



**PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND**

**THIRTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF  
NEWFOUNDLAND**

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Volume 3

3rd. Session

Number 82

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**VERBATIM REPORT**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1974

SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Labrador North.

MR. M. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of some fifteen families in the Community of Mud Lake, in the District of Labrador North. The prayer of the petition is that they get some verification from the government on how they should proceed to get grants and titles to land in that community. Apparently there have been a number of communications between individual residents trying to acquire title to property which they have not received. Now they have formed a committee.

I would like to read the prayer of the petition. It says:

'The residents of Mud Lake, Labrador have for a long time being frustrated in their attempt to solidify their ownership of their land. The majority of the fifteen householders involved have earned the right to land which in many cases goes back to earlier generations. These residents hope to gain documentation for these claims. With this initial letter we would like to inform you that a land committee of Mud Lake has been elected. The three members are Marion Broomfield, Willie Rose and Ward Callahan, all serving a two year term on this committee.

This representative committee will in the near future begin to help interested residents in their present attempt to secure documents and hope to change the maps of crown lands which show the majority of the community to be crown land. There are also a number of early grants which no longer present the true situation. Before development affects our area we would like to be prepared. The residents have been able to already decide on boundaries, marked them and also prepare genealogical records for each family. The next step is to prepare declarations, affidavits etc. The process we are unaccustomed to. We sincerely hope our endeavours are taken seriously.

The situation presisting in Labrador today is very similar to our own. We were very pleased to hear that the recommendations of the Royal Commission which recommended that a travelling tribunal be sent to Labrador to listen to claimants directly and to register and issue title on the basis of presented claims. With development affecting such claims, we feel that the present land situation is of a high priority. We ensure our rightful ownership. We hope to gain your approval for our present work."

This I consider, Mr. Speaker, to be of a very serious nature especially in a small community like Mud Lake that is on the fringes of a development area like Happy Valley-Goose Bay. A number of people are already trying to establish summer cottages in that small community downstream on the Churchill River from Happy Valley-Goose Bay. A lot of people I understand have moved in, on what other people consider to be their property but they have no legal documents to prove that it is.

So I wholeheartedly support this petition and I would like to place it on the table of the House, and for it to be presented to the department to which it relates but I would also like to think in terms of maybe the minister responsible for this particular situation, if he can acknowledge this particular petition, maybe it is an unusual request, I would like to have maybe a copy of his acknowledgement. I know that numerous petitions have been presented in this House, I do not know if they ever got to the department to which it relates but then again that department never, never acted on them. So if the minister is in the House, which I think he is, I would like to have an acknowledgement of the claim. Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Green Bay.

HON. A. B. PECKFORD (MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS AND HOUSING): Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the contents of the petition just presented by the honourable Member for Labrador North. I have had some involvement with some of the people from that area over the

past six or seven months, a couple of people involved with the federal government at one time or another. I met with a couple of them and I gave them some advice regarding how they should proceed on this matter. I was of the opinion that they were to contact the member concerned for Labrador North. Being aware somewhat of the situation that the people there find themselves in - as the honourable member has already stated it is a very serious problem. I think a lot of the residents are worried about the fact that speculation might occur there in the near future and might jeopardize their chances of getting legal title to the land that they now reside on.

So, I wholeheartedly support the prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, and trust that the honourable minister who I have spoken to about this, is taking action on it so that these people who live there sometime will get legal title to the land in question.

NOTICE OF MOTION:

HON. T.A. HICKMAN (MINISTER OF JUSTICE): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Industrial Development and Manpower, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Newfoundland Human Rights Code".

HON. W.W. MARSHALL (MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO): I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following bill, "An Act To Amend The House Of Assembly Act".

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

HON. J. ROUSSEAU (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS): I have two replies today, one for the honourable member for Labrador South but he is not in so I will hold that over until he returns because it is an oral answer. The answer to the question from the honourable the member for Twillingate, yesterday, concerning the project that he suggested - it did not touch my mind at that time because I think this occurred while I was away for the two weeks during - I have checked it out with officials of the department and the problem right now, as I understand it, is that the department is not at all against the LIP Project to which the member refers in building a wharf which I presume is the point he was raising.

The point is that there is already a government wharf there. Officials of the department feel - the member may disagree with it and other people may disagree with it - but the Twillingate Causeway has not yet suffered any conditions which may cause difficulties on it and the department is of the opinion that this wharf should remain until such time as we are certain that the Twillingate Causeway is such that it will maintain any extraordinary forces that may be dealt to it by weather or any other conditions of that nature.

However, we have suggested and the people in the area are most welcome to use the wharf. Of course the creosote and the other materials are quite valuable and if we took the wharf out, we would take them for another place. They are quite welcome to use the wharf. When we are certain that no problems could arise with the causeway itself, then of course the wharf would be of no further need. Right now we using it as a backup and we think it is important in the incidence of some catastrophe which we hope would not happen to the causeway.

MR. GILLETTE: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable gentleman but my question was whether or not the government intended to bring back the ferry because if the wharf is being kept there for the purpose for which you say it is being retained, then what type of vessel can you use there except the ferry, that same shaped ferry. You cannot use any conventional ship at all in no way, shape or form.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I made the original mistake of a politician. Instead of saying I did not know what you were talking about, I assumed that was it and I did not know the question and I did not want to plead ignorance which I should have pleaded and I would have had the answer today. To that one I will have the answer tomorrow. I do not anticipate that we have any visions now of purchasing the ferry but I will check it out and have an answer for the honourable member tomorrow.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Other than that the wharf is useless.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Finance care to make a statement on a very serious statement that was made last night over at the university by the Minister of Fisheries, that the province's financial

picture is worsening and that we are in for a hard time next year.

Would the Minister of Finance care to comment on that.

HON. J.C. CROSBIE (MINISTER OF FISHERIES): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I was at a private meeting at the university yesterday. I did not make the statement that the honourable gentleman is quoting me as making and it is improper in any event for him to ask a question about that. Number one, I never made any such statement.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order. Whether it was a private meeting or a public meeting, the minister did make the statement. Is he now, Sir, denying that he made the statement?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes.

MR. NEARY: He is denying that he made it?

MR. CROSBIE: Right.

MR. NEARY: Well then, Sir, I will go on and ask another question in that case.

MR. CROSBIE: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: The minister is quoted in the today's "Daily News" -

AN HON. MEMBER: Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. NEARY: "Fisheries Minister Crosbie says" -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

AN HON. MEMBER: He is speaking to a point of order.

MR. NEARY: Sir, I am speaking to a point - the minister is quoted in the newspaper this morning, Sir. "Fisheries Minister Crosbie says" - and I can read the quote if I am permitted to do so. "Even colder comfort was in store for the rest of us" -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please! Order please!

I am sure the honourable Member for Bell Island is aware that he is not allowed to read statements from newspapers. The oral question period is a period for asking very precise questions and not a period of debate.

MR. NEARY: Well then, let me ask the Minister of Finance if it is a fact that the one per cent hike in the sales tax last spring will not give the government its surplus predicted in current account, that there will be a five or a six million dollar deficit this year?

H.R.V. EARLE (Minister of Finance): The answer to that question will be given in the budget.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Fisheries gave the answer last night, Sir. Would the Minister of Finance care to make a statement on whether or not the government will face the thirty-nine collective agreements that the government have to negotiate in 1975, or will there be an election before then? Will there be another budget brought down before the next election?

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, the question is highly ridiculous but I shall try to answer it as best I can. The question as to whether there will be an election is not my prerogative to decide. I think he

should direct that question to the honourable the Premier.

I anticipate that there will be another budget brought down. What will happen before or after that I do not know.

MR. WOODWARD: (Inaudible)

MR. EARLE: That will be a big question.

MR. ROBERTS: A better one than we get otherwise, I think.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Finance or the Minister of Fisheries on the Board of Directors of the Marystown Shipyards? Which minister?

MR. CROSBIE: I am.

MR. NEARY: Well, would the minister care to comment on the report recently of an arbitration - one man arbitrator that was set up to settle the dispute in the shipyards in Marystown. The company, Marystown Shipyards Limited refused to accept the recommendations of the arbitration so would the minister care to comment on that?

MR. CROSBIE: Oh yes, Mr. Speaker. I would care to comment on anything that the honourable member wants to ask about. As far as Marystown Shipyards Limited is concerned, Mr. Speaker, the minister directly responsible for it is not here today. It is the Minister of Industrial Development. I am a member of the board of directors as is the Minister of Justice.

The shipyard is run by the management. Neither the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Industrial Development nor I run the shipyard. The shipyard is run by Mr. Millen and the management there. There has been an arbitration case in connection with a dispute on the collective agreement and apparently the board has reported. As to any other detail, whether the company is accepting the arbitration or not or what the details are, I am afraid I could not answer.

They would have to accept the arbitration board report unless they wanted to appeal to the Supreme Court in some point of law. I can confirm there was an arbitration, there is nothing unusual about it, it occurs under every collective agreement. Apparently the employee who went through the grievance procedure has been successful and any other detail on that you would have to ask the Minister of Industrial Development to get it. I am sure that he will be glad to get it for you if you let him know.



MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary question if I might: Perhaps I could address it to the Minister of Fisheries in the absence of his colleague the Minister of Industrial Development. In view of the fact that the incident being arbitrated did lead to a strike which saw the shipyards shut down for two or three days or whatever period the strike did go on, and in view of the fact that if the shipyard did sustain losses it is we the people of Newfoundland who have to stand good to them, would the minister undertake to find out from the management, from Mr. Millen and whoever is on the spot down there connected with this, exactly what action if any has been taken on the arbitration board report?

There is a public interest in it, Sir, and the incident has already lead to a strike. I do not expect it will lead to another but there was this difficulty and the arbitration grew out of it. There are reports that the company, the management on the site have not accepted it. Would the minister undertake to get that information and provide it to the House?

MR. CROSBIE: No, Mr. Speaker, I will not undertake to get that information. The information should be requested from the Minister of Industrial Development.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. SPEAKER: Order Please!

MR. CROSBIE:

If the honourable gentleman has a genuine interest in that he can contact the Minister of Industrial Development tomorrow and ask him to get the information for the honourable gentleman tomorrow. In the meantime if I am back in time from where I am going this evening I will ask the Minister of Industrial Development to get it but I do not undertake to get it myself.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: I am going, Mr. Speaker, to Botwood to bring them the message, a message of the many fine things that this government is doing for the people of Newfoundland.

MR. ROBERTS: It is going to be a very brief speech.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Just a few words.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The honourable member for St. Barbe North.

MR. NEARY: It will be lucky if they let him out of Botwood.

MR. ROWE: A question to the honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. Speaker.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROWE: Any chance of getting heard, Mr. Speaker. In view of the - Municipal Affairs and Housing, Mr. Speaker - in view of the shortage of living accommodations in Labrador and Wabush City, is the government giving any consideration to alleviating the problems by making any financial contributions at all, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

MR. B. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think we are already involved in the Labrador City-Wabush area regarding housing and we are presently developing a policy regarding that which should be realized in the not too distant future. I cannot specify off the top of my head just exactly when but yesterday or the day before, the member concerned, the honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications and the officials of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation are involved at the present moment in trying to alleviate some of the housing problems that are there and I suspect and can say with some degree of certainty that something will be done on it very shortly. But I cannot be any more specific because the details are not clear in my mind right now.

MR. ROWE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker: Does the minister realize that the Labrador Residential Tenancies Board has recommended that the government assess their financial contribution towards the provision of accommodations in the two communities? Is this what the minister is working on now, assessing their present financial contribution?

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, I am aware of that. I think the question was, was I aware of it. I am aware of it. This is one of the factors to be considered in what we are talking about now, in the way of housing in that area.

MR. ROWE: A question to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker. Has the Minister of Justice taken any steps to ensure that the landlord, that is Carol Lake Estates Limited, carried out the repairs which were ordered on March 5, 1974 by the Labrador Residential Tenancies Board for the two apartment buildings named the Cabot Apartments in Wabush and Maple Apartments in Labrador City?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Justice.

MR. T.A. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Tenancy Act does not come under my jurisdiction as Minister of Justice. It is administered by the Minister of Provincial Affairs. I have not seen the report from the most recent hearings of the tenants of Labrador Tenancy Board. I would assume that if these findings recommend to the officials in the Department of Provincial Affairs that their orders have not been implemented, are not being carried out, that they in turn will ask one of the solicitors in my department to take whatever action is necessary and if they do, we will. Maybe they have done it. That would be a matter between officials and the department.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Education: In view of the fact that the St. John's School Tax Authority is going to issue a public statement as soon as possible after it receives word from the honourable the minister on its proposed tax rate, can the minister indicate to the House when he will be making a decision on this matter and when he will be announcing it with respect to the tax rate for the St. John's School Tax Authority?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, after receiving the proposed taxation system, the proposals of the school tax authority and I got to that last Tuesday, a week ago yesterday, I asked officials of government to study it and to analyze it and to make recommendations with respect to it. I expect to receive that in the very near future and certainly will not be making any decision until then. Certainly it will be within the next few weeks.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, it is stated in a local newspaper

that the operating expenses for this year for the School Tax Authority will be \$50,000 and that they are looking for approval from the Minister of Education for a salary for an executive secretary in the range of \$18,000 to \$25,000. Could the minister -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

The Hon. Member for St. Barbe North is making a speech. He should be really asking a question.

