



PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND

**THIRTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF
NEWFOUNDLAND**

Volume 3

3rd. Session

Number 34

VERBATIM REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 1974

SPEAKER: THE HONOURABLE JAMES M. RUSSELL

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Hon. Minister of Tourism.

HON. T. M. DOYLE (MINISTER OF TOURISM): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal privilege, I suppose. I want to correct a complete inaccuracy that appears on page three of this morning's "Daily News" as part of an overall report of the debate in this House yesterday afternoon in connection with the Supplementary Supply Bill for my Department of Tourism.

One sentence in particular that is all I am referring to. The sentence starting; "Replying to White Bay North MHA William Rowe, Mr. Doyle said the total monies being paid to George McClean," I am not worried about the misspelling of the name, "Ltd., is \$112,000 through Horizons Communications."

I would like to point out that (a) I did not say that; (b) it is not correct and (c) I will repeat what I repeated about six times yesterday: That to the best of my knowledge there is no connection whatsoever between Mr. McLean or Horizon. I think perhaps the reporter was confused with three or four various subheads. The only figure that quotes \$112,000 is a different one entirely, which is the one doing with the calendars. I just want to clear the matter, that the sentence which says; "Being paid to George McLean is \$112,000 through Horizons Communications." I feel it should be corrected because it is not a correct statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

HON. L. D. BARRY (MINISTER OF MINES AND ENERGY): Mr. Speaker, I have a brief statement that I would like to make with respect to a matter raised in the "Evening Telegram" of yesterday's date, Tuesday, March 26. I have a copy of the paper to table, Mr. Speaker. This is an article headed "Contract termed a political decision," by Bob Wakelin, Telegram Staff Writer."

This is another example of some great investigating reporting, Mr. Speaker. We have some allegations made here. At no time was the

question put to me as Minister of Mines and Energy, the minister responsible for the Power Commission with respect to this matter. The matter involves the awarding of the contract to act as insurance brokers for the Power Commission. Lo and behold! We find that government are being criticized and there allegations of political patronage made because the contract was awarded to one of the companies making the lowest tender. Now that is a switch, Mr. Speaker.

To give the House information with respect to the award of this contract, tenders were called, requests for proposals were called. The contract was finally awarded to Munn's Insurance Limited Company who quoted an amount significantly less than the company presently holding the contract. There was another tender, Mr. Speaker, for the same amount. There were two low tenders, in other words, identically quotes based on a percentage of the net premium.

Then, Mr. Speaker, it came down to government having to make a decision as to whether it would go for the low tender route, accept the low tender or whether it would base the award of the contract on other considerations. There are, Mr. Speaker, certain arguments that can be raised against the awarding of low tenders in all situations. The newspaper article refers to an allegation that the Power Commission was recommending that the contract remain with the company presently holding it, Crosbie and Company Limited.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question that the services performed by Crosbie and Company have been wholly and completely satisfactory and as a matter of fact they have provided excellent service during the time they have been the insurance brokers for the commission. Mr. Speaker, government's decision had to be whether we strive for this for the upholding of its standards that our government have been adamantly pushing for ever since coming into office, namely; whether we must get away from these discretionary awards and make awards based on the lowest tender or whether we should go along with what could possibly be the easiest and safest and most comfortable route of

giving it to the company that had the contract at the time.

Because there is no question, Mr. Speaker, the working relationship between Crosbie and Company and the Power Commission have been good. There is no question, Mr. Speaker, that there are feelings on the part of individuals in the commission that they would have liked to continued that relationship. But, Mr. Speaker, it was a decision for government as to whether or not we award the contract to the lowest tender. This was done, Mr. Speaker.

with respect to the competence of the company to which the award was made, this is a Newfoundland company employing Newfoundlanders and it has access and has an arrangement with and this was one of the conditions prior to the award of the tender to ensure that the expertise was available because it is a pretty complex complicated area, Mr. Speaker, we are into. There is engineering expertise and so on necessary but Munn's Insurance has an arrangement with Marsh McLellan of Toronto an arrangement I should add that will cost government or the commission not one red cent more.

That company is one of the largest insurance companies in Canada. It has the necessary engineering expertise. The company is the insurers, as a matter of fact, for Churchill Falls Corporation, the company has been used by the power commission in the past, in the first years of placement of insurance. Mr. Speaker, there is no question, in our opinion, that the expertise will be provided by Munn's Insurance and there is no reason that we could see why this lowest tender should not have been accepted and why the work should not have been spread around and made available to any company that wanted to bid and could come in in the low tender.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista South:

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave of this House to present a petition from the District of Trinity South. The reason I am presenting the petition is that the honourable member for the district has been unable to be in his seat for the past two or three sittings because of illness.

The petition is from 241 residents of the Community of Chance Cove in Trinity South and the prayer of the petition is that the road leading from the Trans Canada Highway, at the Bellvue Beach intersection through the community of Chance Cove, be upgraded and paved. They stress the importance in their prayer that the fact that school buses are using this road extensively and commercial vehicles such as large truck that are hauling fish from the Community of Chance Cove.

Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and I hope that if the total funds this year, 1974, the fiscal year, will not be available for the upgrading and paving, at least the upgrading be commenced this year. Hopefully, funds will be forthcoming for the completion of the paving as well. I move, Mr. Speaker, that the petition be tabled in this Assembly and passed along to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Bonavista North:

MR. PAUL. S. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House, I rise in support of the petition presented by the Member for Bonavista South. I realize his concern for the residents of the area, I realize the concern of the residents for the need of upgrading and paving for the road, especially through the community, because, Mr. Speaker, during the summer months in most of our outlying communities where there is no pavement it is almost impossible to live properly without swallowing a certain amount of dust each year.

Also, Mr. Speaker, our outport people believe in placing their clothes on clotheslines outdoors and this dust through their communities hampers this operation. Mr. Speaker, I trust that within the estimates of the Department of Transportation and Communications, this year, that the minister will see fit to place enough money under the necessary headings so that this project can be undertaken during this coming season.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

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

MR. F.B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the honourable the Member for Bell Island I would like to ask the Minister of Manpower if any steps have been taken by his department to protect the employment, the seniority, the pension rights and other fringe benefits of the twenty-eight or so employees who will be affected by the transfer of the federal employees

in the Department of Public Works fire station at Pleasantville to the provincial Department of Justice?

MR. ROUSSEAU: I have to take that question as notice. I am sorry I am not familiar with it at all. I will take it as notice and try and get an answer for the honourable member.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, supplementary, I realize that the transfer of the assets probably comes under the Minister of Justice, however it is a civil rights matter and I was wondering if the minister would endeavour to contact the Deputy Minister of Justice to find out just what exactly is going on here because it is a very serious matter.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

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

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the honourable Minister of Education. Has the Minister of Education received or made any representation to the Avalon Consolidated School Board in connection with the impending strike of plant employees because of the fact that the school board has rejected a union demand of \$1.10 per hour? That is the increase.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Education.

HON. G. OTTENHEIMER, Minister of Education: Mr. Speaker, I have received no communication from the Avalon Consolidated School Board with respect to this matter between themselves and their employees.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, is there any truth to the statement as I have heard that the Operating Engineers Union is being forced to fight the school board's battle for more operating money for the school boards?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the rumour and I could not comment on it at all. The two parties to the agreement presumably discuss and negotiate as do parties to collective agreements, employers and employees throughout the province. They have not attempted to involve me in it. Of course the Department of Education is not the department under which labour disputes are referred, I have received

absolutely no communication from the school board or from the union.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In view of the petition that was presented by the member for Carbonear yesterday calling for the incorporation of Salmon Cove, can the minister give some indication of the speed or degree to which such applications are being processed and approved at the present time?

HON. H. R. V. EARLE, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing:

Mr. Speaker, I think this House will be aware we have many applications coming in at all times. They are going through the divisions of my department as quickly as possible.

MR. F. ROWE: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I kind of asked this question earlier in the session but what I am trying to get at is there a freeze or a certain amount of hesitation on the part of the minister's department to process such applications for incorporation and is there any definite difference between the speed with which applications for incorporation of local improvement district are dealt with as compared with applications for municipal councils, the town councils?

MR. EARLE: Mr. Speaker, there is no hesitation on the part of my officials or my department generally. There was for a period as the honourable member probably is aware, some delay in processing applications because we were waiting on the Report of the Royal Commission on Municipal Government. But since then several communities have been incorporated and the thing is proceeding as usual. There is no freeze on it at the moment and this particular application will receive prompt attention.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. EARLE: Yes, community councils, local improvement districts and town councils.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Bonavista North.

MR. P. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder could the Minister of Municipal Affairs try to get the information for me as to whether or not the Town of Burnside is getting incorporated? I think the requests have been in for over a year, to my knowledge it has not been yet, but is there any action being taken?

MR. EARLE: I will try to get the information, Mr. Speaker, for the honourable member. There is quite a backlog down there of applications and I do not know at the moment the position of any particular one of them.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the honourable the Minister of Transportation and Communication: I am wanting to know whether any initiative had been taken, Mr. Speaker, to provide either additional or replacement equipment to take care of necessary maintenance in the Morrisville, Milltown, St. Alban's area. I should point out as a background that the area from the intersection at South East Brook in Milltown over to St. Alban's has been graded quite recently but the area from the intersection through Milltown into Morrisville has not been graded at all recently.

The reason that I am hearing is that there is no equipment, that both graders normally attached to the Bay D'Espoir Depot are in Grand Falls awaiting servicing. I wonder would the minister indicate what steps his department are taking to provide either the equipment that should be there or some replacement equipment to take care of this rather necessary maintenance?

MR. T.P. HICKEY (MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION): Mr. Speaker, I have been advised that a couple of pieces of equipment have been assigned to that area, a couple of additional pieces of equipment I should say. That is about all that I can say at this time except to point out to the honourable member that we have a problem in the Grand Falls district, Grand Falls region, in so far as mechanics are concerned and we are doing everything we can to find mechanics. It is just a problem which has been with us for some time and we just cannot seem to find a solution to it.

Because of this, the equipment is not repaired as quickly as we would like to have it and of course this creates more stress and strain on the existing equipment. It means that the equipment does not get out of the garage as quickly as we want it. However, this is the information I have, that there has been an effort made to put additional pieces of equipment in and to grade the road as the honourable member indicates.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a further question for the minister on another subject, that of the Bay D'Espoir highway. I wired the minister just

over a week ago requesting this information. I do not have an answer at the moment.

I noticed in the paper today that tenders have been called for two sections of the Bay D'Espoir Highway. In view of these points, Mr. Speaker, I wonder would the minister indicate to the House what plans - this is the question I asked eight days ago in a telegram - his department has for the upgrading of the Bay D'Espoir highway in the present year, that is to say the coming summer, if you like?

MR. HICKEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I acknowledged the telegram from the honourable member and I must confess that I have been out of my office. I have a reply here right at the moment that I am going through before signing it. I am sorry that I have not been able to get the answer to him before this time.

With regards to the Bay D'Espoir Highway the only thing I can tell him at the moment, as I do not have details with me right now, the only thing I can tell him is that the work as committed will be continued. I cannot give him details as to miles and how many miles and so on but I will be quite pleased to get it for him.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question: Would the minister include what kind of information in his response to my telegram?

MR. HICKEY: It is not included as such, possibly in the kind of detail that the honourable member would like it. There is a reference to it. I am sure it answers some of his questions with regards to the Bay D'Espoir Highway. I will have to go over it again and see if it answers his questions fully. Maybe it does.

HON. E. ROBERTS (LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION): Before we proceed, a question - I am not sure this should go to the Finance Minister or the Government House Leader, about this BRINCO statement by the Premier. I gather he is back at work today. He is over his illness. It is a little like waiting for the other shoe to drop, being in an hotel room and hearing one shoe drop in the room above and then waiting for the other one to drop on the floor.

Is there any indication whether that statement will be made today? I think I know the answer but I would like to have it on the record for the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable the Minister of Finance:

HON. J.C.CROSBIE (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, there will be a statement made when the statement is ready to be made. Just when that will be remains to be seen. As soon as possible!

HON. E.M.ROBERTS: Is it likely this afternoon?

MR. CROSBIE: I cannot commit myself.

MR. W.N.ROWE: They have him in the wringer by the sound of it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a question to the honourable Minister of Fisheries: In view of the fact that many months have now expired since the government made public that the LaScie fish plant was going to have another operator or maybe the same operator but under a different situation, in fact the Job contract, the three year contract expired several months ago, I believe, in view of that fact would the minister now be in a position to let the House know when the LaScie fish plant will have an operator? Sir, I do not mean to get into a debate or anything on it but the main reason that I am asking the question is that I have been contacted by many fishermen who are now trying to fit out themselves for the fishery and have relied on credit from the plant in the past and now find themselves in very difficult straits. I would like to have some information to convey to these fishermen, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Fisheries:

HON. H.A.COLLINS (Minister of Fisheries): Mr. Speaker, we called for proposals for leasing or purchasing the LaScie plant, around the end of the year. I do not know if it was in December or early January which would be the beginning of this year, of course. We received several proposals. I might say that a lot of them have been of the most unreal nature but I can appreciate the concern of the honourable member and the people of LaScie who are looking forward to prosecuting the fishery this year. I can say that we should be in a position within the next couple of weeks to announce who the operator of the plant will be this coming season.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Hermitage:

MR. R.SIMMONS: I have a question for the Minister of Transportation in the absence of the Premier to whom I would prefer to direct this question and it would probably be more appropriately directed to him. The reason will become obvious as I ask the question, I believe.

