfoundland Liquor Commission for the year ended 31st. March, 1969, it was ascertained by the Auditor General. He found this out during the course of his audit of the accounts of the Liquor Commission. This is what the Auditor General found out: That the commission's profit amounting to \$373,852.13 had not been received. Now that, Mr. Speaker, is profit, or tax or what ever you want to refer to it as. It is imposed by this House. The amount to be charged is directed here and is provided for in Section (51) of the Alcoholic Liquors Act. Under the provisions of Section (48), "every brewer, every manufacturer of beer in this Province must within twenty days after the end of the month file a return of the amount of beer produced and delivered from its manufacturing plant." The total amount they have taken out of their plant in the previous month so by the twentieth of every month all brewers must report the total amount. Section (51) 4, I think it is, "requires those same brewers at the same time that they report to remit to the Government or to the Liquor Commission, \$2.49 for every case. Even if they have not sold it. If they have taken it out of their manufacturing plant to a warehouse in Clarenville or a warehouse in Burin or St. Anthony or where ever, they must remit on the twentieth \$2.49 for every case taken out the previous month. That must be done. That is what the law requires. There is no discretion in anybody not to collect it or to forgive it, the law requires it to be done. This House has said it must be done.

The Minister of Finance and the Government are charged with the responsibility by this House, they are charged with responsibility to carry out that law and collect that money. Yet the Auditor General says for the year ended says that for the year ended March 31st., 1969 there was \$373,852.13 outstanding. They did not report. They did not pay it, at least. May be they reported the amount. I do not know. He has not commented upon that. But at least the money was not received and no claim for the public record in the Supreme Court, there is a

Writ of Summons issued.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They are being sued for it.

MR. WELLS: They are now being sued for some \$410,000 the additional being for the period from 1st April on up to the time they ceased business, I assume that that is the case.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is right.

MR. WELLS: But that is not the point, Mr. Speaker. I realize that they are being sued for that amount. That is not the point. The Minister of Finance is charged with the administration, the Alcoholic Liquors Act, and he is charged with responsibility to collect that money in accordance with the law; namely on the twentieth of every month to collect \$2.49 for every case taken out of the plant in the previous month and that was not done and, Mr. Speaker, I for one want an answer as to why it was not done and if I do not ask for an answer as to why it was not done, I do not deserve my seat in this House. That is public money. If we cannot obtain it and the Auditor General thinks there may be some doubt about it, not for legal reasons, he now refers to a Writ of doubtful value. I think we all have some knowledge of the difficulties, of the financial difficulties of Atlantic Brewing. The Writ is of doubtful value. In other words, we are likely to lose that \$410,000 or a substantial portion of it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, none of it.

MR. WELLS: That is what is indicated.

MR. SMALLWOOD: We will not lose a cent of it.

MR. WELLS: I hope not, but I want to know why, Mr. Speaker, why did not the Minister of Finance collect? Why did not the Government see that the Minister of Finance collected it? The Government, as a whole is responsible; although the House has given direct responsibility to the Minister of Finance. Why did he not receive these reports and the fact that the hon. gentleman who was Minister of Finance at that time now sits on this side of the House? That does not relieve me of my responsibility to ask why he did not collect it and to expect for the people of Newfoundland an answer. Not just from the Government - the Government, as a whole are responsible, I realize that, but the hon. gentleman who

was then Minister of Finance is still a member of this House.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is still bound by his oath.

MR. WELLS: Yes and still bound to answer to this House as to why he did not collect it to.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is not allowed to break his oath even for the House.

MR. WELLS: He is bound to answer to this House.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is not allowed.

MR. WELLS: He is bound to answer to this House as to why he did not discharge the duty placed upon him by this House.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not only is he not bound, but he is not permitted to break his oath.

MR. WELLS: That is what he is bound to do. Sheer nonsense.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is no nonsense.

MR. WELLS: No but it is an incredible fear of the truth.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, it is not a fear of the truth.

MR. WELLS: It is an incredible fear of truth.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Nonsense.

MR. WELLS: That has become evident in recent days.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Utter nonsense.