MR. F. B. ROWE: The questions are, Mr. Speaker: Could the minister clarify a few points on this? Are the amounts that I just mentioned for the St. John's School Tax Authority alone or are they for the School Tax Authorities throughout the province? Secondly, if this is just for the School Tax Authority in St. John's alone, would the minister undertake to table in this House the operating expenses of all of the other local School Tax Authorities in the province?

HON. G. OTTENHEIMER (Minister of Education): Certainly the proposals or requests, the submission of the St. John's School Tax Authority, is for that authority only. It is not for any other School Tax Authority. The second question was to table the expenditures, I think, of the various School Tax Authorities. Yes, I am willing to undertake that. They have worked on the year of July to June. They have worked most of them on that. We do not have, in all cases, the completed records or audited statements.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible).

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible).

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I would have to do it for their school year, July to a June period.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible).

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I will do that.

MR. F. B. ROWE: These amounts that I just stated, \$50,000 and in the range of \$18,000 to \$25,000 are for the St. John's School Tax Authority alone.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Could the minister be a little more specific, Mr. Speaker, on when he is going to table this information because the minister stated sometime ago that he would be willing to table the Harris Report on Education and he said that he would do this within the near future and this seems to be a favourite expression of the minister. Could he specify when he will table this information?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that that is a very bona fide question at any rate. The information will have to be compiled and I am certainly willing to table it. I cannot say when. It could take ten days or so to have it compiled. I could not say. I will undertake to get it and to table it. I cannot say specifically on what day I will do it.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, since the minister did say that he would be tabling the Harris Report on Education and Youth, within the near future, (He said this on November 28) could the minister indicate if we are getting close to the near future on that point or not?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, no I do not feel that it is part of my duty to define the near future as it approaches. The words are fairly self-evident in their meaning. I think I would insult the honourable gentleman's intelligence if I were to define the obvious and that, Mr. Speaker, would be something most unparliamentary and I would not wish to do it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Health. Because there is an epidemic of mumps prevalent at the present time, would the minister indicate to the House if his department intends to provide vaccine to have all the children in the province vaccinated against mumps.

HON. DR. G. ROWE (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I have not been made aware that there is an epidemic of mumps in the province. I should, first of all, like to check that out.

MR. NEARY: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, the minister does not have any kids going to school these days.

DR. G. ROWE: I do.

MR. NEARY: It is rampant, Sir. I wonder if the minister would indicate to find out?

DR. G. ROWE: I will undertake to find out. I have not been informed that there was any epidemic of mumps.

MR. NEARY: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the minister could answer the question this way: Is it the

policy of his department to provide vaccine to vaccinate children against mumps.

DR. ROWE: If we feel there is an outbreak and a need which is serious to the effect of keeping children out of school, yes, we will do whatever is necessary. I would like to have notice of this particular epidemic. I have not heard of it.

MR. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, might I direct a question to the honourable the Minister of Fisheries? Of course, the Premier would be the most logical man to answer it, however, I am asking the honourable minister to use his good influence with the Premier.

Now that the Harris Commission has entered the area of inshore fishery, namely carrying out an enquiry at Port au Choix, would the minister now have this commission have a total enquiry into the inshore fishery?

MR. CROSBIE: Well, the Harris Conciliation Board, of course, is not a commission. It was a Conciliation Board set up to look into that dispute but as the terms of reference were quite broad, now it has a further job of work to do. It has to sit as a Conciliation Board in connection with the dispute in the plant at Port au Choix. I do not know whether it has commenced that yet or not but it soon will be if it has not already.

As far as the inshore fishery is concerned, the federal and provincial task force that has been set up, is going to, once it is finished with its immediate problem with the trawler fishery, we can call it, it is going to immediately start to consider what needs to be done for the inshore fishery.

Now, when the strike was terminated there last September, it was agreed that there would be a commission of enquiry set up to look into the fishery as a whole. I think it was said then, the wording was that it would be an enquiry into the Labour Relations Act, an industrial enquiry. Well, I think that when the commission is set up that it will have to be under the Public Enquiries Act and along the lines of a royal commission.

The reason why no commission has yet been appointed is that we had discussed it both with the union representatives and with the Fisheries Association as well as with the federal government and with our own people and it is felt that it is better to wait a month or several months before



setting that enquiry under way because all of our people are engaged practically day and night in examining the present situation and coming up with immediate steps to deal with it. We would not have time to prepare briefs and submissions and the trade has not the time and the union at the moment has not the time to prepare submissions and briefs to a royal commission. It is felt on all sides that it is better to wait until we can get over the immediate emergency. Then we will appoint a suitable commission and hopefully let them have an indepth look at the fishery over, say a six month period. That is the position on the enquiry commission at the moment.

MR. WINSOR: Do I take it then that it is the intention to have such an enquiry?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes. As a matter of fact, in connection with the inshore plants, the ones that do not have trawlers, particularly the ones along the northeast coast, they met yesterday with Mr. Doucette who is the chairman of the Federal Task Force. They had a meeting with him yesterday morning to impress upon him the need that they have for assistance. They have -

MR. ROBERTS: Inaudible.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, the plant operator. They have a request into the government at Ottawa for financial assistance caused by the fact that they were late getting open this year due to the ice along the coast and the rest of it to which they have not had an answer yet. They met with Mr. Doucette yesterday to make sure that he understands their problems apart from the trawler, vessel owning companies. The inshore fishery certainly will be next on the list as soon as we can get over this period.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Justice. Would the minister care to indicate to the House just what his department's policy is now concerning the issuing of conditional licenses to those people who have been convicted of impaired driving?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of what the policy of the Department of Justice is with respect to the issuing of restricted driver's licenses to those convicted of impaired driving. That falls under the exclusive jurisdiction of the residing magistrate.

The instructions that have been issued to the crown prosecutors by me have been very clear indeed. That is that in the event of a person being convicted of impaired driving or failing the breathalyzer test or refusing to take the breathalyzer test, that the crown must draw to the attention of

the presiding magistrate. Its feeling that except in very compelling cases impaired or restricted driver's licences should not be issued.

In my address to the magistrates I made it very clear, and I repeat now, that when a case reaches the courts the Crown is in no greater position or no better position than any litigant appearing before the court, nor is it proper or appropriate for me, as Minister of Justice, to comment on any particular case. I do have the right and I suspect the obligation to comment on interpretation by courts generally of a particular provision of the Highway Traffic Act.

MR. NEARY: What about magistrates who have said, they are not going to issue the licences and others have made no comment at all?

MR. HICKMAN: If any magistrate, and we can have two magistrates sitting within the same area, if one magistrate in exercising his jurisdiction decides to place a very broad, liberal interpretation on it, the Crown's only redress, if the Crown is in disagreement is to appeal that decision. If another decides to, and as some have been doing consistently, to interpret the Act -

MR. NEARY: Well is it policy or what?

MR. HICKMAN: It is not a question of policy - To interpret the Act in each particular case, to the extent where restrictive driver's licences are issued only where the magistrate is satisfied that the convicted motorist was not really acting as a menace to the public or to himself was not involved in an accident, was slightly above the medium reading on the breathalyzer.

MR. NEARY: Point zero eight (.08).

MR. HICKMAN: Slightly above .08 - that his manner of earning a livelihood and his only means of earning a livelihood would be placed in jeopardy then a magistrate can and probably would grant a restricted driver's licence for certain hours of the day. That I believe is what this legislature intended and also what Parliament intended when the Criminal Code was amended in providing for authority to issue restricted driver's licences. If on the other hand, you

have say, a truck driver who is involved in a serious accident, who is very much intoxicated at the time he is picked up, then in my opinion that truck driver does not earn the right to have a restricted driver's licence. He has taken the chance. He has decided to place the lives of other motorists in jeopardy, I feel that he does not come within the definition that should allow restricted licences to be issued.

What concerned me was when I discovered that sixty-four per cent -  
MR. NEARY: Why does he not give me a straight answer. I have not got an answer yet.

MR. HICKMAN: The honourable gentleman asked for a policy statement, I always try to oblige him by giving him the answers he want.

MR. NEARY: Yes, but give me a straight answer. Do not be so evasive.

MR. HICKMAN: When I discovered, Mr. Speaker, that in the area policed by the Newfoundland Constabulary, I think, sixty-four of those convicted were receiving restricted driver's licences, something in the sixties, in the areas policed by the R.C.M.P. it was somewhere over forty per cent, I came to the conclusion that the Act was not being interpreted by our courts in the manner in which it should be and was intended. Because, in my opinion, if a person is convicted of impaired driving he should not simply receive his restricted driver's licence because he does not want to suffer the inconvenience of having to walk or hire taxis or get somebody else to drive him for a period of six months.

But I repeat, Mr. Speaker, that this is not a matter really of policy, it is a matter of instructions to the Crown prosecutors and the Crown prosecutors have their instructions and is obligatory upon them depending on the facts of each case to bring to the attention of the court the Crown's feeling that restricted driver's licences should only be issued in very compelling circumstances.

very compelling circumstances. If the honourable gentleman would like a policy statement, I am prepared to continue.

MR. NEARY: I would not want to be reporting what the minister is trying to say there. He is making a fool of himself.

MR. HICKMAN: I realize that.

MR. NEARY: He is making a fool of himself.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer is at best ingenuous and at worst misleading.

In view of the fact that the right to issue a restricted driver's licence is vested in the magistrate, by authority of legislation passed by this House, will the minister undertake to bring before the House an amendment to the Highway Traffic Act to restrict the magistrates discretionary right so that we do not have this situation? The minister, Mr. Speaker, is in a position now where he says we pass legislation and yet we have no policy as to whether the discretion is issued or not, Sir. I ask the minister: Will he undertake to bring before the House an amendment to restrict the right to grant restricted licences? That is clearly within the policy of the administration.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will not give that undertaking.

May I say why? I am not yet satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that the legislation which was passed by this House, if properly interpreted, can serve a good purpose. If following a conviction, first offense, barely above the point zero eight (.08), where the magistrate is satisfied that the convicted motorist genuinely (I know I do not use the word rehabilitated as being rehabilitated in the true sense of the word.) is not likely to commit the offense again, did not endanger any one and his livelihood depends upon it, then I believe the magistrate should be left and our courts should be left with that discretion.

I guess I can take some comfort in the fact that the Parliament of Canada apparently shares the same view. A similar

provision is contained in the Criminal Code of Canada. I realize that the Supreme Court of Canada -

MR. ROBERTS: Supreme Court of Canada has had some harsh words to say about it.

MR. HICKMAN: The Supreme Court of Canada did not have harsh words to say about the intent of the legislation. The Supreme Court of Canada ruled that it was within the jurisdiction of the provinces, of a Provincial Legislature, under the guise of controlling traffic on the highway, to amend their Traffic Act and to contain provisions, which on the face of it, appeared to be in conflict with the Criminal Code of Canada. That was the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada about four months ago, Mr. Speaker, in an appeal from the Ontario Supreme Court. In Ontario they prohibit, under their Highway Traffic Act, the issuance of restricted drivers' licences; whereas the Criminal Code of Canada grants the discretion.

MR. ROBERTS: A further question, if I might. Could the Minister of Justice tell us whether any judges of Newfoundland have been convicted under that section recently?

MR. HICKMAN: I would think, Mr. Speaker, that that kind of a question does not deserve an answer.

MR. ROBERTS: I asked the question. I would like an answer.

MR. HICKMAN: You will not get it from me.

MR. ROBERTS: Okay then. Fine.

MR. SIMMONS: I have a question for the Minister of Justice. It has been now a couple of months since the magistrate was moved from Harbour Breton to another appointment. Would the minister indicate when we might expect to have a new magistrate appointed for Harbour Breton?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, four new magistrates have been appointed and they are now embarking upon a course of instruction. I certainly

do not anticipate that there will be a magistrate in Harbour Breton before the end of the school year. The practice generally is to make transfers at the end of the school year. I should also point out to the Hon. Member for Hermitage that the Steele Commission has suggested that the judicial council take a look at the question of centralizing magistrates throughout the province. The suggestion has been made that maybe we should have three or four magistrates stationed in Central Newfoundland and three or four on the West Coast and that they should have fixed circuits, (I doubt if the centralization could apply to Labrador.) and that they should have set days every week when, say, the magistrate from Grand Falls will visit Harbour Breton and the Harbour Breton magisterial district.

Mr. Speaker, the judicial council has not directed its attention as yet, or to my knowledge they have not, to this but it is certainly something that I think has a great deal of merit. I do know that there are magistrates in the province in some of the old, traditional magisterial districts who are complaining that they do not have enough to do. Well we have other magistrates who are very much overworked.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Justice could tell the House when he intends to appoint a magistrate on Bell Island, a full-time magistrate?

MR. HICKMAN:

I do not anticipate there will ever be a full-time magistrate appointed for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, would the minister care to indicate to the House why? Is it because there is no crime on Bell Island? For what particular reason?

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the report we get and statistics indicate the work load is not sufficiently high to warrant a full-time magistrate on Bell Island. I can say that I have received no complaints from the people of Bell Island. I think Magistrate Horan from Holyrood -

MR. NEARY: He is a fine man. Fine man.