I would like to know whether the minister could indicate to the House either now or would he undertake to find out the information, whether the commitment made by the Premier last fall to the people of Gaultois that a ferry service would be provided between Gaultois and Hermitage, whether that commitment is part of the plans for this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister of Transportation and Communications:

HON. T.V.HICKEY (Minister of Transportation and Communications): I will have to take the question under advisement, obviously.

HON. J.C.CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a message from his Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

MR. SPEAKER: "To the honourable Minister of Finance: I the Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Newfoundland transmit estimates and sums required for the public services of the province for the year ending the 31 st. of March 1975, by way of Interim Supply.

In accordance with the provisions of the British North America Act of 1867, as amended, I recommend these estimates to the House of Assembly." Signed by the Lieutenant Governor.

On motion that the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions for the granting of Interim Supply to Her Majesty, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order!

RESOLUTION: That it is expedient to introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the public service for the financial year ending the 31st. day of March one thousand nine hundred and seventy-five the initial sum of one hundred and three million four hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$103, 450,000).

HEAD I, Department, Consolidated Fund Services, Amount \$50,000

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I assume that we will follow

in the usual procedure in that we will go through these matters item by item in Committee of Supply and then once we are finished with that the bill will go through the usual readings.

Now, Mr. Chairman, this bill on Interim Supply is necessary in order to provide funds for the government for the months of April and May of this year. The government's financial year ends March 31. Whether or not a budget had been brought down this week or last week we would still of course have to had Interim Supply because it usually takes three or four weeks for the estimates to be discussed and approved or sometimes even longer than that.

So what we are asking for, Mr. Chairman, is \$103,450,000 to ensure that we have sufficient monies to carry on the government for April and May. The detailed estimates for next year are at the printers. The budget would have been brought down last week had there not been a supervening event, namely; this BRINCO matter which has occupied myself and several officials who would have worked on the budget for quite a time now. I am hoping and I will not know until this weekend when I can get a look at it all but I would certainly hope to have the budget down in the week that starts April 8, before we adjourn for the Easter weekend or whatever happens then. That is what we will be aiming for. At that time the detailed estimates will be presented to the House.

Mr. Chairman, I think what is required is an explanation of why this money is needed for the two month period. So if it is all right, I might start with the consolidated funds services unless somebody opposite wants to make a general comment.

HON. E. M. ROBERTS (LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION): Mr. Chairman, I only want to make a general comment or two because I think the procedure outlined by the minister as he says, the procedure which has been in effect for some time and I think will meet the need because there will be ample opportunity, I have no doubt, to debate the main estimates at some length, the length they deserve and require.

I think the only point that I would make really is that by my calculations the amount we are being requested to vote, about \$103,450,000, is substantially more than last year. That is not unexpected but I would

ask ministers when they present their request to the committee and true it is in a general way, if they could indicate to the committee, again in outline, in broad outline, there will be ample opportunity to debate the details and I assure the committee we intend to make sure the details are debated, to indicate in a broad way where the increased money is going. I assume part of it is for increased staff costs, reflects the salary increases which will become payable as of April 1, the salary increases which were negotiated over the past few months.

Some of it though may be for new programmes or new services and that is very fine and very much welcomed but I would be grateful if ministers could indicate whether there are in these estimates any funds for new services. Now there is an important point of principle there, Mr. Chairman. We are being asked to produce what amounts to be a blank cheque to Her Majesty's Government to give them blanket authority to spend \$103 millions. That is fine. There is a need for it. Although there is a need for it, the need could have been obviated, the government did not have to wait until the 27th. day of March before bringing in this. When the Minister of Finance was on this side and we were on that side, he used to make some eloquent statements about having the budget in and all of that. The last two or three years he has been very good himself. But be that as it may or for whatever the reasons are, we are faced with this situation. We do not object to it as such and we have no intention of prolonging the debate unduly and no intention of going into it in great detail at this time but I think we are within our rights to ask the ministers either for an assurance that there are no new programmes being authorized in these amounts or if there are new programmes some indication of what they are. I think that is reasonable because, for example, if the Minister of Manpower is being given the right to spend up to \$300,000 that is his request,

if that is merely to go to carry on continuing programmes, presently existing programmes, programmes about which this House and committee are informed, that is obviously one thing, that is fair enough and maybe he only needs \$286,000 but who is to worry? I mean in due course we will have time for that sort of detail.

If on the other hand, included in that head of expenditure are eighty-seven new programmes, some of which might involve the province in substantial expenditure, then I think we have a right as a committee to know about them, and the minister is nodding. I think he and I are in agreement on it because you know it is a fundamental right the House shall pass on all heads of expenditure, all items of expenditure before they are embarked upon. So I think we would make that request of the ministers as they present their requests. I think it is reasonable and I think too that the ministers who approach it in that reasonable spirit will probably find a relatively easy and gentle passage at our hands. We are not in a conciliatory mood, our job is to be the opposition and we are, but we are in a peaceful mood today. The storm is outside but there will be a storm inside if ministers, as some have in the past, tend to get abrasive or sarcastic or attempt to withhold information, then we shall quite properly become concerned; the sort of performance we witnessed yesterday from the senior member from Harbour Main who gave a bit of a text book example of how not to get an easy passage of one's estimates.

The only other point I would make, Mr. Chairman, at this time, is that last year the Interim Supply Bill was about \$86 million, rounded off to the nearest million and the total expenditure was about \$680 millions in the main estimates, adding - let us call it \$700 million in rounded off, adding in the supplementary supply. This year the amount of \$103 million is being asked on interim supply, that would indicate a total expenditure last year, \$85 million to \$700 million is roughly one-eighth million, that would indicate in other words a total expenditure by the province this year of at least \$800 million and of course that amount would have to be exclusive of any amount that may be spent

to acquire the shares of BRINCO or whatever it is the government eventually decide to ask the House to do and whatever it is the House may approve.

So that would indicate that the Minister of Finance's total expenditure would be at least \$800 million this year, an interesting figure, a lot of money, and we shall look forward with interest to hearing his Budget Speech and then the debates which follow it. Having said that, I am quite prepared, unless the minister has anything on Consolidated Fund Services to suggest that Head I - do any of my colleagues have anything on Consolidated Fund Services? Go ahead.

MR. WM. ROWE: Generally speaking.

MR. ROBERTS: Or anything on the general head.

MR. CROSBIE: No, I was just going to ask for consent to do Head XII first because the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, for certain personal reasons, may have to leave this afternoon and will not be here tomorrow, and I know he wants to say some general words first.

MR. WM. ROWE: Generally, Mr. Chairman, we have no objections at all to doing them in whatever order the minister wants to, to accommodate the minister, but generally speaking, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a word or two really following along to its logical conclusion a point made by the Leader of the Opposition concerning the government coming into the Legislature now on the twenty-seventh day of March with Interim Supply requests. This House opened what? How many sessions did we have here?

MR. ROBERTS: Thirty.

MR. WM. ROWE: Thirty days we have sat in -

MR. ROBERTS: Thirty sitting days.

MR. WM. ROWE: Thirty sitting days we have sat in this House. During that time, Mr. Chairman, I am not being irrelevant I do not think, during that time the government kept calling the Address in Reply but no legislation to the House to speak of except of the most minor nature. Now, Sir, three days before the end of the financial year, in we come with

Interim Supply. Now the fact that the Minister of Finance brings in Interim Supply at this date is not really my point. My point is this, the management of the House and committees of the House this year, Sir, has been completely atrocious and I would say unprecedented. I do not think there can be no problem at all from the Minister of Finance's standpoint as to why he did not bring in the main estimates of this House a week or two ago. He says his Budget Speech would have been brought down a couple of weeks ago had not the BRINCO think intervened.

Well, Sir, we have been doing nothing in this House for the last three or four weeks

six weeks, thirty sitting days.

MR. ROBERTS: We stood adjourned for ten days or something.

MR. W. ROWE: We adjourned the House for two weeks I think while one or two ministers went up, back and forth from here to Montreal or from here to London, on the BRINCO thing. If there be any waste of time in this House or in the committee, Sir, I think the public should know that the government has to bear the responsibility for it. If the Minister of Finance had brought in his budget last week or a week or two ago, the fact that a couple of ministers might have been absent on matters, however important they might be, is largely irrelevant. So what!

If there are eighteen or nineteen in the ministry who can come into this House and defend their departmental expenditures, if he had brought in the main estimates a couple of weeks ago, we could have spent a week or so on them and this stage now he could have brought in an interim supply bill and we would not even debate it, just put it through as a matter of course, because we would know that we were already debating the main estimates on an item by item basis.

Now, of course, he brings in the interim supply, the general headings of interim supply where there are no subheads at all listed and we are forced to fish around and try to find out what is going on. As the Leader of the Opposition said, "Are there any new programmes or not?" We have to just fish around, go on fishing expeditions trying to find out information when really, Sir, we should at this stage be dealing with nothing but the main estimates. We will get those through the House in whatever time it takes; an interim supply bill would be a pure formality at most. Instead we are here now and we feel duty bound as members of the opposition to question the government and the ministers on various things.

So, there has to be a certain duplication of effort and a duplication of time and a duplication of information and questions back and forth across

the House. But, I would like to make that point, Sir, that general point on the main motion before the committee, that this government this year has wasted considerable time on the part of the members and on the part of the people of this province and on the part of the civil servants by not showing any leadership with regard to the budget, with regard to interim supply, with regard to legislation, with regard to anything. Then to add insult to injury, Mr. Chairman, we see people like the House Leader going on television or elsewhere in his own inimitable way and saying that the opposition is wasting time in this House.

The opposition is not wasting time, Sir. We have no control over what business is called in this honourable House. We have to debate whatever motions are called by the government House Leader and he has called the Address in Reply and very little else. Now, he has waited until the (what is it?) the twenty-seventh day of this month to call interim supply and now we have to wait for another two weeks before the main estimates come before the House. That is not our fault, Sir, it is the fault of the House Leader and his inefficient colleagues. The press should know that, Mr. Chairman, and the public should know that.

With those few mild remarks, Sir, setting the tone, we can now move to Consolidated Fund Services.

MR. MARSHALL: I do not want to precipitate a debate, Mr. Chairman. It is the last thing in the world that I would think of doing. I would just point out that the Address in Reply is set down by constitutional practice. We have debated it for a long time. Seventy-five per cent of the talking, I think the record will show, emanated from the official opposition. So that if we have had such a colossal waste of time, let us chalk seventy-five per cent of it up to the opposition.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. STAGG): Shall Head of Expenditure 1 carried.

MR. MARSHALL: Oh, Mr. Chairman, I think we are doing number 11, are we not?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Number 12.

MR. MARSHALL: Number 12, Accounts of the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. STAGG): Order, please.

I think we did call Head of Expenditure 1 to get the ball rolling.

On motion Head of Expenditure 1 carried.

Head 12, Forestry and Agriculture, \$1.6 million.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Chairman, there are no new programmes being indicated here in this request for expenditure. It breaks down the various parts which are a continuation of programmes of last year which were debated in the budget debate.

General Administration, \$44,000; Forestry, \$532,000; Crown Lands, \$143,000; Agriculture, \$723,000

the Gros Morn National Park \$130,000; minister's office \$6,800 and miscellaneous \$20,000, which is a total of \$1,600,000. We have no, again I emphasize, no new programmes indicated here. Any new programmes that the Forestry and Agriculture Department will have and we will have some, will be announced or brought out when the main budget comes before the House.

With that I do not think there is anything further I can say but I will try to answer questions from the honourable members if they have any.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for Bonavista North:

MR. THOMS: Mr. Chairman, I do have a few questions I believe for the honourable minister. We have been sitting in this honourable House now for seven weeks and I have, almost daily, repeatedly asked the minister when he is going to publish the report on the Forestry Task Force. In early February he promised me it would be before the House before the end of February. Well, February came and it disappeared, now March has almost disappeared and there is no sign of that Task Force Report yet. Could the minister today inform this House when he intends to present this report to the Assembly because it is my information that the minister has had that report now for, if not a year, almost a year.

I think he has had long enough to study it and I think he is duty bound to present that report to the Assembly and also to make it public to the people of Newfoundland.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to know what is happening with the complex in Corner Brook? That is the complex thing, the agricultural building there, the abattoir, whether this is still under construction and if progress is being made on it? Could the minister inform us approximately what time this building will be in operation? Also, if plans are going ahead with the producers to make sure that an adequate supply will be coming forth to keep the building operating?

Also, Mr. Speaker, I believe there should be at least one new programme or one new project since the last project and that is

the potato seed farm in Glenwood. I believe the minister announced early last summer that a 1,000 acre potato seed farm would be undertaken by his department and I understand that some work was carried out on it. I wonder could the minister give us a report on that. When does he expect this farm to be in operation?