MR. WELLS: I, Mr. Speaker, want to know why, not for my own selfish motives.

It would probably do very little good for me alone to know why. I do not want to be told in secret. The people of Newfoundland want to know why, \$373,000 of their money was not collected, regularly as it was supposed to be collected.

The law that we passed in this House imposes on the Minister of Finance - it says specifically that he is charged with the responsibility for the administration of that act and one of the requirements of that act is that he collect \$2.40 a month from every brewer for every case of beer that they take out of their warehouse. Now I am asking now, Mr. Speaker, the Government in the first instance - I realize the hon. member who was Minister of Finance at the time, is now sitting on this side of the House. I say that does not relieve him of the responsibility

it does not relieve him of responsibility. But for that reason, I will in the first instance, ask the Government why was ~~not~~ that not collected? And the people of Newfoundland want an answer. The Auditor General said, I was informed that the company claimed it was permitted to retain this profit under an exemption or a concession granted by the Premier for purposes of encouraging the establishment of new industries at Stephenville.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is it not obvious to the hon. gentleman what happened?

MR. WELLS: I am trying to find out.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is it not obvious?

MR. WELLS: No. No. It is not.

MR. SMALLWOOD: May I tell him now?

MR. WELLS: No, no, let me finish, then tell me where I am wrong.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, let me tell the hon. gentleman and then he will not have to guess.

MR. WELLS: Okay, I will accept it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The company had the normal letter, that I give to any concern, that is willing to establish in Stephenville, as the Cabinet had agreed, as the Cabinet had ordered, that any concern settling in Bell Island, or in Stephenville to establish an industry there are for the first two years after they begin to produce exempt from Newfoundland Government taxes. Okay, I believe there is legislation passed by the House, certainly there was an Order in Council, and I have given that letter to every one that has gone there, and I will be happy to give it to anyone else, and I wish there were twenty that would go there, and the next thing we will have to do, I hope, is add Argentina to the list. Any firm going is free of Newfoundland Government taxes for the first two years after they begin to produce. Those people thought that the money they were paying to, or are suppose to pay to the Liquor Board was a tax. And it is not a tax. And they thought they were exempt from paying the Liquor Board, it is profit. Because they thought that money was a tax. They thought the letter exempted them from what they thought was a tax. And it is not a tax. They are exempt from all tax for two years.

MR. WELLS: That still gives rise to considerable doubt for this reason, I think, the Premier for his explanation, but why did not the Minister tell him on the 21st. day of the month, that it was not a tax, that it was profit, and showed legally that this was the situation. And if he did not do it in the first month, why did not the Minister do it in the second month, and the third, and the fourth, and the fifth, and the sixth - over a year before any action is taken. Why? That is

what I want to know. I can understand an initial mistake or a misunderstanding due to words contained in a letter.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. gentleman wants the answer -

MR. WELLS: I can understand, yes, I would like to have the answer to that, and I would like to have the letter tabled, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that the company within two or three months or so of its beginning to produce began to go broke. And the Government were hoping to save them, and they decided to forebear to keep them from going broke. Always with the intention of collecting the money, but not to collect it at the moment that would send them broke. We did not want them to go broke. They had a couple of million dollars. They were waiting by the way on half a million or something from Ottawa, at which they got a small portion only, and they are still owed \$200,000 or \$300,000, and out of that, if it had come, they were going to pay the Government. It never did come, because they folded. They lost \$2 million, they lost every nickle of it.

MR. WELLS: That does not still explain it to my satisfaction. Mr. Speaker, or to the satisfaction of the people of this Province. But, I appreciate the explanations offered. It is more than we got yesterday in the answer to the question tabled by the member for St. John's West. In fact, I think, it is a contradiction, because there was a denial that there was any letter written, as I recall the answer to that question.

MR. SMALLWOOD: There was no question asked. There was a denial that such a letter was written, yes. And properly so, because there was no such letter written.

MR. WELLS: There was nothing contained in that letter that was written that would suggest, the Brewery or the promoters of the Brewery to be exempt from the profit or tax whatever it is called -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Exempt from tax yes.