MR. ROBERTS: And the minister was not going to reappoint him.

MR. HICKMAN: Goes to Bell Island. He is a first-class magistrate -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROBERTS: That is not what you said at the time.

MR. HICKMAN: It is what I said at the time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Ooooh!

MR. HICKMAN: It is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

AN HON. MEMBER: He would hang his mother.

MR. HICKMAN: He goes there at least once a week and sits most of the day. If there is enough work to keep him going all day.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Labrador North:

MR. WOODWARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct - now that the Minister of Justice is on the carpet - a question to the Minister of Justice. In the light of numerous correspondence concerning some sort of a penal institute being in Labrador for need of people, I wonder if the minister could tell the House what the present position of that is? Or the status from a federal institute?

MR. HICKMAN: The honourable gentleman is right. There has to be very heavy federal involvement in it. The corrections committee, the joint Federal-Provincial Corrections Committee suggested that there should be a community residential centre in Labrador. This was confirmed by the McReynolds Report. I have written the Solicitor-General within the past three weeks and brought to his attention that



now that we have the McReynolds' Report, of which he has had a copy ever since I have had one, that I await his pleasure to meet with him to discuss the establishment of a penal institutions, (that is a terrible word) correctional institutions within the province.

The recommendation is that there should be three. One a provincial one in the St. John's Area, another in the Stephenville Area to serve the west coast community-residential area centre and one in Labrador.

MR. WOODWARD: In the Goose Bay-Happy Valley Area?

MR. HICKMAN: In the Goose Bay-Happy Valley Area and whenever the honourable Mr. Allmand sees fit to invite me to see him, I am ready, willing and able to go and he has a letter to that effect.

MR. SPEAKER: This being Private Members' Day we shall proceed with the first Private Members' Motion on the Order Paper which is, Motion (3), to be moved by the honourable Member for Bell Island.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, first of all I might say that I am extremely pleased to see the Minister of Social Services back in his seat after his little jaunt out to Grand Falls, where he attempted to do a public relations job on the welfare officers in the Central Newfoundland Area.

Sir, the minister told us in the House, last week, that he was overjoyed, could hardly restrain himself in making an announcement of a twelve and a-half per cent increase in social assistance.

AN HON. MEMBER: 12.7 per cent.

MR. NEARY: 12.7 per cent increase in social assistance rates. The minister was completely overjoyed, Sir. Before the afternoon is over, Mr. Speaker, before I am finished dealing with this resolution the minister may dance a jig around this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: No, the minister had better stay in his seat because I have a few choice words to say to the honourable minister.

Sir, the minister tell us that this great social assistance programme that they brought in was God's gift to -

MR. MURPHY: I never said any such thing. Mr. Speaker, I -

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MR. NEARY: Aw, sit down!

MR. MURPHY: I never said at any time that it

was God's gift - I tell you, at no time did I say it was God's gift. Could I have that corrected now please on a point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I know that the minister will be dancing a jig before the afternoon -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MURPHY: Would you tell 'Maw Mouth' to sit down over there for a minute while I rise to a point of order?

Now, at no time did I say, Sir, it was God's gift. I would not usurp the authority of so great a personage in this world.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I am sure it is not for the Chair to recall the exact words of the honourable Minister of Social Services in making a ministerial statement some days ago. I feel, at this point, it is a matter of opinion between two honourable members.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, the minister left the impression that this was God's gift to the problems of the welfare recipients in this province. The minister went out to Grand Falls the other day, yesterday, I think it was, to do a public relations job with his social workers in that area and boasted about the great things that had been done in that department since the minister took over.

Well, Sir, before I came into the House this afternoon, I decided to get the girl inside here to run through my files and dig out a few letters that I have received from people on social assistance, not from Bell Island, Sir, not from St. John's Centre but from people all over this province. I do not know if there are any here from Bonavista South or not but I will have a look as I go through them.

Let us see what the minister is boasting about, Sir. In his new social assistance programme, for instance, there is no provision to take care of individuals who desperately need glasses, adults I am talking about not children going to school. The only provision now, Sir, in the departmental policy to provide individuals with glasses is for children of school age and maybe, at the discretion of the welfare officer, maybe for mothers of children going to school because they have

to help them with their homework. That was an innovation that I brought in. That was a reform that I brought in, Sir, when I was in that department. There is no provision - a man can be half blind and there is no way that he can get glasses unless he goes down to the CNIB or down to the Department of Health. Then you have to get on your hands and knees before you can get a pair of glasses.

There is no provision in the new programme for dentures, Sir. They will not even legalize the denturists so that the poor old welfare recipients can get dentures at bargain prices. They have to now rely on the black market to get them. God only knows that in the last couple of years I have recommended a good many people to denturists in this province so that they could get dentures, Sir, that they cannot get from the minister's department.

What about wheel chairs, Mr. Speaker? Does the new programme the minister is so proud of, going around the province boasting about, does it provide wheel chairs for people who are on social assistance who have both their legs amputated or who have had a stroke, who are paralyzed on one side or the other, has one leg amputated, is there any provision to provide wheel chairs for these people? No, Sir, there is not. But there is provision from the administration to give a \$1,000 grant to the mummies in Newfoundland.

MR. MURPHY: From my department?

MR. NEARY: No, not the minister's department, the administration.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I will stick to whatever I feel like sticking to this afternoon. I told the minister he would dance a jig before the evening is over.

What about braces? What about braces for little children that are crippled, that have a bad spine? I am not talking about that kind of braces that the minister sticks his finger under, sticks his chest out. I am talking about braces for little children that have bad spines, that are crippled. Can they get assistance under this new programme that the minister is boasting about? No, Sir, they cannot. But the member for Gander can get an extension to the Arts and Culture Centre in Gander, to build on a theater. Is this top priority?

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Now, Sir, let me get back - I was going to read a few letters before I got carried away there. I could go on and on on the extravagance and the waste of this administration at the expense of the poor people.

Here is a letter from Seal Cove in

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Trinity Bay about the programme the minister boasts so much about. While listening to your programme over the radio I have decided to drop you a line or so regarding my social assistance, when I tell you about the amount I have been receiving all along, I am sure you will say with me, there is a bluffing somewhere, perhaps you already know. Here it is again, the amount I have been receiving all along is \$8.49. That is \$4.49 for food, \$1.00 for clothing and personal care, \$1.00 for fuel, and \$1.00 for household maintenance and \$1.00 for a housekeeper. Now what can one do with it? It will not buy a pair of shoes." So this lady down in Seal Cove tells us.

Here is one from Summerville: "Dear Sir, once two years ago I caught myself on fire with gasoline and burned one of my sides a lot. I was in Twillingate Hospital ten times. I had three operations over a foot long under my arm and one down over my arm, so that they had to draw it together every time, they could not graft any skin. Now I am all crippled up on one side. They put me on social assistance, which I am not getting very much. I am not married - two brothers of us living together. I went up to the welfare officer to try and get a window." They cannot blame that on spending all the money over on Bell Island, 1971. This is 1974. This poor old fellow burned with gasoline, crippled for the rest of his life, two brothers living together. 'Could not even get a window for his old house,' he says. He says, "Do you call this justice?" Is that what the new programme is doing for the poor people of this province?

Here is another one from St. Brendan's, down in Fortune Bay. "We have eleven people in our family.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: St. Bernard's Sir -

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member is reading some letters which he had received. I was trying to recall something that Beauchesne said with regards to reading letters in the legislature. I refer the honourable member to page 134, of Beauchesne, Section 158, subsection (3) which says: "An unsigned letter should not be read in the House. On 16th of May 1928, a member stated during debate that a letter which he had been quoting was not signed. The

Speaker said: "Such a letter should not be read into Hansard; all letters when read must be signed and they become part of the documents of the House."

MR. NEARY: These letters are signed, Your Honour, and I am prepared to table the letters and I am prepared to table the answers that I gave these people, Sir. This one here is from St. Bernard's, in Fortune Bay.

"Dear Mr. Neary, we have eleven people in our family, myself, my husband and nine children. We are on welfare. We was getting \$365.00 a month under the old programme, in the summer and \$375.00 in the winter. That was had enough, Sir, but since Frank Moores cut it to \$320.00 a month, I certainly do not know what we are going to do." That is the great programme the minister is going around boasting about.

Sir, I could go on and on. Letters, Sir, that could tug at your heart strings, pouring into our office every day, phone calls. The phone never stops. Half the time we have to do work that the ministers on the other side should be doing. They should send us over their salary, Sir.

This is from Middle Brook, in Gambo, my honourable Member for Bonavista North will be interested in this. "Dear Mr. Neary, you were a good friend to me and my sick wife during your tenure of office. I am sorry to say I was one of those who were led down the garden path during the last election. There is some difference in the Department of Social Services now then when you were there. The minister I wrote, both Hickey and Murphy, but never did get a reply." A closed door policy, Sir, you cannot reach the minister on his own and he has a closed door policy. You cannot get to see him.

MR. MURPHY: It is not true.

MR. NEARY: It is true, Sir. It is true, Mr. Speaker. So arrogant, Sir, and so anxious to get around the province to boast about this great programme that all these people are complaining about. "My wife died in March and of course all our social assistance was cut off except \$6.50."

See what the next one says: English Harbour West, "I am writing concerning the new social assistance, I do not understand it at all. The

other social assistance you would make \$90.00 a month." That is true. Mr. Speaker, you could earn \$90.00 a month, free gratis for nothing. Now, Sir, if you earn \$1.50 it is taken away from you. The minister boasts about how they motivated people to go to work. The motivator, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, could I have silence when I am speaking, Sir. I think I am entitled



to that right, Sir? The motivator, Mr. Speaker, to get people in Newfoundland to go to work, to get them off short-term assistance is the amendment to the Unemployment Insurance Act in Canada. All you need now is eight stamps and you can get unemployment insurance, I think it is, for forty-two weeks.

One time, Sir, the ultimate in life in Newfoundland was to get from short-term assistance to long-term assistance because the benefits were more generous. Now the ultimate in life, Sir, is to get your eight stamps. That is the real reason for the reduction in short-term social assistance in this province and not anything that the minister or his department have done over the last three years. Ottawa is the one the provided that motivating factor.

I am not going to read any more of these letters, Sir. I could go on and on. There are people complaining about overpayments. When the minister was over on this side of the House he was moaning and groaning all the time about overpayments. Now, Sir, -

MR. MURPHY: That is not true.

MR. NEARY: That is true. Go back to Hansard and find out. Check Hansard. The minister and his colleagues. Now, Sir, the other day we heard the minister make a statement that during the witch hunt that they are carrying out in the department now, the minister acting as a pocket-sized Dick Tracey, he announced the other day that they have come across a whole rash of overpayments. Now they are recovering the overpayments.

I know what the minister is going to say: he will stand up and say: "Oh, because of the fifty-fifty with Ottawa we do not have but to recover these overpayments. That is not what he said when he was over here, Sir. Let me remind the minister, let me remind the minister, Mr. Speaker, that if his administration wanted to, they could write off all these overpayments. Write them off!

MR. MURPHY: The whole works?

MR. NEARY: That is right! That is right!

MR. MURPHY: Car licences and everything else. Charge nobody interest. That is right. Wonderful -

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that this new programme that the minister boasts so much about is going to be partly responsible for the defeat of this administration.

AN HON. MEMBER: Any money?

MR. NEARY: I will - yes, if I were a betting man I would lay -

AN HON. MEMBER: It is against your principles to gamble.

MR. NEARY: It is against my principles to gamble, Sir, but if I were a betting man I would take the minister on.

MR. MURPHY: Betting now is, Smallwood against Roberts is five to three. Which do you want?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I want to be brief in introducing this motion because I am certain that it is clear to every member of this honourable House that the intent of the motion is to eliminate an injustice to parents and children of large Newfoundland families who are forced into dependence on social assistance allowances.

The injustice was created, Sir, when the Government of Canada increased the family allowances to twenty dollars a month and then the Minister of Social Services decided that this was a golden opportunity to bring in a new programme to save the province a few dollars and put his tiny little fingers into the pockets of the welfare recipients

and what Ottawa gave on one hand -

MR. A. MURPHY: Could I rise to a point of order. Sit down, boy!

Does the member insinuate that I put my hand in someone's pocket and took something from it. If this is permitted there is not much protection to have really. I am not the robber. I will tell you in a few minutes where the money went.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! I do not think that the honourable member was referring that the minister actually performed any act of robbery itself. He was probably speaking metaphorically.

MR. NEARY: Literally speaking, Mr. Speaker, what Ottawa gave on one hand, the minister took it away on the other.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: I told you, Sir, the minister would dance a jig in this House before the afternoon was over and he can carry on with all the dirt and filth that he wants, Sir, and God only knows he is the master at it in this honourable House. He can carry on with that all he wants, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! While the remarks of the honourable member for Bell Island may be provocative they are not out of order. I suggest to honourable members to my left that their opportunity will come very shortly under the new rules. I suggest that the honourable member should be heard in silence.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister is awfully sensitive today, Sir, tender skin for some reason or the other.