Also, Mr. Speaker, there is another matter I would like to raise, a rather ticklish one. It is my understanding that during the fall of 1973, I am sorry! During the spring of 1973, there were a number of young men hired on as assistant forest rangers. For some unknown reason or other these assistant forest rangers were promoted to ranger number (1). In their promotion they received more money than the rangers number (1) that were already in existence. Some of these rangers have been working with the department for twenty-four years and I understand that many of these rangers are not at all happy with the situation. They feel they have been by-passed, their seniority has not been recognized and I wonder if the minister could give us some idea as to exactly what happened in this regard and if steps are being taken to correct the situation, because I believe at the present time there is a possible bomb there that could explode any day in the minister's face.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, on the first question asked by the honourable gentleman, the Forestry Task Force

Report, I have nothing further to say on it other than what I have already said in the House on various occasions. As I understand it, we are going to release it. I refer to a comment made by the honourable minister that we are duty bound to release this. This of course is a lot of nonsense. The Forest Task Force Report or all reports of that kind are internal government documents and it is completely up to government whether we release it or not. To say that we are duty bound to release the Task Force Report is the same as to say that we are duty bound to release the recommendation that I might make to the cabinet, which of course is utter nonsense.

We will release it but we will release it only because we feel that it is in the public's interest to release it. If the government want at some time in the future not to release the report then it is completely government's option not to release it. There is no duty bound thing to it. It is not a document that was authorized by the House of Assembly, it is a document that was authorized by government. That I hope clears up that matter.

As far as the complex in Corner Brook is concerned, the complex is completed and ready to operate. There are one or two producers in the broiler operations on the West Coast. We are trying desperately to get other people into broiler and hog production on the West Coast so that we can use the Corner Brook Abattoir. The abattoir in Corner Brook, as all members are aware by this time, a comedy of errors from the time of conception to the time it was finished both with the construction end of it, with the architectural end of it, every other phase that you could mention. It was a political move by the last government. The abattoir, I may get raked over the coals in Corner Brook for saying this but it should have been built in St. John's instead of Corner Brook because this is where the production is. But in any case somebody in their infinite wisdom decided to put an abattoir in Corner Brook before there was either hog or broiler producers on that coast.

In any case what we have to do now is try and build up the production in the Western Area of Newfoundland so that we can try to make some sense out of building, a large \$3 million complex in Corner

Brook. It is going to take some time. It is probably going to take four to five years before that abattoir is really into full production. It is going to take that long to get the people, the broiler producers and the hog producers off the ground.

The potato seed farm - we ran into some problems with the land. We do have it straightened out now. We will have the potato seed farm in operation next year. However, as the honourable member is aware, it will be impossible to supply seed potatoes this coming year but we will be able to supply them the following year. The land is, no doubt as some honourable members are aware, or at least the rights to the land were owned by Bowaters. We ran into some trouble but it was straightened out later in the fall.

I am not aware of the number of people who were hired as assistant forest rangers and promoted to Ranger I. I do know there were some problems and there are some problems in classifications and the different rates of pay that forest rangers are receiving in the service. I have talked to a number of people about this and I would - it appears to me that the trouble lies in the collective agreements that have been signed in the various intricacies, machinations or whatever that are involved in those collective agreements.

Now I am not saying that to blame the collective agreement as such. I think the people who worked it out, both treasury board and the unions, were sincere in their efforts but certainly each time that we seem to get something like that straightened out, the proper classifications and proper seniority and the proper rate of seniority and this sort of thing straightened out, a new collective agreement comes along and throws the whole thing out of kilter. Collective agreements as such, being involved with unions in the past, I know relate to the work force as a whole rather than taking into account individual problems.

One of the problems that arose

one of the problems that arose after the second-last collective agreement was that forest rangers who were recently promoted got more money than forest rangers who had been there for a number of years for some reason or another. I have tried to get my staff to explain this to me but I do not think anybody really understands it.

However, we are trying to get it straightened out. We are trying to solve the problem but how soon it will be solved I do not know.

I think these are all the questions that the honourable member has asked. If there are any more I will be only too happy to try to answer them at least.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could have a quorum count please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have a quorum.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder could the minister inform us if there has been any negotiations going on or any plans being made to either enlarge the present abattoir here in St. John's or to build a new one? Because, Mr. Chairman, at the present time the accommodations at Pleasantville are somewhat overcrowded and there is no room at all for any expansion in the St. John's or even in the Avalon Area for our hog producers or our broiler producers. Many of them, because they cannot expand, are running into some financial difficulties and one would not dare predict what would happen if this situation continues.

It is my contention that something should be done. Something has to be done fast in order to maintain our present producers so that they can expand and also to encourage new producers into the area. I wonder if the minister could give us some information along these lines?

MR. MAYNARD: Basically, Mr. Chairman, the position of the department is that as far as the processing and marketing facility in St. John's is concerned, we would like to see private enterprise enter into the field. Unfortunately, up to this date we have not found anyone in the private sector of the economy who is willing to get into the

processing and marketing business. We think that there are people who are interested. It may take some incentive on government's part to get them actually into production but this is what we are looking for.

We are not anxious to continue in the abattoir business in St. John's or, for that matter, anywhere else in the province. Newfoundland is the only province in Canada that runs a processing and marketing facility. It should not be a function of the Department of Agriculture nor any other department of government to be doing this. It should be the function of the Department of Agriculture to be fostering and promoting the producers on the primary level, therefore, we have been looking around for people who may be interested.

We have talked to a number of national companies; we talked to some local people, all of whom have run into problems of one kind or another. If there be no one willing or would be willing to go into this type of business either nationally or locally, and we would prefer someone locally, then we will have to, possibly, from the point of view of service to the farmer, either renew the abattoir in St. John's or expand it or build a new one. I do not feel that the present building and the present equipment is capable of being expanded to any great degree of efficiency.

As for the present producers being in financial difficulties, that may be so but it is not directly related to the abattoir itself. We have just recently changed some of the regulations or the methods of operation and payments and this sort of thing in the abattoir, which has relieved some of the financial burdens on the producers a fair amount. As far as new producers getting into business, the honourable gentleman is right, there is no room to accommodate any new producers in the area at the present time. We would like to be able to do this from a departmental point of view, in helping them get started, but we would not anticipate that we

should get into further processing and marketing facilities. I refer back to the Corner Brook abattoir. If the money had been wisely spent, of course, the Corner Brook abattoir would have been situated in St. John's where the greatest market is, where the greatest potential is for agricultural products and we would not have the problems that we have now. First of all we have the problem of an abattoir in Corner Brook, which we cannot use for the next two or three years; and secondly, we have a dilapidated abattoir in St. John's which we can use. If we had a new one here, we have the production, if we had a new abattoir - it is sort of an ironical situation that we have the new abattoir 450 miles away from the production but that is the way it is and that is the way, unfortunately, this government have had to live with it.

MR. THOMS: I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the minister can tell us what action is being taken within the Crown Lands section of his department to speed up the applications for land, especially for farmers and also for people who are seeking land to build houses on? I understand that at the present time it is taking a considerable length of time to get an application approved. I wonder if there is a programme to speed up the applications within the Crown Lands office?

MR. MAYNARD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have gone through an analysis of the Crown Lands situation, in the processing of applications. We have concentrated on the section of the Crown Lands and Surveys Division which deals directly with the public and which is the one that is the most concern to the public. We are now about to hire thirteen or fourteen new staff and we will take on more if necessary. One of the great faults with Crown Lands Division is that we were trying to operate with the same number of staff which were in the division back in 1935 I believe, which was twenty-eight.

The number of applications per year coming in 1935 was approximately 200 and the number of applications per year coming in in 1973 was around 3,000. It can easily be seen that the number of staff

available - when I say twenty-eight staff, I am talking about draftsmen, surveyors, everything, We are only talking about probably eight or nine people who are actually dealing with the public and their applications. We are taking on more staff and we are also changing around the system, the old, antiquated system of dealing with applications and funneling them through to the various authorities and various systems, a system which has been used back since 1940, 1930, something like that.

We are also experimenting now (it is working out quite well) with aerial photography, especially in the area of summer cottage applications and residential applications. We find that a great number of applications for residential or summer cottages can be eliminated right at the start because from aerial photography we can determine whether it is a good site, whether it is a medium type site or whatever. The person who is applying can get an answer back at least within a matter of three or four weeks compared to, in some cases, two or three years previously. Now this is not all going to work out overnight. It is going to take some time. Our aim is to have the Crown Lands Division completely revamped and completely streamlined hopefully by the last of July of this year. That is the section that deals with the public. The revamping or streamlining of the other sections will have to come at a later date. I think these are the parts which are most important as far as the public are concerned.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, just a short question relating to my District of St. Barbe North. There is a lot of land up there tied up by Bowater's concessions. There are two separate things. There are a number of

individuals in the district who are interested in setting up forest facilities on what amounts to Bowater concessions. There is some confusion as to whether or not they can set up these facilities as long as they do not do anything with the forests in these particular area.

MR. MAYNARD: Is the honourable member talking about building buildings on Bowaters -

MR. ROWE, F. B. Building cabins, forest cabins or summer cabins on Bowaters facilities. Because it is the understanding of some people that they can do this as long as they do not interfere with the forests on the particular land in question.

The other thing is, could the minister indicate or give some indication of what had been done to free the land for private sawmill operations in the area, particularly the Castor River Basin Area? Whether there are any woods operations going on there at the present time or whether any contracts have been let? And if not, when does the minister anticipate that these Bowaters concessions will and if indeed they will be made available or turned back to the crown so that the people in the district who suffer from a high unemployment rate can get back into the woods and operate private sawmill operations and tourist establishments and this type of thing?

MR. MAYNARD: The first question, Mr. Chairman, is a legal and is a very technical one. As I understand it and I could be corrected by any of the legal brains in the House of Assembly, that where Bowaters hold licence to timber lands, they can prevent buildings of any kind whether it is commercial or residential or whatever on any of the land where they hold a timber licence as long as there is a timber potential there. Now again that is a very legal question. It is one really that can only be determined if, for instance, the honourable member had a specific case and it could be referred to our Department of Justice for a legal opinion.

It is one that I really cannot answer. I know for instance that we have had an opinion, if Bowaters, let us say Bowaters and it could be Price or let us say a private company holds a timber licence, they

build a road across that timber licence, if the road leads to public land and even on a timber licence, it is still public land, it has to be considered as a public road. If the road leads to private property it can be barred at the boundary of the private property. In other words they own the land and the timber as well.

So each individual thing has to be considered individually and I am really not competent to answer the question.

As far as the freeing of timber land for woods operations is concerned, we worked out some exchange with Bowaters last year in that area. They were agreeable to letting us have 10,000 cords in exchange for some place, in Howley I think it was. The 10,000 cords area, combined with the crown timber in the Castor River Area, should enable people to be able to cut some wood at least. The problem there, as I understand from talking to the Labrador Linerboard officials, as they would like to have the wood - they would like to be able to ship the wood out of Brig Bay and the wharf in Brig Bay is not suitable - I know that representation was made by Labrador Linerboard to the federal government because the wharf in Brig Bay and the wharf in Plum Point both of them are federal structures. That representation was made to the Federal Department of Public Works to have the wharves upgraded and made suitable for shipping wood over them. As I understand it there have not been anything done with the exception of repairs on the wharf at Brig Bay which is a matter of replacing a few old timbers or whatever - it has rotted away.

Linerboard is still trying to find some way to get wood out of there because they would like to take 5,000 cords or 6,000 cords or 10,000 cords of wood a year out of there. I believe one person had a contract or was about to get a contract and I know a number of people from that area have been inquiring to me about contracts. I think we could certainly accommodate them as far as the wood is concerned, if it is a 5,000 cords or 6,000 cords or 7,000 cords or 8,000 cords a year operation, not a large one but a medium size operation. We could also accommodate them with access roads to the timber but the

problem is shipping. Right now the only place they can ship from is Hawkes Bay which is quite a long haul. It is around forty-five miles from the woodland, so it is not really economical.

One thing that may come in here or the new forest policy that we have introduced in the Legislature and hopefully at some time we will get through the House of Assembly, will require of course that Bowaters or whoever owns the timber rights in that area utilize those timber rights. Whether they utilize them themselves or whether they give them to someone else to utilize or however it works, it would still amount to pretty well the same thing as far as employment is concerned. All of those areas will have to be utilized. Certainly in that area and in the Castor River drainage there are thousand of cords of relatively over-mature timber that should be harvested in the very near future. It will certainly do a great deal to the employment situation there, the people in general. I am hoping that we can certainly get some cloak if you will with people like Bowaters who have concessions in an area like that and who are not using them. It is certainly a crime to see that wood just standing there with no way to harvest it.