MR. WELLS: But, not exempt from this profit or tax of the Liquor Commission.

MR. SMALLWOOD: How could there be?

MR. WELLS: There is no statutory authority for it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Right.

MR. WELLS: Right. It would be clearly illegal. As Mr. Speaker, it is clearly improper not to collect the money on the 20th. day of every month, as the Law requires.

The Government had not the statutory right, the Legislative right to allow this to go beyond the 20th. of every month, and the 20th. of the next month, and the next month, and the next month - for whatever reason without getting prior authority from this House. Had not the authority to do that:

MR. SMALLWOOD: I can give the hon. gentleman another example of some 400 persons working - the Government let them go on working rather than close it down because they owed the Government \$600,000. They still owe the Government \$600,000, we did not fold them up. But we will collect the money.

MR. WELLS: The simple thing, Mr. Speaker, this House had not prorogued, it was merely adjourned. If the Government needed legislative authority, all it had to do, I believe, on twenty-four hours - forty-eight hours notice call the members together and get it. The Government has no right to ignore the Law. No more than any individual citizen does. That is clearly what the Government did, or the Minister of Finance did. And either the Government or the Minister of Finance, the hon. member of this House who was Minister of Finance at the time, and I don't wish to attack him, but the fact that he is now sitting on this side, does not relieve me of my responsibility to point this out, that this was not done. The Law was disobeyed by the Government or the Minister of Finance at the time. Ignored. And the Government has not the right to do that, under any circumstances. No matter what they are, particularly in a situation where the House could be called together in two days, and consent given, and who was justified, and consent could have been clearly given. There is no justification for it. And that I submit, Mr. Speaker, getting at the truth of that, and obtaining that letter, that letter should be tabled. Will the Premier agree to table that letter? Getting at the truth of that, it is clearly the function of a standing committee on the public accounts. Clearly the function of it. Not a three ring circus in this House, or not accusations back and forth. This kind of heated debate would not now be going on, if we had a standing committee on Public Accounts. Because we would know, we would not have to take wild guesses. You would not have to be told that we are not going to know because Cabinet Oath of Secrecy. We would not have to wonder what the truth was, we would know. Public Funds the Auditor says, have been lost, in a result of this. There which is a doubtful and I have other reasons for suspecting the same as he suspects. Because there is something I have done in fact... doubtful value. Even where there is no doubt about the case, even where judgement

has been obtained. the writs are still of doubtful value.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Government do not expect to recover that money through the courts, or by means of the writ. But rather by another means.

MR. WELLS: What about the other creditors. they have a claim too?

MR. SMALLWOOD: They are secured creditors, and there are - what is the next word?

MR. WELLS: Unsecured.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Deferred creditors, and there are unsecured creditors..

We have deferred creditors. And in any case,

MR. WELLS: I am delighted that we are, Mr. Speaker, but we sure do not deserve to be. And I am not sure, but we cannot lose our position has deferred creditors to allow this to go on, in this way. To ignore the Law. Why should we be preferred?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Even, if we were not preferred, we are getting the money by another arrangement, every nickle of it.

MR. WELLS: That one item alone, Mr. Speaker, in the Auditor General's Report is enough to justify a standing committee, that one thing alone, and as the hon. member for St. John's West and the hon. member for Burin pointed out, there are a goodly number of others, because Mr. Speaker, I ~~am~~ like a lot of other members, what to know why? And if we did not we would be derelict in our duties. We would not be doing what we are suppose to do for the people of this Province. I want to know why, the Minister of Finance did not collect those monies as they were due on the 20th. of each month. In fact that the Brewery was in financial difficulties is no excuse. I want to know why, the Law was broken? Because on the hon. gentleman who was then Minister of Finance rested responsible, placed on his shoulders, directly by this House. Not by the Government. Directly by this House. The Government as a whole has responsibility for it too, to the people of this Province.