Mr. Speaker, our job in this honourable House is to, if we possibly can, Sir, is to translate the Declaration of Human Rights into legislative action and since members of this honourable House, Mr. Speaker, are subject to many pressures and many lobbies, Sir, it is difficult sometimes for honourable members to keep up their unrelenting pressure on government, Sir, to act in the best interest of ordinary citizens and their families instead of yielding, Mr. Speaker, to the temptation as has our present administration to placing its first priority, Sir, and playing around with big finance. Probably that is the kind of situation the Minister of Social Services found himself in. He is a voice crying in the wilderness down on the eighth floor

around that big round table they have down there that we provided for them so they could hold their cabinet meetings.

Mr. Speaker, when I was Minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation for a few months I tried to put a little bit of freedom, Sir, of choice into the hands of social assistance recipients by paying them their allowances in cash instead of in the old traditional discriminatory voucher method. That was one of, in my opinion, Sir, one of the greatest social welfare reforms that was ever made in this Province.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That is right. He will go down in history for that one.

MR. NEARY: My colleague says I will go down in history for that one. Well, Sir I do not know whether I will go down in history or not but I am rather proud of that, Sir. There are two things that I am proud of, two things that I am proud of, Sir, when I was minister of that department. One was bringing in the cash system and the other was finding homes for 1,000 children. The minister, I am glad to see he is following through on a programme that I started. If anybody were to ask me today, Sir, in this honourable House "What do you consider to be your two major accomplishments," and God only knows I have a good many, "since you entered public life and became a member of the House of Assembly?" , I would have to say, Mr. Speaker, that my number one thing that I am proud of is the fact that I did away with the voucher and gave people, treated people like human beings and gave them a little dignity and paid them by cash. The other thing is that I found almost single-handed because children were being stockpiled in that department when I became minister, almost single-handed, found homes for 1,000 children that were out in foster homes in Newfoundland. I managed to find mothers and fathers and permanent homes for these children.

Well, Mr. Speaker, no matter how proud I am of the fact that I managed to get rid of the voucher and pay people by cash, it did not come close, Sir, it did not come close to bringing up to the economic councils poverty line either our social assistance recipients or the working poor. It did not come close to it. Now remember, Mr. Speaker, that my honourable friend is going around this Province boasting about the fact, "Oh! We did more than they did. We are doing more than they did." Remember, Sir, that we started off in this Province at zero, zero. When I left the department, Sir, do you know what a man and his wife and seven children were receiving

when it went from zero to \$325, do you know what they are receiving right now, Mr. Speaker - \$320, a man, his wife and seven children.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Two children, two plus two, \$230.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: That was when the honourable member left.

MR. NEARY: No, no, not when I left. That is what they are getting now.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I will come to that in a few minutes. When I left the department, Sir, a man and his wife and eight children were receiving \$350. Do you know what they are receiving today, Mr. Speaker? - \$320, \$320 or a cut.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I understand that members have to be in their own seats if they say anything, Sir. Besides they are not supposed to say anything when another member is speaking, Sir. Let me go through that again, Sir. Let me go through that again.

Two plus eight, when I was there, two plus eight, \$350, under Dick Tracey \$320.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! The honourable member is allowed a certain amount of leeway in debate but the Chair cannot condone his obvious reference to the Minister of Social Services in a derogatory manner. The honourable minister has the right to be referred to by his proper title. Of course, the honourable member has the right to be heard in silence as well.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, two plus nine, two plus nine, Sir, when I left the department, \$400. Today, under the new programme, Sir, that great Social Assistance Programme, \$320, a reduction, Sir, of \$80. The minister has the nerve to go around the Province boasting about his great Social Assistance Programme. The Minister of Transportation and Communications is over there chuckling to himself, over there snickering away, Sir, to himself. Well, let me tell the minister what two adults under this new programme get, two adults, Sir, and how would the minister like to live on this - remember his colleague is boasting about this great programme in this

day and age when you have inflation, increased rents, high cost of living, do you know what two adults have to live on - \$200 a month. That is something to boast about.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: That is something to boast about. Ah! Mr. Speaker, I knew the answer I was going to get. Remember, Sir, that we went from zero, zero, we had to start off with nothing, the Liberals, we started off with zero.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: The Liberal Party started off, Sir, in this Province with zero, a big goose egg and then we went up and up and up and when I left, Sir, as I indicated a few moments ago, I will give you one example, two plus seven children - \$325 a month; two plus seven under the minister's programme - \$320 a month. The minister says, two plus two, what about two plus two. Yes, what about it. I will tell you what two plus two people have to live on today - \$230 a month. How would the minister like to have to live on that? Is that something to crow about and boast about? It certainly is not.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, that has absolutely nothing at all to do with it, Sir, nothing at all. This is three years later, Mr. Speaker, three years later and the big Government of Canada up there have poured it into Newfoundland by the millions in equalization grants.

Sir, if we were there, if we have three years and I am coming to something that the minister will recognize because the officials of the department have passed along all of the other ideas that I left behind me and plans that I did not have time to implement,

the twice monthly payment. Mr. Speaker, the twice monthly payment of that department now of social assistance - whose idea was it, who circulated a questionnaire to the welfare recipients?

MR. MURPHY: Who put it into effect?

MR. NEARY: Ah, Mr. Speaker, let me say this. The minister says, "Oh, look what we have done. Two plus two have gone up to \$230, a fifty dollar increase." If we were there, the Liberals, Sir, God only knows where it would be now.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Ah yes, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I am the first to recognize the fact that the Minister of Social Services did well in recognizing the impact of the rising cost of living on welfare recipients. I suppose, Sir, in one way he cannot be blamed for trying to get a little political mileage for himself and for trying to improve the badly tarnished image on his administration.

Why we heard the honourable the Premier the other night, Sir, when he was talking on television - he is not coming over to hit me?

MR. MURPHY: I have not got my gloves on.

MR. NEARY: The honourable member would need more than his gloves.

Sir, the honourable the Premier has been saying now for the last few months, "We are not getting the full credit for the things we are doing, not getting the full credit". So, now they are going to start a big public relations programme to try to get a little political mileage for themselves because we are getting near an election.

Well, Sir, in my opinion that is nothing short of cruel. For the Minister of Social Services to hold off announcing an increase in social assistance rates which will not become effective, by the way, Mr. Speaker, until the first of January - the election will probably be in March, Sir, according to what the Minister of Finance said over at the university last night.

I have to read you this last part, Mr. Speaker. You will never believe it. The Minister of Fisheries - in conclusion he doubted whether

society in the west would survive the next fifteen to twenty years. My God, what a statement! I wish I could cross-examine the minister on that. According to the financial picture that the minister revealed last night at the University, Sir, we are just on the brink of going belly up in this province. We are on the brink of bankruptcy according to the minister, Sir.

So, I cannot blame the Minister of Social Services for trying to get himself a little mileage. All they are doing, Mr. Speaker, is putting back on the rates of social assistance what they took away a year ago.

My resolution, Mr. Speaker, calls for a further show of concern on the minister's part. It asks the minister and his administration to set up our scale of Newfoundland's social assistance allowances, Sir, completely independent, Mr. Speaker, of the contributions of the federal family allowances instead of as is the present practice with the present administration, and that they not reach out, Sir, every time Ottawa gives an increase in the family allowances, into the pockets of the larger families and penalize them by cutting down provincially set allowances because of Ottawa's generosity, Mr. Speaker, to the children of this province.

The introduction, Mr. Speaker, of such a practice by this Minister of Social Services that we see here before us today, aborts and thwarts the basic principles, Sir, behind both the federal family allowances and the federal, provincial social assistance programme. It ignores the fact, Sir, that the greater the size of the family, the greater the need. It ignores, Mr. Speaker, the humanitarian and social fact. Unless this need is met, children of such families, the large families, will face, Sir, insuperable odds in ever rising from welfare recipient status so that they and their offspring will perpetuate within our Newfoundland society a sub-culture and an indigenous third world of their own,



a living and lasting shame to this province.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Gerry Korbaj.

Mr. Speaker, during the time that I was Minister of Social Services and Rehabilitation I presented, Sir, to a conference of welfare ministers of the Atlantic Provinces, on two or three occasions, and later on, Sir, to the Federal Minister of Health and Welfare, John Monroe, who was the minister at that time, a carefully worked out draft proposal for introducing the guaranteed annual income in this province but four years ago, Mr. Speaker, the mere mention of the guaranteed annual income was regarded as too revolutionary a step.

However, Sir, today the concept of the guaranteed annual income is finding greater acceptance and finding more and more support across Canada, Sir. A short time ago, Mr. Speaker, and maybe in my simplicity or in my wisdom I may have played a minor role in bringing this about. A short time ago, Sir, the Government of Canada set up the machinery, as a matter of fact, it happened just about the time that we were getting booted out of office - the Government of Canada set up the machinery, Sir, whereby the provinces could carry out a pilot project by implementing the guaranteed annual income, Sir, in a given area, of any province that wished to apply, so that a close watch, Mr. Speaker, could be kept on the the effects of guaranteed annual income in that given area. The effects that it would have for instance on the working poor, the effects that it would have on the morale of the people who are handicapped and unemployed through no fault of their own. In this guaranteed annual income, Sir, there would be a built in motivator for people to go to work.

Some of the provinces, Mr. Speaker, took advantage of this offer but unfortunately, Sir, our government, up to this moment, did not have the courage nor the foresight to submit an application in behalf of old age pensioners and our disabled veterans and widows, the sick and the handicapped, all of whom we are told by the Economic Council of Canada are below the poverty level and struggling for existence in this province. Ontario did it, Sir, even though the guaranteed income plan in Ontario began with controversy as we learned from the "Globe and Mail" I think it was, but it started, Sir. There is a

pilot project going on out in Manitoba. There is a pilot project going on in one or two other provinces but not in poor old Newfoundland, Sir, where it is needed most. Not in Newfoundland, Sir, where according to the last Statistics Canada Information, the average per capita income in Newfoundland we are told was \$2,462.00. We were second last, Sir, on the totem pole. We were only out done by Prince Edward Island, \$2,462.00 the average per capita income in Newfoundland as of 1972. So the minister may argue there is no need of a guaranteed annual income programme in Newfoundland.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if you can charge an administration or a minister with negligence, with dereliction of duty. I wish you could, Sir, because if there is ever a field - Ah! Mr. Speaker, I would be in jail all right. Sir, I have exposed myself to public scrutiny for the last three years, Sir, for the last three years and you can have what you like there. You will

find no evidence whatsoever and if there was, Sir, do you not think that they would have me handcuffed long ago. They would have me taken out and shot.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: There is no evidence, Sir. There is absolutely no evidence of any wrongdoing. If the minister wants to get into wrongdoing, I will give him a few examples when we get over on the other side popping up every day all over this province. What about the bulldozer that was hijacked from the vocational school over on Bell Island?

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

I do not think I need to say anything else.

The honourable member may continue with the matters that are relevant.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately you cannot charge an administration nor a minister with dereliction of duty. If you could, Sir, they would all be locked up. They would all be put behind bars. If there is ever a field in this province, Sir, which they have neglected over the last three years, is the field of social assistance.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: "Oh, my God!" he says, "Oh, my God!" Only for Uncle Ottawa up there, Sir, that they criticize so much -

MR. MURPHY: Uncle Ottawa got my money as well as everybody else's money.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, sure you are paying the social assistance out of your own pocket.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: The minister, Sir, has been carried away by the arguments of the Canadian Manufacturers Association. You know what they said when they came down here, Mr. Speaker. They said, "All Canada is lashing out too much money in social welfare." The minister takes that seriously. He employs a staff of C.I.A. agents,

the gestapo, to go around peeping in through keyholes to see if they can catch people chiselling on welfare and what do they do? They turn up seventy or eighty cases and they slap a few poor, old welfare recipients in the can, in jail. They are down there serving time now, Sir.

MR. MURPHY: They were robbing money belonging to the taxpayers.

MR. NEARY: Robbing money belonging to the taxpayer my foot! For trying to feed their families! The minister has never been faced with that kind of a situation.

MR. MURPHY: The minister can tell you a few stories.

MR. NEARY: Yes, go ahead, tell them.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Now they are down serving time, Sir. What good will that do, Mr. Speaker?

MR. MURPHY: It will teach them a lesson.

MR. NEARY: Ah! Teach them a lesson, Sir? Well, Mr. Speaker, this honourable crowd, who are trying to teach welfare recipients lessons, went up to Ottawa looking for a handout for Silver Anniversary booze parties. Fortunately, Sir, Ottawa did not give it to them. I will put the welfare recipient in jail for attempting that sort of thing. It is all right for this honourable crowd, though, to go up to Ottawa and say, "Give us some money so we can let Nutbeem loose around the province, having booze parties."

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Ah! Do not be so foolish. What they did, Sir, is that they put out a book of defence papers from 1939 to 1945, that is one time that old NIP over there got nipped in the bud.

Mr. Speaker, before I come to this, could you tell me how much more time I have Sir?

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the minister has concentrated practically his whole time in office on a continuous witch hunt. First of all the administration set out to get the former minister. They could not get him. Now they have set out -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: I am talking about myself.