MR. ROWE, F. B. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to go on record as pointing out the really pathetic situation that exists in the southern part of the district, In St. Barbe North, where you have massive unemployment, people who have worked in the woods all of their lives are sitting home doing nothing, on welfare and here we have large timber stands that are virtually at this very point in time rotting on the stump. I would say just another very few years before this wood will be absolutely useless to anybody, A lot of it is useless now probably. I do not think this situation can continue to go on any longer and I will just make a request to the minister that he use whatever cloak he has to get Bowaters to exchange or release that land so that it can be used by the people in the district. It is a pathetic situation to see, I have experienced this now for the past two years since I had the opportunity to represent that district. I am saddened every time I go up there to see the situation in these southern communities

and see this wood there just standing rotting on the stump.

Now as I understand it the minister said that Bowaters have handed over an area equivalent of 10,000 cords per year for -

MR. MAYNARD: Inaudible.

MR. ROWE, F. B. Not per year but

period and if this wood is to be used for supplying the linerboard mill or --

MR. MAYNARD: No, one can use it for anything.

MR. F. ROWE: One can use it for anything but one is still working on concessions or releases for the purpose of supplying the linerboard mill and that has not reached any substantive point yet.

MR. MAYNARD: No.

MR. F. ROWE: Right. Well the only thing, Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out to the minister that there is a serious situation there in the district and I think it is urgent that his department get this land back to the Crown or get it back to any operation that can employ the people in the southern communities of St. Barbe North.

MR. WM. ROWE: Carried; He is trying to be provocative, Mr. Chairman, the House Leader.

On the question of the Task Force Report, Mr. Chairman, did the minister say when he was going to table it in the House or make it public?

MR. MAYNARD: No.

MR. WM. ROWE: Can the minister say when?

MR. MAYNARD: No more than I have already said.

MR. WM. ROWE: Well why not? I mean is it a technical problem. Is it a problem of printing? What is the problem with the Task Force Report? Can the minister let us know? Why is it not tabled? Is it a technical problem or is it a problem? Is it that the minister's mind is not made up or the government's mind is not made up? What is the problem? Can the minister tell us?

MR. MAYNARD: There is nothing further I can say about tabling the Task Force Report than what I have already said on a number of occasions, Mr. Chairman, that I am aware of. To the best of my knowledge it is still government's intention to table the Task Force Report, I would assume that an opportune time has to be reached before it is tabled.

MR. WM. ROWE: What kind of an answer is that, Mr. Chairman, to what I consider at least a half reasonable question? The minister gets up, now he is sitting down, Sir, grinning like a hyena, He stands up in this House -

MR. MAYNARD: I never grin.

MR. WM. ROWE: He grins and smiles and gapes like a hyena, Mr. Chairman. He stands up in this House a month or so ago and undertakes to the House to table the Task Force Report on Forestry. He undertook to the House to do that. Now when my colleague, the member for Bonavista North, gets up and says something about his being duty bound, or I say he is duty bound to table the report, we are not talking about a government being duty bound to table a report, an inter-departmental or an inter-ministerial document, we are talking about a report which the minister said he was going to table in this honourable House, That is why he is duty bound to do it, Mr. Chairman. Now he seems to be talking, trying to skirt the issue and saying as far as he knows, to the best of his knowledge it is still government's intention. Well I hope so, Mr. Chairman, because otherwise the minister had misled the House.

I do not know if this government would consider it to be serious or not but in most parliamentary institutions, the misleading of the House by a minister is the most serious sin or crime that can be committed. Now the minister, I would advise him, I would advise the minister not to take backwater from the government on the matter because he has already committed himself to the House and he should not say to the best of his knowledge or to the best, you know, it is the intention of the government. He should, if he is going to live up to his commitment in the House, state firmly that he is going to and he should also say when.

I do not see any reason why he cannot tell this House of Assembly why or when, rather, he is going to table the Task Force Report. Will he say this much; will the Task Force Report be tabled before the government calls the new Forestry Bill for a further debate? Can he answer that

question?

MR. MAYNARD: For further debate I cannot really answer but I will say that unless government tell me otherwise, and they have not told me as yet otherwise, that the Task Force Report will certainly be tabled before the Forestry Bill is debated in complete detail in second reading or - yes second reading.

MR. THOMS: But it is in second reading now?

MR. WM. ROWE: Committee

MR. MAYNARD: Yes, well it has only started second reading now.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, is there any significance you know to the fact that the forestry legislation has been held up? We are still in second reading. It has been cut off, the date has been cut off on it and the fact that the Task Force Report has not been made public you know is there any relationship at all between what is in the Task Force Report and the content of the legislation? Is there any analogy or any analogue to be drawn for instance between that kind of a situation and the situation that we find the government in now in negotiations with BRINCO, having slapped legislation or notice of legislation on the Order Paper. Nothing has been done about that and there seems to be some peculiar goings on with BRINCO, Is there anything peculiar about what is in the Task Force Report and the fact that this legislation has not been pursued with here in this House of Assembly.

MR. MAYNARD: No there is nothing peculiar about it, Mr. Speaker. We are certainly going to go on with the forestry legislation as simply a matter, unfortunate probably in some ways that other things happen to drop right into the centre of the heap and these have to be dealt with first but as soon as we get around to it, after we get some money to pay our salaries and all that sort of thing, we will be going on with the forestry legislation again.

MR. WM. ROWE: What is the minister talking about, Mr. Chairman? We have not done a tap of work in the House for six weeks and he says - look the honourable member for Green Bay, Mr. Chairman, who showed what

political acumen he had down in Hermitage, where he managed a disastrous campaign, mind you he had very little to work with -

MR. MORGAN: Wasting the time of the House now, come on!

MR. WM. ROWE: Oh the Yahoo from Bonavista South is back again.

I thought he was going to leave, Mr. Chairman, what a sigh of relief went up from that side of the House when he announced that he was no longer going to sit in the House. Now he has gone again, the Yahoo from Bonavista South. Now, Mr. Chairman, do I have the right to speak in silence and not be persecuted by and not be harassed by the likes of that honourable member? Is that my right? It is, is it not, Mr. Chairman? Very good.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to know what the minister is talking about. The Forestry Bill is brought into the House and it is debated for a day or so and the minister gets so much flak for not supplying any information to the House, for not tabling the Task Force Report, that it is hurriedly withdrawn by the House Leader who gets up and in an unusual spleenful

speech withdraws it from the House, from debate, does not call it any more. The honourable Minister of Forestry now stands up and says, "Unfortunately other things were dropped in the middle." Now, what other things, I would like to know? What has been going on?

Nothing, Mr. Chairman. We have had twenty-two acts or bills presented to the House, one was to change a comma. Another we had a great debate on was the insertion of a semicolon. Another one, there was a word spelled wrong, and so on through the other twenty-three or twenty-four pieces of legislation. Yet, a piece of legislation that the government considered to be - what was that, was that the greatest thing since the world began or since Confederation? What was that? I am losing track now you see, Mr. Chairman. Restructuring was the greatest thing since Adam and Eve. Then when the forestry policy, the new forestry policy was brought in -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Oh, no, no, no! The social welfare.

MR. W. ROWE: Oh, no. Social welfare was the greatest thing since Confederation. The new forestry bill was the greatest thing since John Cabot. BRINCO was the greatest thing since Adam and Eve. Now, the next thing - I do not know what we are going to have next. The calendar, that calendar we saw the other day was -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Not was, BRINCO is.

MR. W. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I mean what is the problem? Is the minister ashamed of his legislation that he hurriedly withdrew it? Did he find that he was caught you know in a very embarrassing situation were there were doubts being raised and political questions were coming up as to whether they had done the right thing or not? Is this the problem?

There is no reason why we could not have debated that. We could have gone on with it. It was the only thing of some substance, probably importance, that has been in the House since the House sat, since the House commenced sitting in this session of the House. There was no reason at all why we could not go on with it.

Mr. Chairman, there was another question I asked the minister at

the time. I asked him how much the advertising, all that spate of advertising that a company, the introduction of that particular forestry legislation in the House, how much that cost. The minister would not tell me when I asked him questions on it. He might also, when he is giving me the information as to how much it cost, he might also tell the House whether he agrees with the Minister of Finance who said that the advertising was useless or there was too much advertising or something like that.

Is that the government? Which is government policy? In other words; that such advertising is useful for the public or that it is useless and a waste of money? Perhaps the minister might be able to elucidate that particular contradiction for us.

First of all, could he tell us how much the advertising campaign cost, the television, radio and newspaper advertising campaign?

MR. MAYNARD: I am very surprised that the honourable member did not take two hours to ask those three questions. However, he is not up to his usual form today.

This bit about the bill being hurriedly withdrawn, I got too much flak and all this sort of stuff - what a lot of nonsense! I wonder do the honourable members really believe themselves when they are going on with all this - well, I will not say the rest of it.

Anyway, the bill was not withdrawn. I saw the Order Paper today and the bill was very much evident on the Order Paper. So, it does not look like it is withdrawn. As far as flak is concerned, if you can call what came from the opposition benches flak, well, then I suppose I got flak from three people. Apart from that I got acolytes and all kinds of praise from the rest of Newfoundland about the bill. I assure the honourable gentlemen that it is still very much active and it is going to be discussed and hopefully with the leave of this honourable House it is going to be introduced as legislation. The House may need some minor changes. I stress the word minor because I do not think it is possible to have any major changes in the bill unless it were scraped altogether and I am certain

that the House is going to agree that it should go through in substantially its present form.

How much did the advertising cost? First of all, in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, it was not advertising. It was public information and the public information programme that was carried on with the legislation of forestry policy cost \$42,000. It was done by McLaren of Montreal -

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: McLaren or McLean?

MR. MAYNARD: McLaren. McLean is from Toronto. McLaren Advertising from Montreal. Whether or not I agree with the Minister of Finance is irrelevant. It was government's decision to do the public information campaign. It was quite necessary and it worked out very, very well because I have had a lot of very favourable comments on it. Again I emphasize that this bill will go on. It was not withdrawn. It has merely been delayed because of other work. If the honourable member from White Bay South have not done any work, I can assure him that members of the government have done a considerable amount in the last two or three weeks.

MR. W. ROWE: No, Mr. Chairman, not carried yet.

Did the minister say \$42,000?

MR. MAYNARD: Right.

MR. W. ROWE: For McLaren of Montreal. In two days, Sir, we have seen where the Minister of Tourism - now coming into the House - he has told us that \$250,000, I believe, was paid to McLean. There was another figure as well.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. W. ROWE: Another \$43,000 in last year's estimates, yes. Yes, this is last year as well or this year, the present year, you know.

Another \$50,000, nearly \$50,000, for another advertising. Two departments have been questioned on it. Have there been any other amounts spent for advertising during the past year, either to McLean or McLaren or anybody else?

MR. MAYNARD: Not by me.

MR. W. ROWE: Not by the minister's department. This is the only amount,

\$42,000 to McLaren for advertising in connection with the forestry bill.

So, we have - what is that a total of now in two departments for public relations work? \$350,000, is it? \$350,000 of public money spent for at least doubtful and dubious purposes. Some people, Mr. Chairman, would say useless purposes. Other people would say that it is not only useless but pernicious in that most of it is for political patronage purposes. Certainly the Minister of Finance, when he was speaking on another address before this House concerning the private members' resolution, brought in by the member for St. John's North, talked about and condoned political patronage, thereby getting an editorial by Wick Collins, he thereby in turn incurring the arrogant wrath of the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman, the press should know again and the public should know that here we have in two or three random examples well over \$300,000 of public money lashed out for at best dubious purposes and at worst harmful and pernicious purposes

perhaps, political pay-offs or political patronage, \$350,000. We shall continue, Mr. Chairman, throughout the debate on these interim estimates and when the main estimates come before the House particularly, to look into this question of public money being thrown out to friends of the government, in most cases to advertise. The Hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications can scoff all he wishes. The fact of the matter is that most reasonable people, if they were given this amount of money (this is only the tip of the iceberg I would submit) of \$350,000, if that amount of money were mentioned to them and then they were told what it was used for, Mr. McLean's various enterprises for producing patronizing films or to pay for a useless and hopelessly incompetent advertising campaign in respect of the new government forestry policy, if most reasonable people were asked, I would say nine out of ten members of the public, if they were asked, Mr. Chairman, is this a good use of public money? they would say no it is not. They would say I would rather see that \$350,000 spent on upgrading and paving the road from Fleur-de-Lys to Baie Verte or the Random Island morass mentioned by my colleague from Fogo yesterday or other petitions in this House for water and sewer projects, for roads or for schools.

I understand that the Minister of Education is very worried or at least he should be worried about public statements and private communications concerning the problems that the school boards are having on capital and current account. If this government, Mr. Chairman, which is beset by financial problems on all sides, see nothing wrong with throwing away public money on useless advertising campaigns, with pictures of ministers or television public relations work, designed, Mr. Chairman, (I make this flat accusation) not to inform the public but to try to bolster the flagging fortunes of the Tory Party in the eyes of the public (That is the only reason for it.) I think it is a disgraceful use of public money. I think the \$300,000 or whatever it

was we talked about yesterday from the Minister of Tourism's department for public relations work and for films, slides and this sort of thing, is a disgraceful use of public money and the \$42,000 that the Minister of Forestry spent out of his last year's budget for hopelessly incompetent - even if it were the most competent advertising in the world, Mr. Chairman, there is no need for that kind of thing, no need for that kind of information, not information, that kind of slick propganda. There is a great need for information.