And Mr. Speaker, I want to know why? And I want either the Government or the hon. gentleman who was then Minister of Finance to say why the Law was ignored. And the best means of arriving at this truth, is by means of a standing committee. Clearly the best means. But, after the performance we saw this afternoon, I have a sneaky suspicion we are not likely to get much support from the opposite side. I am talking a wild guess mind, you Mr. Speaker. I am not certain of that, it is just a wild guess. I do not be inclined to hit a ball around on it, I am not likely to get much support, there seems to be an incredible fear of truth. And this kind of standing committee is the kind of action that can bring truth into this Chamber. And disclosure in particular, bring disclosure into this Chamber. 945

This is what we want, this is what the people of Newfoundland are entitled to. It is there money, not the exclusive rights of the people who sit on that side of the House. That money belongs to the people of this Province, and they are entitled to full disclose it, nothing short of it. They are entitled to the entire truth. And the best way to obtain that is through this standing committee. But whether we have this standing committee or not, Mr. Speaker, I, for the people of this Province want the answers to why the Minister of Finance did not make sure he collected on the 20th. of every month, the amount of money owing by that company. I want that answer whether we have the standing committee or not.

And I submit, Mr. Speaker, that nothing more need be said, the argument is being made out, amply made out. I doubt that we are likely to meet with success on it. The argument is being made out. The vote will just show again, how the Government, and the members who sit on that side feel about this House and the people of this Province.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. H. R. V. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman who has just sat down has cast some horrible insinuations at me, as when I was Minister of Finance.

MR. WELLS: I hope he has not taken it that way. I hope he is taking it in the right way.

MR. EARLE: How can I take it otherwise? I have been accused as Minister of Finance, of not doing my duty.

MR. WELLS: It is my duty to find out why. I hope he understands that.

MR. EARLE: There is a terrible problem here, Mr. Speaker. I have a reputation to defend, and I also have an Oath of Secrecy. And in spite of all that has been said in this House before me -

MR. SMALLWOOD: What ever the hon. gentleman did or did not do, he did as part of the Government, and it is the Government and not the hon. gentleman who takes responsibility.

MR. E. M. ROBERTS: The mere fact the hon. gentleman who is over there

MR. SMALLWOOD: That does not change that.

MR. ROBERTS: The Government's Act.

MR. EARLE: I am well aware of it, Mr. Speaker. The fact is that during the past few days, sometimes in the past two weeks, I have been accused of being a person

who does not exactly live by an Oath. A person who evades his responsibility, who repeats private conversation and all sorts of insinuations have been aimed at me. I have emphatically denied them all. But, publicity which has gone out, I am afraid, has been so slanted in the other direction that I am afraid, that our this country, in some quarters it might be believed. People who do not know the facts, and people who are ignorant of what actually went on, may believe that Val Earle is over here, because of spite and he is using invective, and tricks and treachery to defeat his former colleague.

I will never, never be guilty of that. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I have a devastating habit of telling the truth. And I would rather be hung tomorrow, and dragged out of this place on my heels, than not tell the truth.

MR. WELLS: That is all I asked for the truth.

MR. EARLE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that in the light of the circumstances in this heated debate, that I can come out openly with it. Because to do so I am sure would immediately be interpreted as a breach of my Oath. Although, I feel like I could escape very close to it without breaking my Oath, but I do not want there to be any fine margin at all. I do not want it to be any suspicion at all that I am breaking my Oath.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is honourable.

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker -

MR. WELLS: Not providing the truth is not honourable though.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Honourable to keep one's oath.

MR. WELLS: But it is not honourable to give the truth to this House.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Even in a court a man cannot be a minister, cannot be called on to break his oath. Even in court his oath of secrecy

MR. WELLS: He has no immunity

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order. The hon. gentleman has a right to be heard. Silence.

