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SPEAKER; THE HONOURABLE GERALD RYAN OTTENHEIMER

The House met at 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. MMYNARD: I am pleased to be able to announce today our decision to proceed with a program to provide consultative services to employers and unions in an effort to bring about better communications between Management, Labour and Government.

The Government, as is everyone else, is particularly concerned over the increase in the number of man-hours lost during recent years as a result of work stoppages. The number is unprecedented in the Province's history and we feel that positive steps must be taken to reduce the lost time.

While many of the causes for work stoppages are as a result of confrontation between employers and employees respecting working conditions, there are many instances in which work stoppages could have been averted if good lines of communications had been established between the parties. While acceptable channels of communication exist between some groups of unions and employers which have signed collective agreements; there are indications in some industries and operations that third party involvement may be desirable as a means to promote better union-management relations. In effect, the primary purpose of this new consultative service to both Management and Labour will be to assist the parties in developing improved relations and, as well, to develop the system to deal with differences which may arise during the life of a collective agreement.

Where the terms of agreement are for periods of from 1 to 3 years, a problem frequently arises concerning changes which may occur in the operation during the term of the agreement. While employees do not ordinarily resist change, any number of difficulties can arise when new techniques or procedures are put into effect without prior consultation between unions and employers.

MR. MAYNARD: If sufficient advance notice is given when changes are to occur in an operation, many of the problems can be averted, but because the traditional adversary system continues to exist between some unions and employers, quite often wildcat strikes or slow downs occur. Fortunately, many of the attitudes are changing in Newfoundland. Through the proper Labour-Management committees the parties can explore ways in which these problems can be overcome.

The practice of unions and employers coming together only during times of crisis, such as in bargaining over revisions to a collective agreement, must be changed. While the consultative service proposed can be provided at any time, it is not intended to be imposed on employers and unions, but rather to seek to have them meet with a senior Labour Relations Officer and where problems exist to discuss procedures to deal with them. The service to unions and employers will be voluntary in every respect with one of the main purposes to provide an opportunity for a free discussion of issues confronting the parties and to do so in a frank and clear manner.

The Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations has the responsibility for taking the lead in a new program of this sort and we have every confidence in its success if Management and Labour will be receptive to it. Where effective procedures for union - employer meetings exist, it may not be necessary for the Department personnel to get involved, but where collective agreements do not exist or where experience has shown that differences continue to arise as a result of inadequate procedures to deal with the issues that exist, then we would like to have members of the staff meet with the parties on a joint or private basis to consider the feasibility of establishing Union-Management Committees.

This new service the Department of Manpower and Industrial Relations is proposing is not confined to the larger operations but to any employer, union or group of employees who have difficulty. While the ultimate weapon could be a work stoppage or a closedown of operations, we believe a more realistic approach would be to encourage

MR. MAYNARD: positive Industrial Relations in order to reduce the incidence of employee-employer confrontation, due to misunderstanding or indifference. We believe that a positive attitude towards a Labour-Management program would overcome many of the problems that lead to work stoppages and the loss of productivity among the work force.

MR. HICKMAN: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I understood the minister's statement- and although I listened to it with care and attention I am not sure that I did understand it because it struck me as one of the better example of turgid prose that I have ever heard in the House - but if I did understand it, Mr. Speaker, I think it should be welcomed for what it is, although as the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) just said, it is nothing really very new or very radical. But I think anybody who is the least bit interested or concerned with labour relations or labour-management relations in this Province, must be aware of the fact that they are not in very good shape and must be ready to welcome anything which will attempt to better them or to ameliorate them. The minister's statement, I assume, will achieve that, although I am not sure that, to be quite honest, that I or anybody else in the House, except possibly the minister, really understands what he said. We will have the opportunity to study it and if we are ever allowed the privilege of debating the estimates of his department we will have the opportunity perhaps to discuss it and to allow him to expound at greater length and possibly even to explain what it is he has in mind.

I wonder though, Mr. Speaker, if the minister could answer a question since we are on this field of trying to improve labour-management relations. Some years ago, two or three, the Premier announced that we were going to have a great international conference on wildcat strikes. We had a royal commission which produced one of the most dismally bad reports that any royal commission has ever produced on the subject of wildcat strikes. It was a

MR. ROBERTS: penetrating insight into the obvious and it was decided by the government as a result of that effort that there was going to be a great international conference here in Newfoundland on this vexing subject of what could be done, what possible steps could be taken, to try to improve labour management negotiations.

Well, Sir, that

MR. ROBERTS:

became one of the 169 unkept promises of the government and I am wondering now if the minister could tell us whether he intends to proceed with this conference. If so, when? And if not, Sir, would he confirm the fact that it has now gone into the pigeonhole reserved for royal commission reports that are not what the government wishes to hear and political promises that the government make before elections?