Mr. Chairman, any one who reads the newspaper advertising or has watched the television stuff or the radio stuff knows that there is no information given. It is an attempt at slick propgandizing. Fortunately from the point of view of the people of the province, it falls short of the mark. Nobody is taken in by this kind of propganda. If it were truly informational in motivation and truly informational in effect, then it would be good. Mr. Chairman, to have public money spent on this kind of stuff, which by the admission of the Minister of Finance is political patronage, is a disgrace.

Mr. Chairman, if we were Ontario or Alberta, with all the money in the world, we could probably overlook it, raise an eyebrow at it and overlook it. When you are the poorest province in Canada or the next thing to it, when you have 800 or 900 communities looking for public services of various kinds, when you have school construction and school maintenance suffering the risk of not being looked after properly this year coming up, it is a disgraceful thing for this government to be spending this kind of money on this kind of activity, propgandizing, public relations work for no useful purpose whatsoever. I would submit, Sir, that we have only seen the tip of the iceberg yet. God alone knows what will happen when we get to the estimates of the Minister of Fisheries. We do not know what Industrial Development are spending out. I would say, Sir, that anything short of many hundreds of millions of dollars

on this type of thing - I would miss my guess if it were short of maybe millions of dollars this year on this sort of thing. We look forward to getting the information from the various ministers.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to go on the record, as one member of this House, as condemning this type of activity and for stating categorically that I consider it to be a disgraceful use of public funds.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Dunphy): I would like to welcome to the House this afternoon the forty-nine St. John's Brownie Pack, accompanied by Mrs. Vera Young and Mrs. Shirely Ludlow.

It is our sincere wish that their stay will be enjoyable and informative.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, could I ask the minister this question? This interview that we see between himself and the back of somebody's head that appears on television from time to time or had appeared on television from time to time in the past, was this a public affairs programme or was it a paid advertisement?

AN HON. MEMBER: Interview.

MR. F. B. ROWE: The interview between the minister and the back of somebody's head.

MR. MAYNARD: I do not remember one with the back of someone's head on it. Is the honourable member talking about the CJON thing, during the five days?

MR. F. B. ROWE: Yes.

MR. MAYNARD: That was a paid advertisement.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, it seems to me - I mean this is in the political realm. I do not know if the C.R.T.C should be asked to look at this but I equate this type of activity with political advertising and at no time did I see credits given during any one of these interviews or any one of these programmes. I think that the minister and the government in general should see to it in the future that at any time they

put political advertising or advertising of this nature on television, governmental advertising on television, radio or in the newspapers or anywhere else, that it should be stated quite clearly that this is - well it is not a campaign, so you would not say this is a paid political broadcast, but it should be stated quite clearly that this is a government advertisement so that the people of Newfoundland will realize once and for all that all of this is costing them money that could otherwise go to the public services in this province.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Chairman, as I understand the C.R.T.C. rules and I am not up on all the rules,

that if it be a political advertisement, then the station must give equal time to the other party. The government is quite different from political parties and if the station were to give equal time to the other government in Newfoundland, they would have a hard time finding one I think. They are the only one around that I know of.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Chairman, could the minister inform us who was interviewing him on television? Who was doing the interviewing?

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Oh, stop wasting time.

MR. THOMS: I am not wasting time. I am seeking information "Mr. Human Rights".

MR. MAYNARD: One of the people from CJON. I do not remember his name right offhand.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I would like to add my voice to what has been said on the subject of the advertising, the public information, call it what you will. I think we all know what we are talking about. I think the minister in the last comment, the last exchange between him and my colleague from St. Barbe North, managed to confuse what was a fairly legitimate question. We were not talking about free time for political advertising. We were not talking about equal time for various parties or other government or whatever it is he was attempting to put into words. That is not the issue.

The issue is that there was a very sly attempt, a very sly attempt to camouflage the point that the interview between the minister and the television station interviewer, a very sly attempt to conceal the fact that it was paid advertising. That is the point. If he is going to be so open about it, if he says it is not advertising, it is an attempt to inform the public, let him label it that and let him and his government have the guts to put on the screen for all to see, "The preceding or the the following telecast is a paid public information programme sponsored by the government of Newfoundland." Let him say that.

Let him say outside the House and on television what he is saying in the House. Let us call this what it is. It is a sly, sly attempt and I would hope beneath the minister to do this kind of thing but I have seen

it done. In most cases, Mr. Chairman - let us be honest with ourselves - in most cases, when you see a public official being interviewed on television by one of the regular news staff of that television station, one can assume that, one would normally assume that this is part of a news programme. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that that was exactly the attempt that was made and that is what makes it so sly, that was indeed a paid programme drawing on money from the public coffers, was trying to be presented as a news type programme. It is sly. I do not believe public money ought to be allocated for that kind of purpose.

I repeat if this kind of thing is going on, if the government feel there ought to be public information programmes, I would like to make two points, repeat two points. First of all, if it is costing the government and therefore the people money to put on these programmes, let the government divulge this openly without indulging in some sly effort to conceal it.

The second point is let it be information. I suppose if you are going to present information, you would assume that as a result of having conveyed the information somebody would be wiser. Well, I know a lot of people across the province who are no wiser after following those advertisements or public information programmes or whatever the minister wants to call them. They are no wiser. They are scratching their heads a little more wondering what the purpose of it all was. They are even assigning some motives to it.

I will tell you the motives I am hearing, as I go around, being assigned to that kind of so-called information programme. The motive is not that it was a sincere attempt on the part of the government to give information. What I am hearing is how sly, how sly and what I am hearing in more words is that it is an effort of government, as my colleague the member for White Bay South said a few moments ago, to bolster, an attempt to bolster a badly sagging image. Let me tell them, if they are open to advice, that if that is their concern, they are going to have to do a whole lot more, Mr. Chairman, than write some

flowery script, for television, about forestry. They are going to have to come up with some solid programmes for Newfoundland, for the people of Newfoundland and from what I have seen so far of the forestry bill - I will get an opportunity to say this at more length I am sure in the debate, if we ever get a chance to see the report or the summary of the report, if we ever get a chance to get back on the debate again. I suppose at some time we will and I shall then address myself to the subject.

What I have seen so far and if I must judge from the information programmes on television - that is about all I have to judge from because the answers have been far and few between in this House on the subject of the forestry - if I must judge from what I have heard on television in the so called information programmes, the interviews and the paid interviews, let me give a little feedback to the minister. I for one - I believe I have a lot who stand with me on this - I for one am no wiser at all about what is the intent of the government's legislation in forestry, no wiser at all having watched the programme.

I have seen some good aerial photography. I have seen a lot that makes for good television if you could turn down the sound but I have not seen or heard much by way of information. The overall point, Mr. Chairman, which bears reiterating, is that let the government on this and other advertising campaigns, whether the welfare programme or what have you, let them be honest. If they are paying out public funds to get across in their minds information, let them publicly label and let them publicly say that this is costing the treasury money. I say that the failure of the government to do that is sly and lacks basic integrity.

MR. W. ROWE: Is the minister not going to offer even a half-hearted defense or does he realize that his position is not defensible?

Oh, it is an embarrassing moment for the government, Mr. Chairman. Members, the backbenchers, especially when they see communities in their district with people walking around up to their knees in mud or worse because they have no water and sewer systems and the government

is lashing out, in two departments alone did lash out last year \$350,000 or \$400,000 for nothing but politically partisan public relations work, Mr. Chairman. It is an embarrassing moment and I am not surprised that the minister cannot get to his feet and give any kind of an explanation.

The most interesting aspect of the whole thing is the willingness of the government to throw out public money, to fling

it out with both hands when it comes to public relations advertising, yet the unwillingness of the government to give any solid information on the forestry programme, as has been repeatedly requested of them, with respect to the Task Force Report, Without costing the government one cent, this Task Force Report can be made available to the House and can be made available to interested members and to the public. They will not do it. It might cost a few dollars to have it printed up but nothing like \$42,000.

The government gladly throws out hundreds of thousands of dollars for PR work with no informational content. Yet it will not lift a finger to give the public or their representatives solid information as would be contained in the Task Force Report.

Now, Mr. Chairman, that speaks for itself. Mr. Chairman, there is no need for anyone to labour that point. That speaks for itself. It is the rankest kind of political hypocrisy.

Now, Mr. Chairman, on another subject altogether: Under the Rural Development Programme a considerable amount of money is being given out by way of loans, so-called, to people to get into the sawmill operation business. From the Rural Development standpoint that is good. I can see that, that is good to allow people to build or expand that type of facility and employ people. From the purely forestry management side of that picture, Mr. Chairman, would the minister give us some ideas as to how this is operating? I mean is it an efficient use of the forestry resource? Is it an efficient use of public money, in the minister's estimates? His officials have probably given him some advice on it. Now that he can give some public information himself, how is the plan working from the forestry standpoint? I realize it is probably all right from the creation of employment standpoint but from his side of the picture where his officials have to give licences and permits to cut wood and have to allow people to go places and to probably incur the cost with the Government of Canada for access road operations and this sort of thing, could he give us a brief resume perhaps when we get into the main estimates, where we can get into it a little more fully. But at the moment how is it from his standpoint? Is it a good type of

programme?

MR. MAYNARD: Well very briefly, Mr. Chairman, the Rural Development Authority and our forestry people were pretty close together in getting sawmills back into operation or getting new sawmill enterprises underway in the province in the last year or so.

As far as utilization of the resource is concerned, we have not encountered any great problems. Most of the sawmill operators are utilizing the timber in a fairly efficient manner by producing both lumber and pulp wood. Wherever there is a sale for the pulp wood, that happens in most cases, there are some inefficiencies. We realize that and these we are working on and we will gradually overcome these as the Rural Development Authority or the Department of Rural Development now gets into its ARDA Programme where a lot of the sawmill operators can get better equipment and gets more efficient equipment and therefore more efficient operations.

This is going to take a bit of time but it has to be done because it is a more efficient use of the forest resources in line with the new announced forest policy.

I did not get up after the last speaker had taken his seat, Mr. Chairman, because I did not really hear anything that was worthy of comment from the honourable member. He did mention that he could not understand the forest policy but again that is his problem I suppose. It is not my problem if he does not have the mental capability of understanding what is written on a paper in very simplistic and straightforward language. That is about all I would have to say in this particular case.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I had hoped and I endorse it completely what the Leader of the Opposition had said when he appealed to the ministers, in steering their estimates through to stick with the issues at hand. I endorse what he said because I very much wanted to have a gentleman's debate on this particular subject.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: For my part it shall continue to be a gentleman's debate. Had the minister chosen to listen to what I said rather than leave the

Chamber at the time, I would certainly appreciate the comments that he has made and take them under advisement. The fact that he did leave the Chamber, which is his business, but I would ask him not to make stock comments about the subject if he is not going to respond to what I think was a very legitimate point. I could stoop to his level and suggest that he did not understand it. Then what follows? But I do not think that is what we are here for, Mr. Chairman. I hope the minister learns that reasonably soon.

I made a very legitimate point and if he should not understand it, I shall repeat it for him. If he should not understand it, then I shall repeat it again for him.

I suggested that if the government are going to engage in public information programmes, particularly when those information programmes consist of things like interviews which can very easily get misconstrued as news programmes and therefore carry a different weight in the public mind than if they were labelled as paid advertisements, if the government are going to get involved in that kind of public information programme I suggested that basic integrity force government to let the public know that this is costing money from the public treasury.

That was not done. I do not care whether the minister responds to the comment. I do not even care if he understands the comment. All I am concerned with is that public funds are being spent in this way. I am concerned that the public know about this. If the minister is too arrogant or for whatever reason cannot take the suggestion, I appeal to some of the less arrogant members of his group, his administration, to take the matter under advisement not only as far as it applies to public information with respect to forestry programmes but any other public information programmes.

He also managed to misconstrue my point in another way. I did not say that I did not understand what was printed in the paper or what was presented in this House. I say, if as one member of the public I am suppose to be more informed as a result of what I saw in the paid information programmes on television, I informed him I am none the wiser.

Now I would hope that I am at least average in terms of the intelligence of Newfoundlanders. If I am none the wiser my point was, but he obviously missed it, Mr. Chairman, my point was that if I be none the wiser as a result of their television information programmes perhaps there are others in the same boat.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to come to the matter of RDA as it relates to the administration of the forests in the province. I may be misquoting the minister but as he spoke in reply to a question from my colleague from White Bay South, he said that the RDA people and the forestry people work very closely together. Now I would assume, I stand to be corrected, that the implication there is that there is co-ordination between the two programmes. I would assume that as a result of working closer together, there is not too much confusion, not too much going off in diverse directions and so on. Of course that is not the case at all but I can (I will not at this time) present information involving a number of cases where RDA loans have been approved without even the knowledge of the forestry people in the area concerned and, therefore, obviously without any consultation to see if the forest limits were available to meet the demands which would be implicit in the RDA loan. I omitted to say and which I should have said that the RDA loan is concerned for the purpose of sawmilling. I can present to this House but I will not at the moment for reasons which I have, information where there were a number, quite recently, of RDA loans for sawmilling purposes and, therefore, involving timber limits, made and approved by the RDA without even the knowledge of the senior forestry official in the particular area concerned.