Now they have set out to get the recipients. The minister seems to have some kind of a grudge against welfare recipients. Put them all in jail; they are all chiselling! The Canadian Manufacturers Association says so. The minister is going to please the Canadian Manufacturers Association and not the ordinary people of this province. What the minister has to remember, Sir, is that there are 500,000 ordinary people in this province.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Ah, there is only a handful who have membership in the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the minister's buddies. But, Sir, even if we did have the guaranteed annual income, I do not think it would make wealthy people out of us all. We need not be afraid of it, Sir. There would still be ample opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for the industrious and the

and the thrifty to make better use of their money and their abilities. If we did have the guaranteed annual income, Sir, the welfare officers, the social workers, would not be sitting down behind their desks now just writing out cheques. That was something I intended to change. The minister has not gotten around to that yet. Maybe Mr. Hollett has not told him about it.

Get them out in the homes, Sir, where they can counsel people and show them how to use their money. Show them how to spend their money.

MR. MURPHY: Senior civil servant.

MR. NEARY: Yes, that senior civil servant. That poor old frightened - I appointed that gentleman, by the way and I think he has a great

AN HON. MEMBER: Admiration for you.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir, I think he has a great admiration for me. I would never lower, I would never stoop -

MR. MURPHY: He is going to have you up for dinner at Christmas.

MR. NEARY: I would never lower myself to put the poor old frightened gentleman on television to try to sell my new social assistance programme. I never stooped that low when I was there.

Mr. Sneaker, I am personally convinced that the best way of cutting the legs from under the monster that we know as poverty is through the implementation, Sir, of a very carefully thoughtout plan for the guaranteed annual income. I will make a categorical statement here now, Sir, that the argument is not that we did more than you did or we are going to do more than they are doing when we get over there. That is no argument. Three years have gone by, the value of the dollar has gone down, the cost of living has gone up. My God! If you are not going to stand still, in three years you would expect some movement, even if it is a bowel movement from the minister. God only knows they are racking up Ottawa so much these days that the next thing they will be accusing Ottawa of - not I had better not say it, Sir, it is not parliamentary - but I want to make this statement before I take my seat, Mr. Speaker.

If my part should form the next government -

MR. MURPHY: Oh, God forbid!

MR. NEARY: Of this province -

AN HON. MEMBER: And they will.

MR. NEARY: And God willing, Sir, we will. If we are going to have an election in March, Sir, I would say that we will be the government the day after St. Patrick's Day.

If my party forms the government, Sir, one of the top priorities of the Roberts Administration will be to phase in the guaranteed annual income.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible)

AN HON. MEMBER: A rose by any other name.

MR. NEARY: Phase in the guaranteed annual income, Sir, to cover the aged, to cover the blind and the disabled, the widow, the orphan, the crippled and try in some way to treat people like human beings and try to give them a decent standard of living which they do not have today.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The honourable Minister of Social Services:

HON. A.J.MURPHY (Minister of Social Services): Mr. Speaker, if I may I shall take just a few moments of the time of the House perhaps to say a few words on this programme. After listening to the Member for Bell Island -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. MURPHY: No. My thoughts have just not changed of that particular gentleman's ability to act as a member of this House should act, and that is as a responsible, intelligent member of this House who should speak to a point, to do it without perhaps dragging someone down into the mire with himself.

To begin with, Sir, I was passed or offered this portfolio in December 1972 to succeed the honourable Member for St. John's East Extern, whom I would say - of all the jobs, all the positions that were passed to members of the newly elected government - the Member for St. John's East Extern had the toughest.

After the disgraceful, disgraceful conduct of the former minister, the Member for Bell Island, after a hearing (and I am going to

quote a few things, Sir, because it is all relative to this discussion) it was the old story again, Sir, that I often tell about the man buying the barn. "No trouble to clean up the outside it was the inside; to get clear of the offal and the offal was awful in this case."

This so-called honourable Member for Bell Island, the former Minister of Welfare, had brought (the Department of Welfare as it then existed or Social Services and Rehabilitation)



The morale in that department was as low as low could be, the lowest of the low because of the actions and conduct of the member who just spoke. In the five years immediately preceding, Sir, the take over by the Progressive Conservative Government, welfare clients had received exactly seven per cent increase in their rates - seven per cent in the five year period immediately preceding the take over of the Moores' Administration.

When the Member for St. John's East (Extern) was appointed, Sir, he had been a member of the field force of the Department of Welfare as it was then known; a man, Sir, who had served in various areas of the province, who knew the needs of the people, who felt that no longer should welfare payments be geared to elections but to the needs of the people, Sir.

Previously, in an election time, there was always a five dollar increase in fuel or a three dollar increase in food or a two dollar increase in something else, Sir.

When I was appointed, Sir, most of the spade work had been done, to establish a department that was worthy of the name of social assistance; not only handing out, Sir, cheques to people; not the old dole system we knew years ago. We tried to do away with the word "welfare", Sir, extinguish it completely. There was a long, hard look at what had happened under the previous administration, Sir. It was proven beyond any doubt that the great majority of people who had, through no fault of their own, to seek government assistance, Sir, were literally being starved to death. That was under this great gentleman you just heard shooting off his mouth over there.

Mr. Speaker, there were some changes made in the few short months when my colleague, the former minister, was in power. Then there began the series of looking at, examining just what the situation was in this little province of ours.

This little province, Sir, where, as I said, three weeks ago in Ottawa, where our food dollar is only worth ninety-four cents as compared with Halifax, just on our doorstep, not the great Alberta, not the great Ontario but Halifax. In other words, every dollar we gave, Sir, to a welfare client or any dollar we spent ourselves, whether we were on wages or not, could only buy ninety-four cents worth of food. That has been proven. The statistics are there. We made a complete review, Sir, of the whole situation bearing in mind that criticism, and unjust in many cases, - this Department of Social Services as it now is and the Department of Welfare as it was receives from the public at large. At the present time, Sir, there are two trains of thought when we talk of welfare in this province: (1) The people who receive the benefits and they are convinced without doubt that all the minister, his department and his officers are trying to do is starve them to death. They are convinced without doubt that this is a natural fact.

Mr. Speaker, on the other side we have the taxpayer, I mean the man who is working and luckily has a job, a steady job to do or perhaps earns enough to maintain himself without

having to go to his welfare officer. Sir, he is just as much convinced that we are giving all these lazy good-for-nothings, as they term them, handouts. There is no middle road at all as I have found the past two years. No middle road. When you are trying to look after these 58,000 people - or is it 55,000? - I have the figures there, who through no fault of their own, Sir, in the many, many, many, many, and the great majority of cases must be helped by someone. They must be helped by someone they cannot help themselves. Whether they are disabled, unable to work through illness or unfortunate enough not to be able to find productive work, they must be helped.

I think the greatest virtue that we have of the three virtues is Charity. Helping these people, Sir, has to be the first demand on this House of Assembly, on this government. To help people who cannot help themselves. We can talk about industrial development, we can talk about paving roads, we can talk about the fishery, we can talk about any one of a thousand things, Sir, but when this government came to grips with our problems and I wish to thank again the Premier of this Province for his kindness, his understanding and his humanity as well as the rest of this government - we said: "Something must be done."

These people must be helped notwithstanding, Sir, notwithstanding their being used for political purposes at tied election times. That is why, Sir, this programme was unveiled last year. Reference has been made, Sir, to my Deputy Minister, Mr. Hollett which I greatly resent. A man of his integrity, his service to this province and this government to be used for political purposes. I will say this, Sir, it was entirely the opposite thing. I was the one as minister who wanted to make this statement. I was the one who wanted to go on. Someone, whether they were wise or foolish, said: "No, let us make this as nonpolitical as we possibly can."

I am sure -

AN HON. MEMBER: What a joke!

MR. MURPHY: It might be a joke. It might be a joke but I am sure that

my making that announcement could have gotten a heck of a lot more political mileage out of it than a civil servant who has no political ties, as far as I am concerned, at all. I think that stands to reason.

AN HON. MEMBER: Contemplating more personalities?

MR. MURPHY: All kinds. All kinds.

What was this all about, Sir? What was it all about? It was to bring people from the depths of despair that they were plunged into with the previous administration to at least some ray of sunshine. But we said this: "The goal of this new reform, Sir, is to create through increased social assistance benefits and family allowances an income maintenance standard which will provide an adequate standard of living for the needy of the province." That was the basic one.

Sir, we had to have this principle tied to it and embedded in it, that it is always more beneficial to work than it is to stay home and live from welfare. One of the greatest criticisms we got, Sir. That is why this programme was tied to the minimum wage. To do that we had to look over the whole programme. We had to look at the single person and it is not single in the sense, it could be a widow, single and living alone, who were receiving ninety-five dollars a month. Ninety-five dollars a month for one person. We brought it up to one hundred and forty-five dollars, Sir.

Two persons we brought up to two hundred dollars and we went on from there. But, there reached a point in that line, Sir, where when we received seven children, we came to that point, if we kept the benefits increasing it would be more profitable to stay home and not work because you exceeded the minimum wage.

I do not know what the members opposite feel. Should the welfare benefits be greater than work benefits or not? If it is their philosophy I would like to see them fight an election. This was our feeling, Sir. At the same time the Government of Canada through a very, very enlightened programme of family allowances, under one of the finest men I have ever had the pleasure to deal with, the honourable Marc LaLonde, the Minister of Health and Welfare,

produced a plan where more monies would go into the larger families through family allowances but in future the family allowances would be taxable income, not by the provincial government but by the federal government.

We arrived at a stage, just to give a simple illustration, where a family with two adults plus seven children receives a cheque of three hundred and twenty dollars a month from our government, from our people. In addition to that they will get from Ottawa a cheque for one hundred and forty dollars a month in family allowances. That is a total of four hundred and sixty dollars.

Let us not stop there, Mr. Speaker, Let us go on. The great majority of people in this province on social welfare or social assistance are living in rented homes. Who pays the rent? The people of this province. The taxpayers. Up to one hundred and seventy-five dollars a month, another great social increase on the part of our government.

So all right! We have three hundred and twenty dollars plus one hundred and forty dollars which is four hundred and sixty dollars plus, and we will use the medium, one hundred and fifty dollars a month. That is six hundred and ten dollars plus, plus prescription drugs absolutely free to all these people on social assistance.

Prescription drugs: We cannot arrive at a cost, Sir, because with some families, particularly large families it could run to twenty-five or thirty dollars a month. At twenty dollars a month that would give us six hundred and thirty dollars a month income going into the homes. I am not saying that it is all from the provincial government but it is "dollars" wherever it comes from, Sir.

Whether you work on Water Street, the Avalon Mall or the K-Mart, that dollar still has the same value no matter who signs the cheques. This is what we have to look at. I figured this out, Sir, and I took some cases - not all cases now, I am not trying to gild the lilly - many cases where people on social assistance in this province with their monthly cheque from government, with their family allowance, with their rent allowance and with their drug allowance

would be, if social assistance were taxable, paying income tax, Sir, of \$400 a year. As a matter of fact (Perhaps, I should not say this) some of the junior clerks in this building, with the same income, would have to pay \$400. Now where do you start and where do you stop? That is what we have to look at. We have to temper one thing with the other. Compassion, our government is full of it, Sir. We are most compassionate, most compassionate for these people.

We realize it, Sir, and perhaps as an outcome of this famous or infamous document entitled: "Report Of The Commission Of Enquiry Into Certain Matters Pertaining To Welfare," we said, "Let us have a long, hard look." Should we continue, Sir, to supply beer, coloured televisions, bikes, you name it what was given out; lamp holders, toilet plungers, blankets, batteries, tires, paint, oil ranges, mattresses, hockey sticks, beds, flashlights, canvas, shirts, extension cords, television lamps, davenports, cabinets, toasters, pole lamps, clocks, radios, televisions. These are some of the things, Sir. These are only a few of the items. Everybody has this report. Read it! Read it and see what it can do to any department or to any taxpayer of this province, Sir. One quarter million dollars approximately, Sir, was spent on Bell Island in the fall of 1971 and what did the commissioner say, a judge of the Supreme Court? I will paraphrase it.

"It was rather peculiar that it was immediately preceding an election in an election year."

I would say this, Sir, that the Member for Bell Island had the largest campaign fund in the history of Canada at any time, one quarter of a million dollars. I will say that, Sir, here. This is what our department must deal with, these things happening. A minister of the crown takes an oath to do to the best of his ability,

to carry out the duties, Sir, as laid out, in what he is supposed to do. We have all the departments here, Sir, set up with permanent civil servants. We are here today and possibly gone tomorrow. The permanent civil servant, Sir, is a man who is dedicated to his job in a great many cases, (I am talking about the senior officials) and who have given their lifetime, Sir, to working for this government of ours.

Dare I do this? "The pressures on the Bell Island office, through the volume of applications and through the institution of the minister's system of communication, resulted in a more beneficial interpretation of regulations and the reconsidered cases were such that they would not have occurred if the welfare officers had been proceeding under the normal rules and procedures of that department."

That is one of the slight criticisms for any minister of this government and I do not give a darn who he is, Sir, would dare to say that we cannot do what Section (a) says but I will add another section to it, so that I can help my people in St. John's Centre or any other part of this province, Sir. I will say he is not true to the trust that is being placed in him.

Anybody who reads this here - in no case does any official appear to have taken independent steps to ascertain the exact situation existing on Bell Island, although your commission are satisfied that during the fiscal year in question, especially with the staggering increase in the amount of assistance being granted in relation to previous years - Sir. This is the next year, I am talking about.