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly answer the question and expound on it in some detail but I think it is a question more appropriate for the Question Period as opposed to the item on the Orders of the Day that deals with ministers' statements.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I listened also with some intensity and a considerable amount of incomprehension. I am not sure yet that I understood what the minister said, but I do gather the strong impression that the minister is very anxious to bring in something, to take some steps to alleviate what is admittedly a pretty bad and discouraging situation in our Province today. And indeed not only in our Province, but I am afraid across Canada and in other parts of North America and indeed in other parts of the world. It is a discouraging situation and God knows something needs to be done. What that something is I confess very frankly I do not know. I hope truly that the minister knows. I hope that his remedies will be effective remedies. I give him full marks for wanting, for trying to accomplish something in this direction. When we know more precisely of the proposals he has in mind we will be better able to judge the efficacy of them or the likely efficacy of them.

But in the meantime I congratulate him on bringing in from his department and from his officials and himself, and perhaps his colleagues in the cabinet, this statement that he has given us today.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House of the big game licensing system used for 1976 hunting season. This system was arrived

MR. HICKEY:

at after detailed analysis of the system in operation during 1974 and 1975 hunting seasons, which I must say generated a considerable amount of criticism by local hunters.

Five main areas of criticism were as follows: The lateness of notifying hunters of their success; the people who have gone as many as two years without receiving a license; unqualified hunters received licenses; hunters could hold a moose or caribou license in consecutive years and more than one license could be issued per family. Regardless of which system is used to allocate licenses it will be impossible to satisfy everyone. Therefore a certain amount of criticism of any system is inevitable.

What we are attempting to do now is to bring in an interim measure to deal with the immediate problems, bearing in mind that further modifications may be required to improve the system. The new system is as follows: One, we will retain the quota system. This is the only system whereby the wildlife division can control the harvest. If the division loses this control, irreversibly damage is inevitable to both the moose and caribou populations. This system dictates the necessity of a draw for the awarding of licenses.

Two, the use of the computer will be discontinued as a means of awarding licenses this year, and the license allocations will be done manually through a public draw. Three, we recommend soliciting applications for moose and caribou hunting licenses as soon as possible but not later than May 17. The acceptance period for the applications will be three weeks with no extension. This will enable my department to advise hunters in July whether they are successful or not.

Four, we will place license applications in priority pools. Priority one will include applications from hunters who have applied for but not received a license either in 1974 or 1975. Priority two will include hunters who applied for but did not receive a license in 1975. Priority three will include all other applications. I should again stress at this point that this allocation, although we are

MR. HICKEY:

attempting to iron out the inequities, will not satisfy the demands for the resource.

Five, the obvious method to help meet this demand is a party license system. This system will permit two hunters to utilize one license thus increasing the recreational opportunity.

Mr. Hickey:

it will not be necessary to apply for a party licence during the initial application period. After the applicant has been notified that he or she is successful, then he or she may request a party licence instead of an individual licence. This will permit an individual holding a licence an opportunity to take one person with him or her to hunt. A party licence will cover -

AN HON. MEMBER: How many people can hunt on a licence?

MR. HICKEY: One.

AN HON. MEMBER: One.

MR. HICKEY: A party licence will cover two hunters and both are permitted to carry a gun. They may also alternate hunting. In other words, if a person is unable to hunt on a particular weekend the individual may select, or his partner may be permitted, to use that licence or the licence can be used with both hunters present, or individually.

MR. NEARY: Can a male and female go together?

MR. HICKEY: Yes. If my hon. friend will just wait now he will hear all of this.

On each party licence one animal only may be taken. Six, in consideration of the question of one licence per family, we made a detailed analysis of our records which indicated that less than 6 per cent of licences were awarded to more than one member of a family. Considering the small percentage no action will be taken to eliminate this possibility. Seven, during the week of May 3, applications forms will be distributed throughout the Province and will be available at most government offices. Eight, successful applicants will receive their licences locally from government personnel after showing proof of identity, Two forms of identification will be required one of which will be the MCP card.

During the next ten days I will issue a further statement pertaining to licence quotas, season dates etc. as well as improvements regarding conservation and enforcement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, in commenting on the ministerial statement regarding moose and caribou licences, we are all happy, Sir, in this House to see that the minister has recognized the problems and weaknesses of the last formula for the issuing of such licences, and has reacted at long last to the pressure and outcry from the people of Newfoundland with regard to the most unsatisfactory method of issuing such licences over the past year. You know, it was obvious to every one that the previous formula, if I can call it that, was an utter and complete disaster and met with dissatisfaction of many people in the Province.

I did not get all of the points, and I do not have the statement in front of me, but obviously the first point that was made with respect to maintain the quota system I think is of utmost importance, if that is not established obviously the resource, the moose and caribou, will cease to exist and we would not be able to carry on with the hunt on a recreational or on the basis to get food into the homes and this sort of a thing.