MR. W. N. ROWE: Would the honourable member permit a question?

MR. SIMMONS: Sure.

MR. W. N. ROWE: Is the honourable member aware as I am that there were at least several occasions where RDA loans had been given out and before permits were applied for and when permits for sawmilling operations were applied for they were not even granted, the loan having already been given out? Is the member aware of this?

MR. SIMMONS: Thanks. I am aware of that. I did not want to unload the whole load on the minister before he was given an opportunity of qualifying his rather general statement. I am sick and tired, Mr. Chairman,

as one member of this House, of hearing rather general pontifications by ministers without any reference to the facts. I do not know if they do not know the facts. I do not know if they have facts, Mr. Chairman, that they do not want to divulge. I do not know if they are just playing with this as the minister tried to do with me rather weakly a few minutes ago. I do not know if that is the game. I am honestly seeking some information. I am sick and tired of being played with. When I hear general pontifications about how RDA and forestry are working very closely together on the one hand and when I see around me all kinds of evidence that that is just not so, I think I am entitled to ask a few questions. I think the minister, if he is going to live up to his responsibilities, his sworn responsibilities, I think he ought at least to stand up and as a man say he does not know or that he misled the House or he made the statement without due regard for the facts or he will go look for the facts or whatever the case may be. There is some explanation for this. I cannot buy, Mr. Chairman, (I stand to be educated on the point) the statement that RDA and forestry are working very closely together, when you have the kind of situation that I have mentioned where RDA loans have been granted for sawmilling without the forestry officials even knowing about it, although timber permits were implicit in the loan decision, when that kind of a thing is going on or the kind of thing my colleague the Member for White Bay South has mentioned. We are not talking about approval in principle, Mr. Chairman. It is understandable that the RDA would sometimes give approval in principle probably and then say to the applicant, "well look, this approval is subject to your getting the appropriate permit to cut timber." That is a reasonable way to proceed. We are not talking about that.

Mr. Chairman, we are talking about the final decision having been given; in some cases the money having been handed out, by the way; in some cases, the equipment having been bought; in some cases the individual having incurred a substantial financial commitment which he will have to live with for some time by the purchase of equipment and then at that point being told by the forestry official that notwithstanding

the fact that one department of government has given him \$5,000, \$6,000 or \$8,000 or \$10,000 to cut timber, not withstanding that, he is not able to get a permit to cut the timber on crown limits.

Mr. Chairman, I would certainly like the minister to indicate whether, in his opinion, this kind of example that I have mentioned is widespread so far as he is concerned or if it is completely new to him or otherwise, if I have misunderstood what he meant when he said the two agencies were working very closely together?

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Chairman, I have no reservations about saying that at the present time and for some months or for some period of time the Rural Development Authority and the forestry people

have been working together. There may have been incidents in the initial stages of the Rural Development Authority operation where there may not have been complete co-ordination between the two agencies. To the best of my knowledge, there is complete co-ordination between the two agencies at the present time. I have no doubt that there are going to be mistakes made by officials of the Rural Development Authority. I have no doubt there are going to be mistakes made by the officials of the Forest Service. I think that is a human element that we have to contend with. But I would suggest to the honourable member that if it be that serious he would produce specific examples and relate those to the actual percentage of loans that have been made for sawmill operations where there has been complete co-ordination.

If he can produce specific examples and those examples amount to more than five per cent of the loans that have been made for sawmill operations then I will be willing to do a very thorough investigation into the whole matter.

MR. SIMMONS: I am not about to make any deals with the minister. Five per cent is a fairly high percentage. I do not care if it is only one half of one tenth of one percent, I am saying that if the alleged "working very closely together" is not close enough, let us make it closer. I do not care what the percentages are. I do not care if there is only one loan that got off the tracks as a result, I know there are more than one, but I am not making any bargains with the minister, I am just asking him to do his job.

MR. MAYNARD: Is he making charges?

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I am making charges. I am charging that the minister is not telling the full story when he stands there and says that the two are working very closely together. I am saying that there is evidence that the two are not working close together at all. He says, "Give evidence." Well, I will tell you why I cannot right now.

MR. MAYNARD: Because he has not got it.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have the evidence.

AN HON. MEMBER: Then he should produce it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. MORGAN: Stop making charges. It is against the rules.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I still have the floor. I still have the floor, Mr. Chairman. While I still have the floor I will pursue the point I was making a minute ago, the evidence I have it certainly involves some confidences. I would like to check them out first. In the meantime, even without checking the confidences, as soon as I can get the list of loans involved, I have the list I do not mean as soon as I can get them, I do not have them here with me presently, I shall be very happy to give them to the minister.

MR. MORGAN: Inaudible.

MR. WM. ROWE: I thought he was leaving. Why not do us a favour and leave?

MR. SIMMONS: He did leave. Did you not know he has been away.

Mr. Chairman, he has not been back.

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible) - no proof.

MR. SIMMONS: You mean the member for Bonavista South is back. I did not notice him. Did anybody notice him?

MR. MORGAN: He cannot prove it.

MR. SIMMONS: I can prove that one.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. STAGG): Order please! The honourable member for Bonavista South has indeed made his point on a couple of occasions now in interruptions of the member for Hermitage which are out of order, I ask him to desist.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, at one time I identified the member for Bonavista South as the -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! The honourable member for Hermitage is called to the rule of relevancy. I suggest that his observation of the member for Bonavista South has very little to do with the head under discussion.

MR. WM. ROWE: He has nothing to do with any head under discussion, at least nothing that would be allowed to be discussed.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I shall make my observations on the member at some other time.

MR. MORGAN: On a point of order, the honourable gentleman has the floor and there is nobody interrupting him on this side. The interruptions are coming from his own colleagues. Could we please have quiet in the House?

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, as I was saying a few minutes ago, before the major addresses from the two members opposite, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture and the member for Bonavista South, the two most major contributions they made in this session so far, I was saying that the onus really is on government to put its money where its mouth is, to quote the minister or to quote him nearly accurately. I am prepared to do it. I am prepared to give the information and I shall. I shall give it where I believe it can accomplish most. If it be in this House I shall give it here. If it be to the minister I shall give it there. If it be to the Minister of Rural Development I shall give it there, if I can find him.

But I think the overriding concern so far as I am concerned is this, that there are RDA loans which have been granted to people who were subsequently unable to get timber permits and whose loan applications were not known to

two senior forestry officials in the area concerned at any time. Now that is a statement which I can substantiate and which I shall substantiate. Two related points, Mr. Chairman!

I would be much more impressed with the minister in his performance of his duties if he dwelt less on calling bluffs, whether mine or somebody else's, and more on seeing that what he asserted is indeed true. If he were so convinced that the two agencies, RDA and Forestry, are working closer together, if I were in his shoes I would see to it that that statement if not completely accurate now would become accurate. I would not waste my time trying to call person's bluffs, I would go out and I would find out. If he should want to find out from me, I shall certainly give him the names of the loan applicants involved. I would suggest to him that he go out and find out if there have been breakdowns instead of adopting this overly protective attitude, this idea that somehow everything has to be right all the time.

Of course I can see, I understand that there are going to be errors but whether they should be five per cent or ten per cent - I am not willing to say that five per cent is not bad, I would say any number, any number. One such error is bad if it could have been avoided, ten thousand errors are not bad if they could not have been avoided. I am not prepared to deal with the minister in terms of percentages I would rather that he dealt with the realities and if there are some problems, that is understandable. To dismiss a five per cent or to dismiss some as not being important is not good enough and I would ask him to look a little more closely into this and see if his statement on working closer together is indeed as accurate as he asserts it to be. I hope for his sake and for the sake of the programme that it is quite accurate but I have evidence to convince me otherwise at the moment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall Head XII, Forestry, carry?

MR. W.N. ROWE: In a moment or so, Mr. Chairman.

I must say, Sir, that generally on the minister's estimates

a very disappointing performance, Sir, on the part of that honourable minister. Yesterday we put through this House Supplementary Supply in which there were one or two embarrassing things. The Minister of Tourism, for example, handled it with dignity and in a gentlemanly fashion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! The honourable member is apparently going to get into the history of what we did yesterday and other matters and certainly it is not relevant to this particular head. Does the honourable member wish to make some observation? I speak to the honourable Member for Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS: What did you say, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable gentleman wish to make some observation about the Chair's ruling?

MR. SIMMONS: Not at all. When I do, I shall.

MR. W.N. ROWE: What is the problem, Sir? Has a member of the House -

MR. SIMMONS: I looked at him the wrong way I think.

MR. W.N. ROWE: What is the Chairman doing? Reflecting on some clunking noise limit?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please!

MR. W.N. ROWE: I am a member of this House, Mr. Chairman, and I want to know what was going on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! If the honourable member want an explanation he shall get it. As I was making my ruling toward the honourable Member for White Bay South who was listening in his usual courteous manner, I heard what I interpreted as a derogatory, either remark or a noise from the honourable Member for Hermitage and I asked if he wished to make an observation.

MR. SIMMONS: I think, Mr. Chairman, in view of your charge that I am entitled to know what the derogatory remark was you think you heard, I am entitled to know it and I would ask you to repeat what you think you heard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for White Bay South:

MR. W.N. ROWE: As a member of this House, and I think it probably

affects the privileges of the House, what was Your Honour referring to when you referred to my colleague the Member for Hermitage? I would like to know as a member of the House as I might be guilty of doing it sometime. When I was listening to Your Honour I heard a clucking sound from the Member for Hermitage. I did not attribute it to what Your Honour had to say. It might have been coincidental, it might have had something to do with what Your Honour was saying but I certainly want to know for my own future guidance what so outraged Your Honour as to rise to your feet and chastise my colleague like a kindergarten schoolchild? I think it is a matter that does affect the privileges of this House and I would like an explanation if Your Honour is so disposed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has gotten all the explanation he is going to get on this matter. I suggest he move on to Head XII, Forestry and Agriculture which we are discussing.

MR. SIMMONS: On a point of personal privilege, Mr. Chairman. I did not utter any derogatory remark. You may have heard something but I did not utter any derogatory remark whatsoever. I want to make that crystal clear. I have also now learned that "Twitting" is unparliamentary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On motion Head XII, Forestry, carried.

MR. W.N. ROWE: No it is not carried. I am sorry, Sir, on the order and the ruling that you made a little earlier, surely it is relevant for me to compare what is going on here today with other things. That is the only thing I was doing. I was comparing the performance of this honourable minister with the performance of another honourable minister. Whether that happens to be ancient history, future or present, it is I would suggest, Sir, largely relevant. Surely one can compare things with what is under discussion.

What I was saying was that I was very disappointed at the honourable minister's performance compared to certain other ministers in this House. We have been going on with his estimates now for the last

hour and a-half or two hours, I do not know, and most of the reason being because of the arrogance of that honourable minister.

A member stands in the House and makes a statement and he will look down at the minister and he is grinning like a jackanapes. You do not know whether he is taking you seriously or whether he is laughing at you or ignoring you or what it is, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARSHALL: Grimacing.

MR. W.N. ROWE: Not grimacing, grinning. Sneering might be another way to characterize the actions, physical visage of the honourable minister.

He will not treat anything seriously. He is coming dangerously close, I do not say he is but he is coming dangerously close to misleading members of this House with regard to the Task Force Report. Having uttered in this House a definite undertaking to table that report, he now gets up and with weasel words says things like, "Well if it is my colleagues, if the government allows it" or "unless the government have changed its mind," all this sort of a thing. Having made a definite commitment to this House, he is now coming dangerously close to misleading the House, Mr. Chairman.

Raise the matter of the public money being spent on advertising and all you get back from him is no explanation of any kind. It is a sort of a sense of pride emitted from the honourable minister on the fact that this government are lashing out hundreds of thousands of dollars for useless purpose.

My colleague the Member for Hermitage gets up and makes what was indeed a valid and legitimate point. What do we get? Low, crude, humour of a personal type from the honourable minister.

All I can say, Mr. Chairman, is that the ministers do not have to accept any advice. I mentioned to the honourable House Leader and the Minister of Finance as did the Leader of the Opposition that we have no desire to prolong debate on these interim measures we are debating today. But if we stand in this honourable House and get nothing but arrogance and contempt for serious questions and grinning and sneering back and forth across the House, Mr. Chairman, it does nothing which is conducive to a good debate in this House.

If the honourable minister want to make a whip for his own back let him do it. I give him notice now that when the - I do not intend to pursue this but as one member of the House and I am sure my colleagues share the view that if he or any other minister gets up and does not take members of this House seriously, does not take legitimate and valid points seriously, well it is going to go hard on him, Mr. Chairman, particularly in the main estimates.

I am not trying to, obviously, foolishly trying to intimidate or threaten or blackmail the minister. All I am saying is that if I ask

a question in this House ninety-nine per cent of the time I am serious in that question unless it is obviously facetious. To have that question treated with contempt and to have a minister trying to avoid, continuously avoid giving information and to have him sneering and grinning over there across the House is not going to be very satisfactory to me as a member of the House.