MR. EARLE: I would like, Mr. Speaker, if possible to be heard on this subject in complete silence, because it is indeed a very serious one. This Auditor General's Report which throws great reflection on me really, while in the presence of the Auditor of Finance. It is taken on face value would almost indicate that I and my staff were not doing our job. But, as I said, the Premier gave me credit for it the other

day. I content that most of the things in this report are completely over exaggerated or at least the reporting on them has been overly exaggerated. The fact is that most of these are normal bookkeeping errors, in a large volume of work and can be justified. For instance, there is one reference in this report to the fact that if Bank Accounts have not be reconciled, since goodness knows when. Well the truth on that subject is this, that we brought in special auditors to reconcile these bank accounts. I insisted on it, I told the officials in my department, that they could drop everything else and reconcile those accounts. I did not want this to be brought up again in the House this year. And the fact of the matter is, that the latest accounts have been reconciled. All of the up-to-date accounts of the bank have been reconciled. But, when you reconcile an account of a bank, the last account, did automatically follow that the previous accounts must have been correct. So, we were working from the first backwards.

Now, the fact is of course that

MR. EARLE: Of course that the previous account Sir, has not yet been timed to go right back through the years and reconcile all of these accounts, but the public and the Government and everybody who hears this statement can be perfectly assured that these accounts are reconciled, because the last have been proven correct.

Now this sort of thing, unless an explanation is given would leave a false impression, and there are many things in this which the Auditor has to do because of his responsibility as Auditor General he has to report these which are technical errors. But when the technical errors are examined they are just that, technical errors. I believe that the hon. the present Minister of Finance when he makes his statement tomorrow, will show that to be correct. I hope he does.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. gentleman is speaking like a man

MR. EARLE: Well I hope this is correct.

The other point is Mr. Chairman, that as Minister of Finance I had as any Minister of Finance will have, terrific responsibility. I had the responsibility to the policy of Government, I had the responsibility to my staff, and I think that my record with my staff was pretty good. If you question any of them as to whether they were honourably treated I think the answer will be yes. I did not under any circumstances wish to let them down. Now this particular program referred to in this Auditor General's report caused me many, many, many sleepless nights because, I was caught over a barrel. I was defending my staff, I was defending Government policy and I had to do both and I still have to do both. This is one of the terrific responsibilities the Minister takes on. The finger of accusation can be pointed at him and he can be held up before the world as being a cheat, a liar, a hider of secrets or anything of that nature and he is honour bound not to say certain things. This is the exact position Mr. Speaker I find myself in tonight.

Now all of this happened while I was Minister of Finance, and I cannot speak of any of this. The only thing I can say Mr. Speaker, and if the skies fall I must say it tonight. That the answer to the question given question number I think it was 136 yesterday, when the Premier was asked about the information on the "Hilltop" and the "Hilltop" and the "Hilltop" and the answer "no" as given there to be correct. This is why if for no other reason I would support a private committee of this House to investigate this down to the last item, because, these letters referred to can be produced. I have a copy of a letter here. I also have, I was so worried about this thing

it kept me awake so much I kept a private diary. I have day by day, hour by hour - the report on how this thing was handled for twelve months, and I can quote from this diary right down to the last minute if I am called before a committee.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. gentleman cannot do that. He cannot from a diary which contained secret Cabinet information.

MR. EARLE: Well if it is a committee of the House I think they are all

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, not even the Supreme Court of Newfoundland. Not even the Supreme Court of Canada. No one on earth can require the hon. gentleman to break his oath. No one, no court, no one.

MR. WELLS: That is some skirt to hide the truth

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is the law, I did not make that law

MR. WELLS: Some law, it is not the law

MR. EARLE: I do not wish to be sidetracked on this because there is a danger that I might say the wrong thing, and I am striving at every power that I have not to say the wrong thing tonight.

The facts are here, if I am demanded under legal obligation to disclose these fact I shall. Otherwise I shall not. No I know the exact and intimate details of this case and I can disclose them. It is not too creditable but there it is. The facts are Mr. Speaker, that I can say no more on this. I can say nothing more tonight or any other time on this subject unless I am legally compelled to do so, and I can only rest this case before the public to know that I stand here to speak as Minister of Finance, living up to my oath and I shall always live up to my oath.

It is a sad story, it is a very dispicable story and it would be a tremendous weight off my shoulders if I could tell the whole truth tonight.

MR. WELLS: What we would like to have is the truth

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I do not know how much I can contribute to this debate because, hon. members who have spoken before have covered just about every possible angle concerned here. I might say that there is a very sad situation when we have to witness what has just transpired in this hon. House. I am satisfied that my colleague the member for Fortune Bay has gone as far as he can possibly go, and of course his case will have to rest where he has left it.