The matter cried out for particular attention. Why the reason for this reluctance by these officials can perhaps be understood in light of the minister's direct involvement, in many of the applications. Nevertheless your commission was satisfied that their failure to take initiatives can only have contributed to the continuation of the situation on Bell Island. Why, Sir? Because their boss, the boss said, "Do away with the red tape. Do not go to that old son of a B. across the hall who is the deputy minister, do not go to him, I am telling you to do it." I wonder is there any minister that we have had - men on the other side have been ministers - I wonder if anybody, any minister could speak up and say to me now that they would be acting properly to tell any officials of the department 'Ignore your deputy minister. Ignore him completely he is an old son of a B.' They were the actual words used. By passing the deputy minister of the department, Mr. Neary knew that he was in fact usurping the office, in other words, taking over not only as minister but the deputy minister who is the permanent head of that department, and I dare anybody to disagree with that, Sir. And in so doing he interfered with the proper function of the department in this respect as well. The proper function of the department, what is proper and what is not proper. What is proper - if you act improper I do not give a darn, you should not remain, not only as minister on this account but a member of this House, Sir, because improper conduct cries out



for a cure.

The same man the other day stood up here and asked about vandalism. Are we going to do something about it? Pictures published in the papers, Sir, and this same man there had people beating down walls with ashtrays and everything else. Is that vandalism? Come on! Who are we fooling, Mr. Speaker? Who are we fooling? Direction, Sir. Direction comes from within. We have responsibilities. Not only to the people for St. John's Centre, must I stand here, Sir, but I must look after the welfare of all of the people in this province. He accuses me of being out politicking or whatever he likes in Grand Falls. I will go anywhere, Sir, that the people want but I go to tell the truth, Sir, to do away with some of the stuff that is being done to my department and to me as an individual by that man over there, who should be there now, and others I will not name because they are not fit to name in this province, who come in here from outside. What are the backgrounds of these people? Would someone care to check. I did. I checked where they came from. When anybody accuses me, Sir, of using the people of this province, the poor people of this province for political purposes here, it is an absolute lie, Sir. It is an absolute lie.

If as Mr. Neary has stated he was determined to cut through the red tape in the department then it was incumbent upon him to institute a revision of the procedures in the department, thus expediting assistance to all welfare recipients on a general uniform basis and not merely to those, and listen to this, and not merely to those who happen to live in a particular area. What was the particular area? Can anybody guess what the particular area was? His own constituency, Sir. He was feathering his nest for the event that was to take place in a few years. I will make that charge, Sir, and stand behind it.

I will make that charge. And then he has the gall to stand up there and say I was a critic. The man is condemned and if he had any guts, Sir, he would resign his seat in this House and I say that he should not have to be kicked out.

If anybody said things about me that a judge of the courts said about this gentleman, Sir, I would crawl into a hole and haul my legs in after me and pass away. Yet the likes of that gets up and criticizes people. I am amazed. I am really shocked to think that this House of Assembly, Sir, has reached that stage.

The Premier in his speech the other day referred to the gentleman as 'Three Per Cent Neary'. I said, afterwards, "Sir, it is a bit more serious than that. Twenty-four people voted for that gentleman." With all the millions we spent on education, twenty-four people in this province still voted for that member. After this report, there should be a royal commission into education.

You know, you get clobbered. You cannot do right, Sir. You cannot do right. I stood up here in the House and I said, "This is a proud moment", and it was a proud moment, Sir, because under the new programme, social assistance will continue to be pegged to the cost of living, continue, not only because someone said it is election year. I do not know if there is an election in 1976 and I do not give a darn. I will invite the whole lot of you over there to come down to St. John's Centre to run against me - not one of you, the whole works - after our accomplishments for the past two years, Sir, not mine but this governments, Sir. At the same time we increased the minimum wage level which will make work more attractive.

They will talk about social advances, Sir. They do not know what they are talking about. Then they talk about other things I will not go into now, Sir. I might have a chat later on on some of the things happening, this gerrymandering in this province and all the rest of it.

There we are, Sir. I will say that nowhere, no other province of Canada, are the people happier with what they are receiving than here in this province of Newfoundland. You look at some programmes, Sir, the dollar value is higher but let us not forget, Sir, that they include rent

in their basic amount. They include drug care in their basic amount, the cost of prescription drugs. We do not, Sir. Someone has said, "What about the increase in rents?" If the rents increase, Sir, there will be a separate check paid that has nothing whatever to do with the basic payment that these people receive, not a thing in the world. We will get criticism, Sir, absolutely we will.

Some letters were read there. Give us the full story of these letters. Any honourable gentleman - I say this in this House, Sir - that has had any problem or has a problem with their clients, I think they get twenty-four hour service to the best of our ability. I do not know if anybody will deny that or not.

The past year we have done the best that we could do to provide information for the members. First of all, it was cleared up down there. I did not institute it, it was down there. Mr. Baldwin who is doing a tremendous job is third party looking after members and what not. A few months ago - I do not know the month exactly - I issued another letter to all these members, the forty-two, all the M.P.'s, senators, anybody concerned, and said, "In future, we would like you to go to the nearest welfare officer and get the information as quick as you can." We thought this was

a little something. One letter I got thanking me, thanking the department for the courtesy shown their clients - one letter, Senator Ches. Carter, one letter. My darling fellow if something had to go awry somewhere along the way, I would get more than one letter and one phone call about what we are trying to do to the poor people.

We have problems, Sir, we have problems, not all our doing. We are only here something over two years - a lot of problems, perhaps the worse, Sir, is the terrible condition of housing in this Province, terrible condition. For the six months past, just to give us some idea, Sir, we have handled some 1,200 cases, Sir, of repairs to houses, from the Battery Sir, to Nain, if you like, in Labrador, repairs to houses. In October alone, 297 cases were looked after by our department in various areas of this Province, Sir, 297 cases for a total of \$89,000. That is the next big social step that has to be taken, Sir, is housing in this Province.

The Minister of Finance now, the former Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the new minister share my concern, Sir. We know that people are living in homes that should be condemned but in heavens name what do we do with them. Where do we get the homes? Where does the money come from? Someone will send in a petition tomorrow that there should be \$100 spent on a road in Bumble Bee Bight and everybody on the other side rushing "Yes, spend that, they should have that." We all know they should have that. We are not stupid. I was in the House as I said for ten years on the other side. They were coming in, the same petitions that this government is getting today, Sir, welfare and everything else.

There is one thing that I will say, when I was in opposition and anybody who wants to check Hansard, at estimate time, Sir, when the welfare estimates were all read, I was man enough to stand up, Sir and say what a problem the government was having and to congratulate the welfare officers, Sir, these men out in the front line who are criticized, scandalized, abused because they are trying to do their job right, Sir. If I am being political, Sir, would I not say to the first person to come in, "Your entitlement is only \$300 but look there is an election next month. I am going to give you an extra twenty." There is no trouble to say that, no

trouble to say it. But if we are to be a government, Sir, a government that is really worth being a government, we have to set standards, Sir, and abide by them. We cannot discriminate. When we took over there were two rates, Sir, in the Department of Social Assistance. There were long term and short term. The long term rate, Sir, I think most people know was designed for people through illness or further reasons could not work. They were called long term and they got "X" per cent more than the short term.

I looked at the thing, Sir, with my officials and I said, "I do not agree with this." Here is a man here, disabled with five children and a wife, he gets, say, \$200 a month; another man here, Sir, who has worked his guts out, if you would like to say, in the lumber woods, he gets laid off. He needs help. We do not give him \$200, Sir. We give him \$180. Why? Is not his wife and children, Sir, as much entitled to live comfortably as best the dollar can offer as well as the other man, Sir, or should I say to this man, "Go out and let a truck hit you, Sir, and come back and you will get another ten per cent increase." Can we be fair because built into that, Sir, the long term man had his own benefits. When I was down in Harbour Breton for that famous election, Sir, this lady came over to me and she said, "Look, I have to go into Grand Falls hospital," - actually it was here husband. His wife had to go in. He had to get an ambulance - \$125, Sir. He was working in the fish plant. I tryed every way I could, Sir, to make him eligible so that we could pay that money for him but unfortunately his income was too high. Across the street, Sir, was a welfare client, went up twice a month, I think to Grand Falls and all the way was paid.

So when an honourable member stands up on the floor of this House, Sir, and accuses us of not doing this for someone and not doing something else, some letters were read, Sir, what is the story. I was in Grand Falls yesterday, Sir. I was on two open line programmes;

because I want to go on these things, Sir, as I said, to set the people right, to dispell from their minds the venom that was spewed in this House, Sir, by the Leader of the Opposition the other day, (too little, too late, God help us Almighty) who sat there twiddling his thumbs - the same person we are giving \$150 to was getting \$95, five years with a seven per cent increase, two years over double the rate, Sir, and someone says, too little, too late. No wonder you want us to get him out of the way. He does nothing but read and what else? There is something else.

To me, it is too important, Sir, - I am behind a closed door. I will guarantee that gentleman over there, if he is a gentleman, that I do not operate behind closed doors. I answer more phone calls and return more phone calls than anybody in this building or any other building at any time, Sir. Anybody who says that they cannot get in touch with me is because the phone calls are stacked up ahead of them. If they will leave a number, Sir, I will get back to them. Any member here who phones me about anything, I will ask them to deny it if I am wrong, I have always done, to the best of my ability, to give the service to their clients. When we acknowledge a letter, Sir, in our department, there is no politics. We have had a request from your member the honourable so and so and so and so; copies of that letter have gone to every member of this House, every honourable member. "Neary" does not get one. I throw his in the wastepaper basket.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY: It is not parliamentary. I will take it back, Sir, but I got it in anyhow.

When we read this resolution and we talk about this - to give you some statistics on this, Sir, you would not know but half of Newfoundland was literally starving to death. We looked at the whole thing. Where do you cut off? As I said, we must cut off here

because the welfare line crosses the minimum wage line. We must stop here. That is two plus seven. We looked at the statistics, Sir, ninety per cent (90%) of the people on social assistance received raises ranging from ten to thirty-five per cent. Four per cent remained as they were just about. Six per cent, Sir, were over that line and consequently, their welfare cheque was as high as it was formerly. We increased the rental allowance, Sir.

Here we had a case, Sir, and I had one of my own constituents, through no fault of his own, a comparatively young man in his fifties, who had bought a house, who was working faithfully, putting, I think, eighty dollars a month on that house, on the mortgage. Next door to him was a client in a rental house, (We were paying and I say, we, the government. We were not in government at the time. We are the people, we are all paying these bills.) who was paying something like \$120 a month rent, Sir, for the family next door. That young man was committed to eighty dollars a month, Sir. Under the previous administration, Sir, the rule was we will pay interest up to fifty dollars a month.

Now we are going to one hundred dollars a month or more to pay not only the interest, Sir, but to help that man who, through no fault of his own, an industrious working man, was struck down and could not continue his payments, Sir, and we feel rightly or wrongly, Sir, that that man is as much entitled to have a mortgage paid as this man next door for whom we are paying rent. We may be all wet; it may be a long philosophy,

Work incentives, Sir, let us come to that. There was something like the first thirty dollars you could keep if you earned it. We looked at the statistics, Sir. We had an awful lot of people earning thirty dollars and then quit. . . Now how you can arrange a workable work incentive, I do not say it is perfect. We had a long, hard look at it,

Sir, and we said this, "You can earn up to \$200 a month, half of which goes in your pocket, the other half is deductible from your welfare or you social allowance check." Now, they can earn up to \$200 a month.

So, there is one statistic that amazed me. We had 1,047 chronic welfare recipients, 1,047 due to an awful lot of reasons. One perhaps was the guy that we see down around water street, the guy who likes the few nips who is, chronic, visits regularly as regularly as the clock, 1,047 of these, Sir.

We set up our new special projects and employment opportunities grew. Thank God - I can say this - we have approximately 460 today. There are still some. You cannot drive these people to work, Sir. They must be led. Work for those who can, Sir, should always be our main aim. We talk about prosecutions. Good enough. You go into any store, they will ask you your name. You give them false information, Sir, what happens to you? When they catch up with you, you get the full extent of the law.

You go into the welfare office, we know your name, you are registered there. Have you had any earnings? "Oh, no I am not working, no earnings." We knew this was going on, that people were earning money, Sir, hundreds of people literally. It was not out of my pocket. I think the member for Bell Island said that. I was not paying it. I am darn well not paying it. It is the taxpayer of this province who is paying it. So, someone comes in. We have had them as high as \$5,000 obtained under false pretenses.

According to the member for Bell Island, throw a party for him. He is a wonderful fellow, grand. Do not prosecute him. Why prosecute that poor fellow? The taxpayers are good for it. Encourage everybody to do it. We have had seventy odd convictions, Sir, under that. In addition to that, Sir, we have had hundreds of other cases, people, mostly older people who tell our welfare officers they did not understand just what was meant by this, that and the other thing. They did not know that this was income or that was income, this pension check or that. We accepted that, Sir, from these people and we said, "Good



enough, you have got the money. You got it illegally" - if I can use the term illegal if they say they did not know what the law was. But I think there is an old saying, "Ignorance of the law is no excuse."

MR. ROBERTS: Rule law.

MR. MURPHY: It is the rule law is it. There is a brilliant fellow.