I do hope when the main estimates come through this House or are brought down by the Minister of Finance, the minister treats his position, a high position in Newfoundland, treats it with a little bit of respect and dignity and that he brings to his office something besides arrogance and vacant pride and lack of seriousness. I hope it brings seriousness to his office when his estimates come through and some dignity and some respect for the high office which he holds.

AN HON. MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I have some questions that I would like to direct to the minister. First of all, in relation to what we are calling the paid advertising programme, what he is calling the public information programme, and since we all know what we are talking about, would he indicate to the committee whether it is the intention of his department or government to pursue, to have additional public information programme, paid information programmes on television in the foreseeable future concerning the forestry programme?

MR. MAYNARD: No, Mr. Chairman, it is not our intentions to have any additional programme in the immediate future or in the future, period, as far as I am concerned.

On motion Head XII - Forestry and Agriculture, carried.

Head II - LEGISLATIVE, \$400,000.

HON. J. C. CROSBIE: (MINISTER OF FINANCE): Number one is carried is it, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, it is carried.

MR. CROSBIE: Well that is wonderful.

The breakdown of this \$400,000 is the Auditor General's Department as included under Legislative and the staff of the House, of course that is \$115,000 in salaries. Travelling for the Auditor General's Department

is \$20,000. Travelling and allowances for members of the House is \$265,000. We are hoping, I presume, that the House will end by the end of May. Anyway that is why it is in there. That is a total of \$400,000.

On motion Head II - Legislative, carried.

Head III - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, \$350,000.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. the Minister of Finance.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Chairman, the Executive Council includes the Lieutenant-Governor's establishment. I do not know how much of a breakdown you want but it is \$21,667 in salaries and the expenses for his establishment are \$2,418; expenses in other departments \$11,000. That is \$35,000. The Premier's office salaries, \$33,000 and then some money for travelling in the offices, \$11,000; expenses in other departments \$3,300. That is \$48,000. Executive Council Office and the Cabinet Secretariate; salaries \$31,000. Now that secretariate, Mr. Chairman, includes the Planning and Priorities Secretariate. Mr. David Mercer is the Director of the Secretariate. Resource Policy Committee - the Government's Services Policy Committee and the Social Services Policy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Does the Treasury Board come under that?

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, and Treasury Board. Treasury Board is separate here. These are the three committees included under that - \$3,600 is allowed for travelling office, car allowance, commuter services; \$41,000 for the Classification Appeals Board; \$5,200 expenses voted in other departments for that group. That is \$44,000 total.

the treasury board secretariate, salaries, \$95,000. That includes of course the personnel and administration division, collective bargaining and the other personnel there. Expenses, \$6,600 is allowed for that, travelling, office computer. The total is \$101,000 and - wait now, I made a mistake there, sorry.

The one that I said was \$44,000 is the executive council office and cabinet secretariate. Now, that is Mr. Channing's people and the cabinet secretariate. The Planning and Priorities Committee secretariate which I described before those three committees and Mr. Dave Mercer and so on is \$93,000. There is \$26,000 expenses, computer services, \$15,000. The reason for the large amount there is that the economic and statistics branch is moved up there also now and the fiscal policy division which used to be in the Department of Finance is there. Mr. Cyril Avery is the director of the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs.

So, that gives a total of \$120,000 and the total altogether is \$350,000.

MR. W. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, did anybody ever take the place of Dr. Stu Peters as special adviser or learned expert or whatever he was in the Premier's office?

MR. CROSBIE: No one, Mr. Chairman, could take his place.

MR. W. ROWE: So, they left the office vacant. In that way they took his place.

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, I think that is the right word.

On motion Head 3 carried.

Head 4, Finance, \$650,000.

MR. CROSBIE: Finance, Mr. Chairman, is: Salaries, \$340,000; Travelling, \$40,000; Postage, \$70,000; Ex Gratia payments, \$140,000, these are pension payments and so on made ex gratia; Miscellaneous, \$60,000.

On motion Head 4, Finance, carried.

Head 5, Manpower and Industrial Relations, \$300,000.

MR. ROUSSEAU: If I may before, I have a reply to the honourable member's

question of today but I do not think that I can reply to it in committee so I will wait until tomorrow, I presume at the beginning, to reply.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: Inaudible.

MR. ROUSSEAU: May I by leave? First of all I would like to make it abundantly clear that, as was mentioned before, the item is not in my Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations so that I was completely uninformed because of course it just appeared in the paper today and it had nothing to do with our department as such with either manpower or public works. I did undertake to phone the deputy minister, Mr. McCarthy, and there was a meeting held this morning. The meeting was purely exploratory.

The federal government officials who met with Mr. McCarthy - since the fire protection of the province comes under the jurisdiction of Justice and not Manpower and Industrial Relations, we were not involved in the meeting but the meeting did go ahead and Mr. McCarthy suggested to me that the federal people said that he had assured, or the federal people had assured these twenty-eight employees that they would be taken care of. Now, whether to their satisfaction or not, that I do not know but the meeting this morning was purely and solely preliminary and exploratory.

The federal are going back and they expect to come down in two or three months time - I do not know what it is - and talk to Justice again and at a time when some basis of understanding is there. Actual negotiations, serious negotiations will be carried out but that is not foreseen to be within two to three months. So, I give that answer to that question. Of course the question is entered to me. I would think of my colleague, the honourable Minister of Justice, for future reference unless of course we were asked in Human Rights and there was anything there to become involved in it, but we do not initiate any action in the Human Rights Division unless of course a request comes in.

To my knowledge no request has come in. I am sure the honourable

members can appreciate this. This appeared in the paper. This afternoon is the first time I saw it. I sometimes do not get a chance to read the "Daily News" so I do not know if it is in the morning newspaper. We have not been advised, that I know of. Now, there may have been a call gone to Human Rights and if it did in the normal course of events it certainly will be dealt with if there is a case for it. I was not aware of it because it does not involve the department except on initiation by one or more of the employees or on their behalf of somebody else. When Human Rights is a matter of policy, we carry through an investigation. Unless that came we would not initiate it on the basis of a news story. So, is that a satisfactory reply?

MR. F. ROWE: If I may be permitted. I asked the question on behalf of the member for Bell Island and in the absence of the Minister of Justice, I asked it of the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations since there was a question of Human Rights in this particular thing.

I do not know if I am permitted to ask what is the equivalent of a supplementary question or not here at this point, Mr. Chairman, but when and if the provincial government take over the assets of this particular fire department, will that include the personnel involved or will they still be with the federal government? This is their basic concern - that they will be left with the federal government and they would have to compete with other people such as young university graduates and this sort of a thing in order to get a job with the federal government. They are concerned about their employment opportunities, seniority, pension benefits and this sort of a thing.

MR. ROUSSEAU: All I can answer there again is what I was told by the deputy minister who met with them. He said - I think it is reported today in the "Evening Telegram" - again suggested here, if I may, that he held talks yesterday with thirty firemen at Pleasantville, the federal people they are talking about, and he gave them assurances that they would not lose their jobs as a result of the planned takeovers.

So, you know, all I can say is what Mr. McCarthy told me and Mr.

McCarthy said that he had reason to believe from what the federal people said yesterday or this morning at the meeting or yesterday morning - I think it was this morning - that they would have no fear of losing their jobs. Now, like I say, whether that will be satisfactory or not, I do not know. It is not a matter for Manpower and Industrial Relations. If it came as a request to the Human Rights Division, as I say, it would be as a matter of policy but it is not a matter for our department unless it were initiated by somebody outside who made a request on behalf of one or twenty-eight or any number thereof to pursue it along Human Rights policy lines.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for getting that answer to the question. I only add that the people concerned are extremely concerned over this

latest move and when the Minister of Justice comes back to the House I will pursue the questioning.

MR. ROUSSEAU: If I may, just one more before I start here, the impression I got is that this is just started although it has been going on for quite a while it is just yesterday morning, so all of a sudden it is going to be a protracted thing and I can understand twenty-eight employees who care about their positions and their seniority and their fringe benefits and so on. There is a lot of concern certainly but as I say, I am not aware of it. I think the honourable Minister of Justice would be in a better position to answer it since it falls within the jurisdiction of his department. I thank the Chair for giving me the opportunity to reply.

The Interim Supply for the Manpower and Industrial Relations is made up of \$300,000 of which approximately \$141,000 is made up in salaries for the minister's office, the general office and the various divisions of the department. The remaining money, the \$159,000, is mainly salaries. There are no new programmes. They are mainly salaries. The biggest one is the general services - \$22,500. We are asking for that and that is for building cleaning and building costs and that sort of thing which Public Works have suggested - postage, office supplies and advertising, office furniture and equipment, printing and photography, repair and maintenance and so on. It is the biggest individual lot there.

\$90,000 is another large sum. That is for instructional costs at the College of Trades and Technology and the various vocational schools in which we purchase the apprenticeship training programme from them for the Education Department, through our Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations. The only possible new thing there is a possible film that we may be doing for labour education which would be done. We are conducting talks now with the Federation of Labour and Memorial University Extension, none of which have agreed yet that finally we are going to do this but we are conducting

preliminary talks with the Memorial University Extension Division and with the Federation of Labour in respect to our labour vote of last year that we had for the first time. We have come to a sort of tentative agreement that they would prepare a script for us and then we would look at it, the government and the federation, and the three of us can come to an agreement on which way we would like to go.

Certainly we would like to see something produced in the province for the labour people in the province. A good film we think would be most helpful and we are looking to Memorial. They came in to me about nine or ten months ago with a possible proposal on the use of that division to do this film and it would be something that would be made available to all labour groups in the province concerning matters relevant to labour and labour education.

So there is nothing new in there outside of that and the ongoing programme that we estimate would get us through two months of Interim Supply.

MR. F. ROWE: Just one brief question, the minister mentioned something, there is a certain amount of this money for students at the College of Trades and Technology for allowances or salaries and this sort of a thing. Is this correct? I do not want to know the exact amount. I want to know this, Mr. Chairman, has the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations been in consultation with the Minister of Education at all concerning the possible formulation of some sort of a student assistance programme for students in our pro-secondary educational institutions so that we could have a student assistance programme for students in these various institutions that would have some degree of standardization about them? Probably the question can be more properly addressed to the Minister of Education when we come to his particular Vote. But the simple question - has there been any consultation between the two ministers in connection with any kind of a student aid programme or allowance and this sort of thing?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Of course the only students that would come under the

jurisdiction of Manpower and Industrial Relations are those in the trade schools and only those in the trade schools who are out of school for a period of time and go back under Manpower. So there has been consultation and right now we had our people up in Ottawa this week, my Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister of Manpower, in an attempt to reconcile this year's manpower training programme in the province.

We foresee some possible difficulties in coming to a satisfactory conclusion with the federal government in this. Of course this money then will be looked at and whatever is there we certainly would try, and at least to stabilize the different students in post-secondary education.

On motion Head V, carried.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, because the Minister of Transportation and Communications will probably not be here tomorrow so I wonder if perhaps we could move to number XVII.

MR. WM. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, before we go to that matter, could the House Leader give us any indication as to whether we are meeting tonight because -

AN HON. MEMBER: Tomorrow.

MR. WM. ROWE: No, we are not meeting tonight and it is Private Members' Day tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have honourable members reached a consensus on what we are doing when?

MR. MARSHALL: Transportation and Communications.

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS - Head XVII.

HON. T. HICKEY, MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS:

Mr. Chairman, the amount requested here is covered as follows: current account, salaries, summer maintenance, winter maintenance, other subheads, capital account, new construction under DREE agreements, improvements, reconstruction and other subheads. The other subheads referred to are made up as follows: amounts required to cover miscellaneous expenses such as office expenses, travelling expenses, ferry operations,

local roads, that is under current account. Under capital account the other subheads cover such items as staff engaged in survey work and also expenses and other miscellaneous capital works.

The amounts in question are: salaries - \$3,340,000 and their summer maintenance - \$350,000, and their winter maintenance - \$430,000. other subheads - \$3,580,000. A total of \$7,700,000. Their capital account, new construction under DREE - \$1,900,000, improvement in reconstruction - \$800,000, other subheads - \$700,000 for a total of \$3,400,000, combined total of \$11,100,000.

MR. GILLET: Mr. Chairman, I could not hear the honourable minister

very well but did I understand his figures for winter maintenance, \$430,000? I was under the impression, Mr. Chairman, that the winter maintenance ceases on this Saturday coming. Now maybe that it is only in my district but if this interim payment is for April and May, then how could it cover winter maintenance?

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, I guess it is just a matter of a technical point with regard to the name or what we call it. Any money spent on snow clearing or ice control is called winter maintenance, in other words, keeping the roads safe and keeping them open. Any money spent by way of grading or reconstruction or anything of that nature would be classified as summer maintenance. That is simply the explanation.

MR. GILLETTE: In other words then this is for, shall we say, the permanent staff, the permanent maintenance staff for April and May and has nothing whatsoever to do with the additional staff that was taken on for the winter maintenance of the roads?