In rising to support this resolution Mr. Speaker, I think it is necessary for us to realize and agree that the establishment of Standing committees on Public Accounts is a usual practice, an accepted practice by most legislatures in Canada, most Provincial legislatures. Certainly it is

an accepted practice in the House of Commons in Canada, but I think Mr. Speaker it is worthy of mention that the Right Hon. John Deifenbaker during his term of office in Ottawa, when he was Prime Minister of Canada was the Prime Minister to appoint an Opposition member as the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. That was the first time that an Opposition member was appointed, and I might say Sir, that since then the two Liberal or three Liberal, two I suppose which we have had in Ottawa have continued to appoint an Opposition member as the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

Those of us Sir who care to think back for a little while will remember the great contribution to Government which this Committee made last year when they were commissioned to investigate the happenings and the repairs of the H.M.C.S. Bonaventure where they uncovered many millions of dollars which were spent certainly unwisely, I do not need to itemize what they were, they appeared in the press and they were heard on television and radio, but if that committee did nothing else but uncover some of the waste and extravagance in spending on H.M.C.S. Bonaventure then I would say that they performed a good service to the people of Canada.

Certainly Sir, there is a great need in Newfoundland for such a committee, and as hon. members who preceded me tonight have indicated

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does the hon. gentleman agree that had they tried to devise some system if possible that would have prevented that loss and waste on the Adventure merely to find out that it had happened after it happened?

MR. COLLINS: There is no doubt about that at all Mr. Speaker, but certainly by uncovering that one we might prevent one from occurring on the Esquimoux or some other Canadian war-ship, certainly it would mean that the people who are running the country will be more careful with the taxpayers money.

Just imagine Mr. Speaker, we could investigate Erco, we could investigate the Power Commission, we could investigate other Crown Corporations and I would suggest that if this committee were established, that they would have the power - the terms of reference would be such that they would have the power to call the administrators of Crown Corporations and other Crown Agencies and indeed, the Auditor General and others. They would have the power to call those people and in an atmosphere of informality and so on, where they could find out exactly what was going on. If we found that last year we had waste some money on some particular project, well then we could certainly be on our guard that we would not do the same thing next year.

Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Speaker, it has been said in this House that some of the monies which has gone to Shaheen enterprises was money which was collected as a tax on children's chocolate bars. But certainly, Sir, if we look at this Auditor General's report and we see that there has been some - not exactly misuse of funds but certainly there has been some instances here where the Government have suffered, where the coffers of the Government have suffered. It might not have been possible had we been more careful there. It might not have been possible - it might not have been necessary to put this tax on children's chocolate bars. Certainly, the people of Newfoundland are paying taxes enough now and if we can find by setting up this committee that it might be possible to save the Treasury some money well then, Sir, this might mean that we might be able to reduce taxes. If we cannot reduce taxes, certainly, there is not an hon. member in this House, whose constituents cannot do with an extra mile of road or the extension of public - the extension of electricity. All of these things are important, Sir, and I would suggest that unless the Government has got something to hide, then there is no reason at all why it should not establish this committee once and for all and follow the good sound practice of other Legislatures throughout Canada. I have much support, Sir, in supporting the resolution - much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

MR. NOEL: Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to be associated with the charges or allegations of propriety or anything of that nature which has been made in the course of this debate. However, I do feel that I would be less than honest, if I did not say that to my mind the only real control that the members of this House exercise over the Executive arm of the House, over the Cabinet is the control of the purse and if this House is not prepared to exercise control over the public purse, then this House in effect loses its function. We have often heard the manner in which the structure of our Government is set up. It has been tried and true now for about 200 years and prevented revolution and civil strife during all that time. It is very rare in a country or province which has our form of Government to have any form of civil strife in the sense that people are discontented with the way things are running.

occasionally you get riots due to poverty but apart from that you do not have these civil strifes that you have under other systems, and this is because of the balance that is built into our system, and the balance that is built into our system is this: that the Government of the country is placed into the hands of a single person, who appoints a Cabinet to assist him in that Government and on Cabinet solidarity and Cabinet secrecy and Cabinet responsibility. It is true that under our system you do have a form of dictatorship in the sense that you do have one man who is responsible. That one man has to accept responsibility and those of us who do not have to accept that responsibility should be glad that we are able to find a capable man willing to take that job. It is no use calling a rose by any other name or anything of that nature.