So, alright, what do we do with these people? We say, alright there will be no court conviction. You just pay back x dollars a month of what you have received. It is not the welfare officers money again, it belongs to the people of this province, the whole 514,000 or 515,000 who pay taxes one way or another. That is whose money it is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I just want to interrupt the honourable member to remind the House that there is approximately two or three minutes left.

MR. MURPHY: Two minutes left.

MR. SPEAKER: Two or three minutes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. What do we get? Forty-five minutes is it?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MURPHY: Really I do not remember. I do not know if I apply to this, you know.

MR. ROBERTS: The rule says forty-five minutes for everybody.

MR. MURPHY: Is it? I would like to thank the member, Sir. It is the most constructive thing they have done in the House this year.

MR. ROBERTS: Can we quote you on that?

MR. MURPHY: Quote me on that, yes. I would like recommended reading - I do not know if they could get a smaller copy of this for this great crusader, this man who despises vandalism, who is against this government for doing acts that he does not agree with, he thinks are not right,

not moral, morally wrong. No principle. That man who is on his feet every day hanging up the House for fifteen or twenty minutes instead of doing the business of the province. This same man, Sir, who, I do not know how much he pays but he has certainly got access to all radios no matter what he has got to say.

Just to conclude, Sir, in just about one minute - this is the last reading I will give as to the means of controlling improper interference by a minister, similar to that found to have occurred in relation to Bell Island. There is no simple solution, under our system of government. It is impossible to effectively circumscribe by rule and regulation the actions of persons at the apex of the pyramid of authority. In other words, the elected member who is at the very top of that pyramid. The actions of these persons can only be effectively governed, Sir, effectively governed or controlled by their own integrity.

So, I hope, Sir, that I have done some little - I have a lot of material here, unfortunately I am limited to forty-five minutes but some other time I may get a chance, Sir, to tell the people and I hope it goes out to the people of the province, not only to the few in the House today. Just what our attitude is on social assistance and how we have tried to cope with it to the best of our ability so that the unfortunate people, Sir, will get the most benefit from our welfare dollar. Thank you, very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Barbe North.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister has that scale over there, the Minister of Social Services. The Minister of Social Services, Sir, do you have that scale?

HON. MEMBERS: Inaudible.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services missed the point of the motion completely, in his speech. I assume that he is not going to vote for that particular motion. I, for one, and I am sure my other colleagues will be voting in favour of this particular motion but the minister missed the point of the motion completely, nobody in fact up to this point has referred to the motion, well, Sir, I will do that.

WHEREAS the new Social Assistance Programme in its diversion of Federal funds discriminates against larger families; - WHEREAS the minister did not refer to that WHEREAS whatsoever. He did not answer that question.

WHEREAS the new Social Assistance programme in its diversion of Federal funds discriminates against larger families; - the minister did not disprove that particular point nor did he refer to it.

WHEREAS such action was never contemplated by the Federal Department of National Health and Welfare when it instituted its new family allowance plan; and

WHEREAS this is causing actual hardship to parents in their struggle to cope with the rising cost of living; and

WHEREAS this policy is depriving the children of larger families of equal educational opportunities and equal preparation for their future roles in our society and economy; the minister did not refer to that point at all Mr. Speaker. He did not refer to it at all or disprove that particular point.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Minister of Social Services be instructed by this Honourable House to draw up a programme of social assistance benefits completely (now these are the key words, Mr. Speaker) independent of the Federal family allowance plan (this is the purpose of the motion) to draw up a programme of social assistance benefits completely independent of the Federal family allowance plan and based on our traditional, long-time, humane principle of providing benefits proportioned directly to the size of the family.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I find it unbelievable and I just cannot comprehend how a minister can speak to a motion and not refer to the particular items in the motion, defend them or otherwise. Instead of that, Mr. Speaker, what the Hon. Minister of Social Services did was to draw a great red herring across the floor of this House of Assembly, to use an old legal tactic, with all due respect to learned members of this House, to use an old

legal tactic of trying to discredit the integrity of the man who was trying to make the point or make the motion. He tried to do that, Sir, by quoting from the Mifflin Report. The Mifflin Report speaks for itself, Mr. Speaker.

The honourable Member for Bell Island has no need to resign, he is not going to resign, he has not been asked to resign and he will not resign. His integrity is intact, Sir. But the honourable Minister of Social services lowered himself in this debate. Lowered himself, Mr. Speaker. Instead of speaking to the motion he drags in the great red herring of the Mifflin Report and takes a low cut, a punch below the belt by trying to question the integrity of the Member for Bell Island.

I was tempted, Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions to rise on a point of order and I quite honestly and respectfully was surprised that Your Honour (Well, Your Honour was not in the Chair at the time) that Mr. Speaker did not rise on some occasions to bring the honourable Minister of Social Services to order for questioning the integrity of the Member for Bell Island.

But, Sir, the point is that we are asking the honourable House to draw up a programme of social assistance benefits completely independent of family allowance programmes. The minister, Sir, takes great pride in this red and blue brochure that was sent all over the province: "A new social assistance programme, January 1974. Welfare no longer more profitable than work. Need the only criteria. Incentives to work."

In that brochure, Sir, the honourable minister lists off the following: "Social assistance programme, and they at least put in, 'plus family allowance' but they say one adult \$145.00; one adult one child \$200.00; one plus two \$235; one plus three \$270.00; one plus four \$305.00; one plus five \$304.00 and we go right up to ten, one plus ten \$520.00.

Sir, the fact of the matter is that I cannot call this brochure in itself a deception because the heading there says family allowances. But the fact of the matter is that the people of this province receive

their cheques, they receive their money and it is not very difficult for a lot of people with the various social assistance programmes, the U.I.C. programme and the various other provincial, federal and sometimes the combination thereof, of the various programmes in this province involving payment or assistance or grants or loans, it is not surprising that people will lose sight of the fact that these stated dollars of \$200.00; \$335.00; \$270.00 and what have you include the family allowance. This is the basis upon which the minister takes great pride in stating the percentage increase that they have instituted since this present administration took over.

If you took out the family allowance you would have an entirely different story with respect to social assistance, particularly for large families. If we take, for example, two plus seven, two adults plus seven children; according to the minister the assistance is four hundred and sixty dollars. If you take out the family allowance the assistance is three hundred and twenty dollars.

In the old days for two plus seven, it was three hundred and twenty-five dollars. In fact, the amount that the provincial government

has paid to a two plus seven family is minus five dollars. The minister stands in his place and takes credit for this or should take credit or should admit the truth anyway. The amount that this administration has contributed to a family of two adults plus seven children is five dollars less than the amount that was contributed by the previous administration. I am saying it again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, for two plus six according to the honourable minister, the amount is \$420. If you take away the family allowance programme or family allowance payments, you have \$300. This was exactly the same as it was before. So, I do not know what all the ranting and raving is about because the motion, Sir, is specifically related to the first; whereas here, "The New Social Assistance Programme in its diversion of federal funds discriminates against larger families." That is what we are talking about.

We are not talking about percentage increases when you include the family allowances. By the way, Mr. Speaker, we might add here that fifty per cent as it was, of course, under the previous administration, fifty per cent of the social services payments in this province come from the federal government.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. F. ROWE: From the people, that is right, Mr. Speaker. Okay.

In other words, the minister would not mind admitting that. Mr. Speaker, would you bring the honourable minister to order, that arrogant - well, I will not be unparliamentary - the arrogant minister. I will simply call him that.

This is what the whole point is about, Mr. Speaker. The motion refers to discrimination against the larger families. If we look at this scale here, we see that - and there is nothing against this - we see that proportionately speaking the smaller families get the greatest increase in social service payments, the smaller families. What we are concerned about are the larger families. It is as simple as that, Mr. Speaker. We are asking for a programme that is independent from and separate from the family allowance programme in Ottawa.

Now, while speaking to this particular motion, Mr. Speaker,

I might make a suggestion, a couple of suggestions to the minister and ask him to consider it in the administration of his department. The minister said that he is going to institute a programme of indexing the social service payments in order to keep in line with the increased cost of living, I believe. Now, this is what I was going to ask the minister, is this in fact going to be done on a quarterly basis or are we going to have periodic announcements of increases in social services at the will of the minister? It is a question that I would ask the minister, Has it been formalized? Are we going to have indexing on a quarterly basis?

MR. MURPHY: I really do not know. If the computer can do it for us, we will do it. No sweat there.

MR. F. ROWE: Well, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is a reasonable thing to do. It is a logical thing to do. It is what Ottawa is doing with respect to their various social service programmes.

MR. MURPHY: Inaudible.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, it is a sensible suggestion. I do not know why the minister has to become so arrogant once again. We did the minister the courtesy, Mr. Speaker, of keeping our mouths closed

while he was speaking and I would ask for the same courtesy from the minister at the present time, and I would ask Your Honour to rule on it.

MR. THOMS: He does not want to extend you the courtesy.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

I think we heard the Hon. Member for St. Barbe North ask the Minister of Social Services a question. He was in the process of answering. I presume he had the liberty to answer. Is the honourable member now asking that he be heard in silence?

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, yes I am certainly asking that I be heard in silence. I would expect an answer from the minister and I would expect the minister to stand up when he is answering the question and sit down when he is finished answering the question and to shut up when he sits down.

MR. SPEAKER: I would respectfully suggest to the Hon. Member for St. Barbe North that when a speaker is on his feet, the honourable member has no right to speak.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

It is a provocative motion that we are discussing. Honourable members are reminded that every one has the right to speak. If someone, who has already spoken, is given the right to speak again, I suggest that that once given be not taken away so that the person has the right to answer.

MR. F. B. ROWE: With all due respect, Mr. Speaker, I cannot quite understand what that -

MR. MURPHY: I did not, Sir, because he had already spoken in the debate and -

MR. F. B. ROWE: Is the minister asking a question?

MR. MURPHY: I do not know where I stand now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: (Inaudible).



MR. F. B. ROWE: That is the problem with the minister, Mr. Speaker, he does not know where he has been standing for the past two and one-half years.

MR. MURPHY: That a boy!

MR. F. B. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, I sincerely requested the minister if he would give some consideration to indexing on a quarterly basis. The minister has agreed to adjust that. There is another problem that has cropped up in my travelling throughout the district, Mr. Speaker, in particular and that is - I do not know whether there is any truth to this or not.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. F. B. ROWE: Sometimes where there is smoke, there is fire, Mr. Speaker.

It is my understanding that the various fieldmen or the welfare officers, of the Department of Social Services, are constantly receiving memos and directives and changes of regulations and rules from the head office here in Confederation Building.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. F. B. ROWE: The Minister of Social Services a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, was talking about the kind of life that a welfare officer has to live, the abuse that he has to take and he shed some tears on behalf of or for the welfare officers and I have to agree with him that some of them are working under very difficult circumstances. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that one of the difficulties and one of the problems that these welfare officers have is having a recipient come in one week and being told one thing, based on a certain regulation and then two weeks later the recipient comes back and he is told that the regulations have been changed and he has to do something else.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, do I have to stand this constant harassment?

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, do I have the right to be heard in silence?

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Stagg): Order please!

The honourable member is complaining about something which is really brought about by his own willingness to enter into a discussion with the honourable minister. If he should wish to make a speech that does not evoke responses or suggest responses, then he may do so. If he should make a speech which asks for responses and gets them, I find it very difficult to then substantiate his request in order to be heard in silence. I suggest the honourable member -

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, any questions that I have asked over the past three or four minutes have been rhetorical questions. When I want to ask the minister a question I will do so in the formal manner and ask him to reply to it and he does not have to reply to it. I am being constantly interrupted by the honourable minister and everybody in the House recognizes it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that half of the problems and half of the pains caused by the welfare officers in this province are caused by the fact that they are constantly getting a stream of directives, memos from the head office changing the regulations and rules and putting them in a rather embarrassing position with respect to the recipients who they are serving. Probably, there is a very good reason for these directives to be sent out. I would suggest that they be reduced in numbers. I will talk to the minister in private because it involves welfare officers and they can be easily identified. I would rather not bring the particular examples out in the House. It is a fact, generally speaking, that there are a tremendous number of these memorandums or directives coming from the office.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I intend to vote for this particular motion, because I have not yet heard from the other side anything that argues against the substance of this particular resolution and that is that this House draw up a programme of social assistance benefits completely independent of the federal family allowance plan and that is basically the essence of the resolution. I would further submit that chunking in the family allowance with the social service payments in this particular scale is to say the least confusing

and to say the least, could be deceiving if you are using these figures to calculate the percentage of increase that this government is bringing in with respect to social service payments. I would further suggest, Sir, that it is the larger families in this Province who need the greatest amount of social assistance on a relative basis. Obviously, they are getting a greater amount of money in absolute terms but on a relative basis they are being discriminated against. This is the essence of the whole motion and I, Sir, for one intend to vote for it.

MR. ROBERTS: Inaudible.

MR. MURPHY: Excellent speech.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): The member for Bonavista North.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I also rise in favour of this motion. It is a good motion I think brought forward by the honourable member for Bell Island. I believe the minister in speaking failed to touch on the motion at all. There are a few other points I would like to bring out.

During the fishing season of 1973 we had many of our fishermen in the northeast coast who could not operate because of the extreme ice conditions. During this period of time they were not, and I repeat, were not drawing welfare or were not drawing assistance under the U.I.C. Act.