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, maybe what the honourable gentleman is referring to is the possibility of people being laid off at the end of the month.

MR. GILLETTE: Yes.

MR. HICKEY: Under normal circumstances this is when the winter maintenance vote ceases for the present year. As the honourable member can appreciate, if there is a snowstorm, we have to clear the roads and if the roads are icy, we have to sand and salt them or whatever the case may be. This work must carry on and, therefore, there must be money made available to do so. If it be used for that purpose, then it would be classified as winter maintenance. Now in all probability it would be done by the permanent - there is no decision to extend the time in which case the decision has already been made with regard to lay offs in connection with winter maintenance.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, every now and then on television I see this advertisement put out by the Department of Transportation and Communications, along with other advertisements, showing four lane highways and little model cars and trucks, with the greatest warning about watching

your blind spot. Sir, this does wonders for the people in St. Barbe North, on their cow path, they have to drive over in their district. I wonder if the minister could indicate how much of this money, interim supply, is going towards this advertising and what company has the contract for the advertising and whether or not tenders were called for this advertising that we see put out by the Department of Transportation and Communications? Probably the minister can relate and give us some idea about how much (The question probably should have been asked during supplementary supply) money under supplementary supply was made available for such advertising and how much, generally speaking, over the past year was paid out for this advertising? I am not trying to score political points, Mr. Chairman. I am just trying to find out exactly how much money is going for this advertising because some of it admittedly is advertising that is needed for the safety on our highways but, Sir, in terms of priorities and needs in this province, I really question that particular animated diagram with trucks and cars going down four lane paved highways asking people to look out for their blind spots as being particularly important when we need so much pavement and upgrading of the roads, particularly on the Great Northern Peninsula, and where so much more money needs to be spent for equipment, both the quality of equipment and the quantity of the equipment on the Great Northern Peninsula Highway.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, with regards to the advertising I might just say that we have had a very positive reaction from the general public with regards to that particular advertisement. I can appreciate the feelings of my honourable friend with regards to the needs of his district. All of us are in probably a similar position but I do have to feel that it is my duty to remind him that we have to deal with the whole province and we do have a section of four lane. We do have a very real problem with the slaughter of people on the Trans-Canada Highway. This is what this advertising is geared to cover and hopefully to correct, to make people aware and to draw their attention to the fantastic number of accidents which have taken place on the Trans-Canada Highway.

Let me answer his question with regards to the monies that we are presently requesting here. My information is that none of it is allocated or will be allocated for advertising of this type. It is my understanding that whatever advertising was done during the past year or up to and including the time when the new estimates are passed by the House, that has already been taken care of. I do not have the figures available, I am sorry. When the regular estimates are being discussed I am sure I will be able to give him more information on that particular matter.

MR. ROWE, F. B. Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the honourable minister would be kind enough to indicate how much money has been spent for this advertising, up to this point, during the last year? Again, who got the contract for this advertising? What company or companies got the contract? Whether public tenders were called for these particular jobs?

MR. HICKEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have to say again I am sorry, I cannot provide the information at this time because I confine myself to request for information, my familiarizing myself with the amount of money that we are requesting today, I confine myself to the amount in question. I have just stated that none of this is for advertising, therefore, I am not in any position to give figures or to state how much has been spent during the past year or any information of that type.

4

I repeat, when our regular estimates are going through the House I will be more than happy to co-operate with my honourable friend and to get him whatever information then is necessary.

MR. ROWE, F. B. Mr. Chairman, I will accept the minister's answer. I would request that he prepared himself for that particular question when the main estimates come up, Sir.

I wonder if the minister would itemize the areas - he mentioned some money there for capital construction I believe some under -

MR. HICKEY: New construction.

MR. ROWE, F. B. New construction and some under DREE and some presumably straight provincial capital construction. Would the minister indicate in what areas of the province and give us an itemized list of what areas of the province this capital construction is being carried out and the value of the construction?

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, that is next to impossible because again I do not have a detailed breakdown of all projects. It is to cover two months. It is to cover certain projects which are on-going from last year where the contractors are presently working. Under capital account it is to cover projects some of which are on-going, carried over from last year. Others in which tenders are called, one of which is in the District of my honourable friend for Hermitage.

It is very, very difficult and I have to say that I do not have that breakdown. I will have to tell my honourable friend even if I did, I could not give him an accurate account at this particular time because I do not know, for example, nor does my department know every project that this money is going to be spent on because we do not know when a contractor will resume work and until he resumes work there will be no money used but the minute he does, then part of this money will have to be used to pay him under a certain head.

MR. ROWE, F. B. Well, Mr. Chairman, during the last year's consideration of the main estimates, my

colleagues on this side of the House did make a great number of attempts to get some idea from the minister and from the minister who held the seat before him or held the department before him, the Member for Humber East.

We have, for two years, attempted to get from the various Ministers of Finance, what areas of the province were being proposed for capital construction and highways and we have not gotten answers to these questions, Mr. Chairman. I know, even if the minister suggest that he does not know what contractors are going to bid on certain jobs or whether there will indeed be any contractors bidding on certain jobs in certain areas of the province, I realize that there is obviously a certain percentage of the proposals that surely the department have on hand down there, that will not come about for that very reason. Surely, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Highways and his department must have some idea in what areas of the province they are intending to carry out some capital construction and road improvement, paving and upgrading and what have you, during the coming year.

The minister says he does not have this information on hand for the Interim Supply Bill. Sir, I am not entirely satisfied with the reasons why the minister does not have the information on hand. We will be further dissatisfied if the minister should not have a detailed itemized list of what areas of this province where his department intends to carry out capital construction and road improvement and this sort of thing during the coming year. The only thing I can say, Sir, is that I ask once again that the minister prepared himself for this line of questioning when we consider the main estimates.

There are many parts of this province that want to know, whether it be from the government members or from the opposition members, they want to know, have some idea where road improvements are going to be carried out during the coming year. Now, Sir, in St. Barbe South there is a considerable amount of road construction going on because of a DREE agreement that was negotiated between the

Federal Government in Ottawa and the previous Liberal Administration, and they have benefited considerably from this particular agreement.

For two years now I have been hammering away at the various Minister of Transportation and Communications to put a little bit of provincial money for capital construction and improvements in the district north of that, since this improvement is going on through a federal-provincial agreement in the south. I repeat that request and I simply ask that the minister, during the consideration of the estimates he provide the information as to where his department plans to carry out construction during the coming year so that we can debate it fully in the House.

It is no good for us to get the information in the middle of the summer, Sir, when the House is closed and we cannot debate it. We can get on the air and say; Well, I am extremely sorry that this area of the province or that area of the province has not gotten well-deserved monies for capital construction on the highways." We want the information during the consideration of the estimates be it Interim Supply or the main estimates.

I sincerely request that the minister get together with his advisers and his departmental officials and prepare an itemized list that he will be willing to table before this House, of where his department is proposing to carry out capital construction, road improvement, upgrading and paving by district or by highways district, certainly by geography, when he defends his estimates, when we come to the main estimates.

I would like for the minister as a matter of fact at this very moment to say that he will undertake to provide this information during the consideration of his main estimates when the budget is brought down. Will the minister now, at this very moment, assure the House, Mr. Chairman, that he will provide this honourable House with an itemized list of road construction, improvement, upgrading and paving for the coming year, bearing in mind that some contracts may not be fulfilled, may not even get a personal tendering,

submitting a tender for a particular piece of work? Will the minister assure this House, Mr. Chairman, that he will to the best of his ability and the ability of the officials in his department provide an itemized list of proposed road improvement construction and paving and so forth and so on to all honourable members of this House when the consideration of the estimates come up, the main estimates?

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, I would be very happy to accommodate the honourable gentleman if I could but I regret that I can give no such commitment for any number of reasons. It would be suicide for me as minister to stand in this House and to unveil a roads programme that is going to be carried out this year, one main reason being that if through circumstances beyond my control or the control of the government one project did not get under way, Mr. Chairman, I am not quite sure what would happen because we get so much flak and so much criticism even when we guard ourselves and guard what we say, attempt to qualify what we say. Imagine if I were to say a particular road is going to be paved this year and if, for example, we could not get a paving contractor to do it, maybe the honourable gentleman - I am not suggesting he would but maybe, (If I were on the opposition I probably would do likewise.) maybe he would be the first to get up and say, "The minister announced to the whole province that this road was going to be paved. Now he tells us that it is not going to be paved. Does he know what he is doing? Does he know what is going on in his department? If he said it is going to be done, why is it not going to be done? The reason he now gives is no excuse" and it could be great political hay, Mr. Chairman.

Now, I cannot in conscience allow myself to make that kind of a statement, to annunciate a roads programme which I have not the foggiest notion, With the limited number of contractors in the province, with the fantastic escalation of cost per unit mile of road be it reconstruction, be it pavement or what have you, Mr. Chairman, it is becoming more and more difficult for my department to estimate, to say what project is going to get under way.

There are any number of reasons. I assure my honourable friend that I am not evading his question. I do realize and I do appreciate fully how important it is for people to know what is going to be done in their area, how important it is for him to know and every other honourable member in this House what is going to be done in his district. I assure him this much that when I do know and when I am reasonably sure I will be glad to notify each and every honourable member of this House. I will not hesitate to do that at all.

For me to give a commitment that I am going to announce a total roads programme, Mr. Chairman, I would not indeed be honest if I gave the House this evening such a commitment. I do not believe, in all sincerity, that I am able to perform or able to deliver such a commitment if I were to give it.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I find this kind of a devastating answer because in spite of the government's continual expression of planning and priorities, the minister has just admitted - this is my interpretation - that he has no plans in his department and no priorities.

Now, I have the floor, Mr. Chairman. The point of order -

MR HICKEY: To a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the honourable gentleman from St. Barbe.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: MR. Chairman -

MR. ROBERTS: What point of order. I am making a point of order.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that I can rise on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. STAGG): Order, please!

Will all honourable members please resume their places? The honourable member rose to a point of order which is in order. Whether the point he is going to make is actually the point of order remains to be seen.

MR. HICKEY: My point of order is this. I do not want the honourable gentleman - I do not wish to war with him this afternoon but I do not want him to totally misrepresent what I said. All I have said, Mr.

Chairman, is that I in conscience and in full sincerity am unable to give a total roads programme; that I did not say -

MR. CHAIRMAN (MR. STAGG): Order, please!

The honourable minister is making a point which he has ample opportunity to make after the honourable member has spoken. It is not a point of order and while he may be

move to attempt to get it into the record at this point, I suggest he is not in order.

MR. F. B. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I am not intentionally or unintentionally misrepresenting what the Hon. Minister of Transportation is saying. The minister said that he honestly does not know what proposals or what plans his department has or the officials of his department have. Mr. Chairman, even if the minister did have plans, priorities and proposals and intentions of where his department is planning on carrying out road work during the coming summer, I submit that the minister is duty bound to present that to the people of Newfoundland, at least to the members of the House of Assembly on both sides of the House in order that they can give this information to their constituents, give them some idea of what the plans are for the future. If there be a reason why the minister announces that there is going to be paving from Section A to Section B in the coming year, if he makes that announcement and then for some reason or another the commitment is not carried out, there must be a reason. If the reason is a good reason - I am trying to explain to the people why certain sections of road in this province are not being upgraded or paved at the present time. The honourable minister does not have to remind me of how to try to convince the people. I have had certain members of my family relatively close to politics over the years and I experienced the difficulty they had in trying to convince the people over certain things.

Mr. Chairman, all I am saying is that the honourable minister owes it to this House to indicate to the Newfoundland people what the plans of his department are with respect to road construction during the coming year. Sir, if the minister makes a commitment or his department makes a commitment and the department is unable to carry out that commitment, the minister again is duty bound to explain to the people why that commitment was not carried out. Now the reasons can be many. It could have been a bluff to start of with. I would imagine, Mr. Chairman, that previous to an election campaign, i.e., or a by-election campaign

that the government and the Minister of Transportation and Communications would have no hesitation whatsoever indicating what the plans are, what the highway plans are for the coming year or the coming months. Sir, if the government fail to fulfill that commitment, the minister and the government are duty bound to explain why.

I would submit, Mr. Chairman, that the minister may not have a very good reason. However, if a contractor for some reason or another goes up the spout or nobody submits a bid on a particular job the reason stands on its own. The minister does not have to worry about convincing people. He does not have to defend himself if a contractor goes up the spout or if nobody bids on the job. What is the minister so nervous about, Mr. Chairman? I cannot think of one single reason why the Minister of Transportation and Communications should not do what we have been requesting over two years and that is to provide this House with some plans, priorities, proposals or intentions as far as capital construction and paving is concerned on the roads of Newfoundland. He owes it to the people, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Stagg): Shall Head XVII- Transportation and Communications ..?

MR. ROBERTS: Not yet, Mr. Chairman.

Under Standing Order 7, either Your Honour had best report to the Speaker - we are going to have some interesting procedural rules, I think.

On motion that the committee rise and report progress, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

On motion report received and adopted.

On motion committee ordered sit again on tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: It now being 6:00 P.M., I do now leave the Chair until 3:00 P.M., tomorrow Thursday, March 28, 1974.