People who talk about dictatorship in this Province just do not know what they are talking about, because there is not a system of government in the world which does not have one man responsible for government. That man under our system chooses his own Cabinet to assist him in carrying out that responsibility. That is the way we are governed. The people exercise control once every now and again at a general election, when they elect members from their number to come and sit in this House and this House then exercises control over the Executive arm by exercising control over the public purse and that is why the most important business ever to come before this House is the business of finance. There is no more important business that ever comes before this House than the business of finance. The power of the purse, and if this House loses control over the power of the purse, then this House has in effect passed control over to the Executive arm of Government.

I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that a resolution such as this would not have been necessary. I would have thought that in the ordinary course of things that the balance of power would have been preserved and I do feel that this balance of power must be preserved and that this question which is before the House now will be a continuing question, until this business of the balance of power is resolved. I am not sure that the resolution actually goes far enough, but I do feel that the time has come for this House of Assembly

to set up some form of committee to examine the public accounts of the Province and the report of the Auditor General. Now just how that is going to be done, I do not know, but the time has come, the time has come for the Premier and the Cabinet to put before this House a means whereby the balance of power in this Province can be maintained. Thank you.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a couple of items noted, but there is certainly no need to go over them now. They have already been discussed and well debated. I rise, Sir, in support of my colleague the hon. member for Fortune. I feel that we have seen a pleasant change tonight. It is unfortunate that it has not come earlier. I have sat here during the last couple of weeks. I have heard charges, insinuations, innuenda, and all the rest thrown across at this hon. gentleman

I have heard hon. members charge him with breaking his oath, breaking his loyalty. The same hon. gentleman Mr. Speaker, tonight, do not hesitate to say that he is an hon. man. Mr. Speaker, if he is an hon. man tonight he was an hon. man last week. In the face of having his reputation questioned before the whole Province and surely those who heard him tonight have no doubt about how he felt. And with his records on his desk and yet unable, as the old Newfoundlander would say to spill the beans - bound by an oath, unable to clear himself in the eyes of the public, completely, and yet those charges were fired across this House, vicious, vicious charges.

Mr. Speaker there can not be any doubt in any one's mind as to the honour of this gentleman, My colleagues and I have never questioned his honour when he was on the other side, certainly not now. It is unfortunate that it has taken it so long to realize that a man does not break an oath of loyalty, he does not break an oath of secrecy. Just for the sake of, as we have seen tonight, even defending himself. I would say Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that this hon. member has been put through what he has been put through in very recent days. I can not understand why the Government this year, last year, and without a doubt before my time in this hon. House has continued to refuse to set up a Standing Committee on Public Accounts. There can not be anything to be lost, but if we are running our business properly and admitting that we will make mistakes, But if we are running it in any reasonable fashion there can not be anything lost, except what is to be gained. Certainly there is no better way Mr. Speaker, to instill the confidence of this Government in the eyes of the public then to set up this kind of vehicle whereby any item in the public accounts may be gone into in great detail.

Most of the other Provinces have them, I see no reason why we should not. For this reason Mr. Speaker I have much pleasure in supporting this motion.

MR. ROBERTS: The hour is late and the hon. gentleman who moved the motion, will I assume speak, to close down, not to delay the House, Sir, I just want to say two things Sir, The first is with reference to the remarks of the hon. member for St. John's North, our deputy-speaker, who is absent from the Chamber again for a second. I think he was absent when the Premier spoke earlier in this debate Sir, and since he was perhaps I can repeat what the Premier said in behalf of the Government; half of us all. The hon. gentleman's point as effect was well taken and as the Premier had already said, when our colleague the minister of Finance makes a full statement as he will tomorrow, on this matter, he will on that time give notice of motion. What the motion is of course Mr. 955

Speaker we will have to wait the fate of the motion. Equally, we will have to wait the pleasure of the House. But I want to stress, Sir, that the remarks made by the hon. the Deputy Speaker of the House were well made. I may say that they were much more to the point than most of the understandably partisan material which has been thrown at us tonight. That is the duty of the Opposition, Sir.