MR. MORGAN: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly wish the honourable member for Bonavista South, if he is so interested that he would get into this debate and discuss the issues that these people are concerned with instead of mumbling in the back rows of the government benches as he normally does. He is scared to speak. He is scared to speak on redistribution. He is scared to speak on this and many other things. He waits until he gets out on open line somewhere and then contradicts his own government. It is more or less of a weekly episode for him so he can draw the support of the members in his district.

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order, please! Order, please! I did not get the introduction to the honourable member's remarks but certainly they do not appear to be relevant. I believe they are directed at the member for Bonavista South.

MR. ROBERTS: Who is not relevant either as Your Honour -

MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): I would suggest that the honourable member deal with the point under discussion.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying before I was so rudely interrupted by the member for Bonavista South, during the spring and early summer of 1973 the fishermen on the northeast coast were interrupted in their fishing operations because of the extreme ice conditions. Because of this, sometime in the winter of 1973-74, the Federal Government, the good Liberal Federal Government in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, thought that because of this late season in 1973 many of these fishermen should be compensated. As a matter of fact, all of the qualified fishermen along the northeast coast who qualify were compensated to the tune of \$300.

Many of these fishermen, Mr. Speaker, because of the poor fishing season in 1973 and the late fishing season found it necessary, the winter of 1973-74, to have to draw assistance under the Provincial-Federal Programme of Social Assistance. Mr. Speaker, because this \$300 was given to the fishermen who were on welfare at that time, because it was given to the fishermen, the Provincial Government felt that it should delete this \$300 from the payment that they were paying them under the welfare programme.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this to my mind is robbing the fishermen of benefits that were paid them by the Federal Government. Now this happened I know in many cases in my district and all along the northeast coast. This, Mr. Speaker, was robbery, was definitely robbery by the member for St. John's Centre.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! I am sure the Hon. Leader of the Opposition realizes that certainly a person standing outside the confines of the House has no right to be heard. I distinctly heard the Leader of the Opposition speak.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I believe -

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: No the Provincial Government deleted it from their welfare payments. It was highway robbery of the greatest magnitude. Here we have the minister in his shining white armour from Flower's Hill, you would think he was the Saviour of the welfare people, and here he is robbing them left, right, and centre, every chance he gets.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. THOMS: No point of order, there is no point of order to you my son, you do not know how to raise them.

MR. MURPHY: Am I robbing people right and left.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! The Minister of Social Services rose on a point of order, I will hear him.

MR. MURPHY: I did not rob anybody right or left or anything else, you know. If a man has income whether it is a fish dollar or a longshore dollar, Sir, it is income, there is nothing I can do about it, that is the rules. If he wants me to break the rules like someone else did, let her go. That is all I say but do not make charges that are not true.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): Order, please! I think the expression "Highway robbery" that the honourable member used was not used in this literal sense. However when it appears in Hansard, it will appear as just that "Highway robbery" which in fact is impugning the motives, integrity of a member of the House. Maybe the honourable member might rephrase his remarks, retract them would be the best route. But certainly I think he has in his vocabulary expressions that would amply describe it without using these unparliamentary words.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, if I said the minister was guilty of highway robbery no matter how true it is, if it is improper or if it is unparliamentary I will withdraw it. I would say however the minister and his department extracted from the unfortunate fishermen of this province, on the northeast coast, who were unfortunate enough to find themselves on welfare in the winter of 1973-1974 extracted from them \$300.00 which was justly due theirs and it was not just for the Provincial Government to take.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. We are not debating compensation to fishermen -

MR. THOMS: What about the poor welfare people that is what I am on.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. We are debating a resolution which states specifically that whereas a new social assistance programme discriminates against larger families. Now what that has to do with fishermen's compensation is beyond me, Mr. Speaker. So I would ask that the member speaking would be asked to be relevant in this debate and stay relevant.

MR. THOMS: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. I was not speaking specifically of fishermen's compensation, I was specifically stating that the government were extracting from the fishermen who were on welfare, they were extracting from their welfare payments money that they had rightfully earned while they were fishing or supposed to be fishing in the spring of 1973. This is what I was saying, Mr. Speaker, not specifically on the compensation to fishermen. I believe the Member for Bonavista South is rather mixed up in his point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (STAGG): I suggest that the debate on this resolution has been wide-ranging. The mover of the debate certainly diverged from the strict interpretation of the resolution, the minister in his reply at times may have wandered. I would suggest that debate is wide-ranging,

whether that is advisable or not, it is nevertheless part of the records. I do believe, however, that the honourable Member for Bonavista North was quite relevant and that he was about to make a point that was relevant. Maybe the fact that this is so would make it appear irrelevant while he is probably the most relevant of all.

MR. THOMS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. The Member for Bonavista South is shot down again as usual.

Now, Mr. Speaker, because of this extraction by the Department of Social Services from the poor welfare recipients of the northeast coast last winter, many of the families at that time found themselves on welfare and also found themselves without any income whatsoever. Or, if they were a large family they had very little income.

This, Mr. Speaker, put extra pressures upon the people at that time. They found themselves without any money to pay for the various services that they received. Many of them could not pay their grocery bills for a month -

MR. MORGAN: The federal government gave them -

MR. THOMS: The federal government gave three hundred dollars and the provincial government took it away from them. It is as simple as that. I like to think that the provincial government stole it away from them but I will not say that.

MR. MORGAN: They helped the farmers too and the fishermen the Federal Liberal Government.

MR. THOMS: The Federal Liberal Government helps everyone.

MR. MORGAN: They ignore the fishermen.

MR. THOMS: Everyone. It is the provincial government who take it out of the hands of the poor people of our province when the federal government gives it to them.

Such action as this, Mr. Speaker, is certainly not in good keeping with good government. Certainly it was never mentioned in any political campaign previously and I am sure they would not dare mention it again.



MR. SPEAKER (Stagg): Order please! This has nothing to do with what the honourable member is saying but I have a distinct buzz of conversation to my left here initiated, probably, by original mover of the motion, I am not sure. In any event I suggest that we have as much quiet in the Assembly as possible so that I as well as others can hear the honourable member.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I am up and down here so often it is hard to say where I am just now. I did have a few other points to bring to the attention of the minister with these unwarranted points of order.

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, because of this unnecessary and unwarranted and unfair extraction by the provincial government, by the Department of Social Services, the three hundred dollars from our welfare people, people who were on welfare at that time, because of this many of them found that they were without income during that period. As I say, many of our people on the northeast coast suffered because of it. Thank God, many of our people on the northeast coast will not forget it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the table that was given to us by the Department of Social Assistance that would more or less compare the previous payments of October 1973 and the new payments for January 1, 1974, these were definitely somewhat misleading. Of all the amounts stated in this scale, Mr. Speaker, take as an example a family of two parents and ten children who receive \$520.00. That, Mr. Speaker, is not true. That family only received \$420.00 from the provincial Department of Social Assistance.

MR. MURPHY: \$320,000.

MR. THOMS: \$320.00, right! Fifty per cent of this was paid for by the federal government. Also, the other two hundred dollars was paid for, one hundred per cent of it by the federal government. Therefore, in this case you have something like

sixty or seventy per cent of the payments to this family being paid by the federal government. Therefore, under this new scale that family, in particular, took a cut in its income from the provincial government. They actually took a severe cut.

MR. MURPHY: Did I say they did not?

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I am just pointing out exactly what happened.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Because the minister tries to take credit for producing fifty per cent of this \$520 when this is not so. It is definitely not so. The amount that he actually was donating to the welfare of this family, who was receiving a total of \$520 was only \$160.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: All the rest came from the good Liberal Government in Ottawa.

MR. ROBERTS:(Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. NEARY: You are not playing bingo -

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the only way that the Minister of Social Assistance can maybe push forward his programme is to try to interrupt and to interfere with the people who are speaking, continuously. His programme you cannot defend. There is no way you can defend it because it is a shameful programme.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Sure, before the election of 1972, they brought out the great new programme, five per cent - five dollars was it a person? When it came into effect it was only five dollars a family. Do you remember that?

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Ah, you were not minister then so you do not know very much about it. History is too much for you to consume.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, as far as many of these fishermen are concerned on the North East Coast, the provincial government at the present time owe them \$300. Many of the people who are on social assistance at the present time across our province find themselves short-changed because of the actions of the present Minister of Social Assistance.

MR. ROBERTS: Ask John Lundrigan what he thought of it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please!

Honourable members both to my left and to my right seem to want to interrupt the Hon. Member for Bonavista North. He does have the right to be heard in silence.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the present programme of social assistance in Newfoundland is terrible. It is a sham, it is in a mess, it is disgraceful. While the incomes of social assistance may have gone up, the cost of living is threefold. The programme at the present time is so rigid that it is not doing the job that it was set out to do. Definitely not! I have case upon case of people at the present time who are living in substandard houses. I have sent various letters to the officials of the department, to the different welfare officers, to the administrators and they said that because this is so and that is so, a certain person does not qualify.

Mr. Speaker, I know of one case where a chap is trying to building a house on his own, completely on his own.

MR. MORGAN: : Give us the name.

MR. THOMS: I can give the minister the name any time. The Member for Bonavista South, I am sure, has a lot of them.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, all he was asking for was \$600 so he could put his house out of the weather.

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: The department would not allow him any funds. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, that department or some other department of government, paid out \$17,000 to purchase a house for another welfare family. Now these are two extreme cases and I can give you names and I can show you the buildings.

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible).

MR. THOMS: This is a terrible situation.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is about time for the Ministers of Social Assistance to sit down and

to come to grips with the problems in social assistance in Newfoundland.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: It is about time to come up with a fair and equitable scale of payments to the various families who are on social assistance and not to be discriminating against large families. I have one family who at this present time have nine children going to school on social assistance. If the mothers' allowance was reinstated it would give this family a tremendous boost in the fall of the year to clothe these people. I had a letter from a woman the other day. She happens to be a separated woman and it is impossible for her to find the funds to clothe her children. She has told me that she cannot find the funds to give them clothes. Therefore she is going to have to take them out of school during the winter months. There are hundreds of families in the Province such as this and the Department of Social Assistance is not coming to their aid. They are not rising to the occasion.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I will heartily support this resolution and I congratulate the member for bringing it forward.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, in speaking now, Sir, I realize I close the debate on this resolution, Sir. Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Social Services stood in his place in this honourable House this afternoon -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: He showed again as he has done so often before, Sir, his incompetence. He showed the House his inability, Sir, to come to grips with the problems, with the matter that was outlined in the motion. He also showed, Sir, that he is a bad piece of business, that he is the ultimate in nastiness.

Sir, my colleague, the member for St. Barbe North mentioned this point about his references to the Mifflin Report. Sir, let me say this to the honourable member and I do not intend to get down and roll in the mud with the minister, Sir. I will just turn the other cheek, Sir, but I will say to the minister let those on the other side who are without sin cast the first stone. Sir, as I say I will just merely turn the other cheek but if I am provoked much more, Sir, by speakers from the other side of the House,

they might be sorry, Mr. Speaker. That minister sitting around the - no, I had better not say it, I had better not say it. I have gone far enough. Bad piece of business, Sir, a skinful of nastiness. He did not answer one of the points that I raised, Mr. Speaker, and I am proud, Mr. Speaker, I am proud and I do not care whether it is judge or a minister or a premier or anybody else who gives me full marks for looking after my district, Sir. I am proud of that fact, absolutely proud of it. At least when I was minister of that department, Sir, there was a captain there, there was a man that had a strong hand on the helm. I was no cabin boy. There was a captain there, Sir. I was no cabin boy and I guarantee you this, Sir, that I ran that department and if I ever get the chance again I will run the department. I will not have the hired help dictating to me and telling me what to do.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: - deputy minister.

MR. NEARY: I will not have to put my deputy minister on television to push a programme that is so weak that the minister could not justify its existence himself.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: Sir, I will just turn the other cheek to some of the statements the minister made this afternoon but I issue him fair warning that if he continues it that I am going to fight back. I have been completely exonerated in that report

of any wrong doing whatsoever. Mr. Speaker, if I did anything wrong would I not be prosecuted in the Court of Law?

MR. MURPHY: No, it was not in his terms of reference.

MR. NEARY: It was not in his terms of reference? Would not the Minister of Justice immediately launch a case against me?

MR. MURPHY: The Premier interceded for him.

MR. NEARY: Oh, the Premier interceded for me. The Premier has a couple of writs to serve on himself, so has the Minister of Justice. Does that make these honourable gentlemen guilty? No, of course not. There are other members over there who in the past have had writs served on them. Does the minister want to hear about these?

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, he does not want to hear about that. But, Sir, this is a good motion. It is a good motion. Maybe the administration does not - I know they are not going to vote for it, Sir, from what the minister has said. He is speaking for the administration.

MR. MURPHY: No I am not.

MR. NEARY: They are not going to vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, I intend now, Sir, to close the debate.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, I am not going to adjourn it. Mr. Speaker, I want to get the motion off the Order Paper if I can this afternoon, by asking the fair minded members on the government benches to vote for this motion because it is intended to give the people of this province who are forced to go on social assistance a decent standard of living.

MR. SPEAKER: It is six o'clock, are we going to vote on this motion before we finish? All those in favour of the motion "Aye". Those against the motion "Nay". In my opinion the "Nays" have it.

On motion the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday December 5, 1974, at 3:00 P.M.