May I add just a word as well towards my former colleague and my friend, the hon. member for the District of Fortune Bay. I thought his speech was obviously very deeply felt and a very sincere one. It was very manly, very honourable in every sense of the word. I know the hon. gentleman well. We served together in the Government for a couple of years. Before that we served together as friends, fellow-supporters of an administration he was part of.

Mr. Speaker, I was elected to this House as a Liberal and I will remain in this House as a Liberal. If I cannot support the Administration I will leave it, but I will not cross the House, Sir. I was elected as a Liberal. If I cannot support the Liberal Party I will leave the House and let my constituents decide. They sent me here, Sir, and they sent me here as a Liberal. I do not intend to cross the House. If the hon. gentleman wishes, so be it.

But I do appreciate what he said. I think in a very real way he and I were associated closely. Any actions he took, any actions that were taken on the whole matter of the Atlantic Breweries, the full facts of which have not become public, by any means. In the Auditor General's Report the full facts will be made public, and so they should. Any action taken by the hon. gentleman, Sir, was taken as a member of the Government and, of course, the Government stand by our actions. The fact that the hon. gentleman is no longer one of us as an Administration nor on this side of the House has nothing to do with what he did as a minister nor our responsibility, collectively, for that. That, of course, is the other side of Cabinet solidarity and the oath which we have all taken, which we all have taken in the ministry but which no man has to take. But, Sir, when a man takes his oath, I feel, as does the hon. gentleman, that I will stand by it, like the hon. gentleman does. He intends to do so and he will.

Having said all that, Mr. Speaker, it is nearly 11:00 P.M. and I will yield the floor and let the hon. member for Burin draw the debate to a close, in his usual terse, succinct way. I do not agree with the hon. member in this case, and I think there was a better way to solve this, and my vote will evidence my feelings but I will leave it to him to put the final arguments on the motion.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not propose to keep the House very long. When I opened the debate I mentioned the fact that this resolution had been coming before this House with consistency for a number of years, but that in my opinion every year the urgency of this resolution being passed became more, and more apparent. Even, if I were wrong, Mr. Speaker, at the opening of this debate, I submit to hon. members that I am right now. Right beyond all reasonable doubt. We have seen in this House in the last few minutes a display of integrity and courage that I have learned to expect from the hon. the member from Fortune Bay. More than that, Mr. Speaker, I want something that is equally important. There appears to be a divergence of opinion. The hon. the member for Humber East and very properly so demands the truth. The hon. the member for Fortune Bay says that the answer to a question yesterday was not in his opinion correct.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I put it to every hon. member in this House. The hon. the member for Fortune Bay has proven his integrity. There is no question about that. There is equally - it is equally clear that there has been some suggestions made as to whether or not he, as minister, handled this particular issue in the proper way. There is no doubt in my mind that he did. Government, the hon. the Premier is right, unquestionably right, when he talks about the oath of Cabinet ministers and how it applies to ex-Cabinet ministers, but the secrecy of the Cabinet can never be an excuse for Government to refuse to explain to the people something that is of vital interest and of vital importance to the people of this Province, and must not under any circumstances use that oath as a crutch or a cloak. The hon. member for Fortune Bay is prepared to put his reputation on the line, the least we can ask of every hon. member here is to support this resolution, then not that he comes before this standing committee to give away Cabinet secrets, but every minister of the crown in every other jurisdiction is subject to summons before a standing committee to give departmental information. That is not covered by a Cabinet oath or by the oath of secrecy. It is a horse of another colour. I do not believe that any hon. member on the Government side of the House tonight - if they want to discharge their responsibility to these people - if they want to re-establish the supremacy of this House that was so ably referred to by the hon. member for St. John's North, their duty is loud