May 17, I am not sure, I have had a number of complaints, Mr. Speaker, with respect to, you know, when people will receive notice that they have been successful in getting their licence, and I am not sure of the date, but am I to assume that this announcement satisfies that anxiety, that now people will know in time to plan ahead for their holidays so that they can go moose hunting and this sort of a thing? I have heard this kind of a complaint. May 3, I understand, is the time that the applications will be distributed. And how long will it take, if the minister will just reply from his seat, how long will it take to have the applications processed and the people -

MR. HICKEY: In July.

MR. ROWE: In July.

MR. HICKEY: Early in July.

MR. ROWE: Fine.

Well, Sir, in closing I would like to mention one thing and that is, and I do not know whether it is appropriate for the minister

Mr. Rowe:

to answer this at this point or during the Question Period, but can the minister assure this House that no moose licences will be issued free of charge to residents of this Province? Because

MR. ROWE: as everybody realizes there were a total of 112 moose licences issued free of charge last year, costing the Province, I know it is a small amount, but \$1,680. And if the minister can rationalize or justify the reason for the issuing of such moose licences free of charge to residents of this Province, we would be ready to listen and determine whether the reasons are justifiable or not. But can the minister assure the House that this occurrence will not recur this year?

MR. ROBERTS: Hear! Hear! Well said.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if my hon. friend was here the day I gave the explanation for that number of licences being issued. It is not as though those licences were issued as complimentary licences to friends or to relatives or what have you, or to special people.

The 112 licences - as I explained that day in commenting on the Auditor General's Report - were drawn in a public draw. They were given to people in all regions of the Province, and they were given as part of a policy to encourage people to send in statistical data which is necessary to promote and to improve our management programme.

Now I just want to repeat and make it clear again that those licences were not per se just handed out. They were not complimentary licences in that sense of the word. It is true that they were free. It is true that they cost the Treasury "x" number of dollars, but it was done as an incentive to ensure that the great majority of people at least, or a pretty fair percentage of the people hunting sent in the required data that is required by my division.

MR. SIMMONS: Without mentioning names, what type of people were these licences issued?

MR. HICKEY: There was no particular type of people, just anybody who was lucky enough to have their name drawn. Now I will, before

MR. HICKEY: the House is adjourned, I will table the list. Because it seems that my efforts in terms of my statement, and I believe this is four times I have explained it, were not understood. I heard one member of the Opposition commenting to the media shortly after that explanation accusing the government of just giving out licences. This is poppycock. This is foolishness. You know, absolute misinterpretation of the facts. So it seems that, Mr. Speaker, the only way to clear the issue is to table the list and I will gladly do so.

Now I can say one thing further with regards to that system, in view of the fact that the Auditor General finds it unacceptable, we have looked at the whole situation and I will be making a statement on that. That system will not be in effect after this year. There will be another system which hopefully will require people to send in the information and which will encourage them to send it in. But this was purely the reason for it. It is not just licences given to people whose names are picked at random. The names were drawn publicly the same as the regular draw that we are talking about that we are going to do this year. And it was done as an incentive to get people to send in the data.

MR. ROWE: Probably a little bit of education beforehand or explanation would have solved some of that.

MR. HICKEY: Well it could have been.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I hear with pleasure the remarks of the hon. minister. I accept now today, as I did when he made the statement originally, his explanation of the free licences. I think this is good rock-bottom common sense in a government. I hope also that the minister offers an occasional free licence to distinguished visitors to the Province.

This announcement today by the minister if it could only be coupled, as I hope it will be, with another announcement a little later of a greatly

MR. SMALLWOOD: improved and reformed system of regulating ski-doo's, snowmobiles, if these two taken together would, it seems to me be a most eloquent argument in favour of having, say, three by-elections every year. Because in that case the government would be on its very best behaviour and we might get excellent results for the general public.

MR. NEARY: Do you think that is what is motivating them now?

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, no! But it just happens to be that way.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, the following is a statement I would like to make, too insignificant probably after the statement previously. I am pleased to announce the continuation of the garden allotment programme which was started in 1975.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: It is a pilot project in the St. John's, Corner Brook and Gander areas. The objectives of the programme were, one, to provide garden space for urban residents who do not have access to agricultural land.

MR. DOODY: Any by-elections coming up there?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Two, to provide urban residents with an opportunity for recreation and, three, to make people more aware of the problems and costs associated with vegetable production and increased consumer understanding of the farmers.

Some 425 garden plots of 1,000 square feet each were prepared and rented at a seasonal cost last year of ten dollars. The programme was successful with regards to the 425 plots last year in these three areas of 1,000 square feet each. The programme was successful with regard to participation, yield and the quality of produce and recreational benefits. In view of this and the increase in the number of requests for garden plots, it has been decided to make more plots available at Corner Brook, Gander and St. John's this year, and to expand the programme to include Grand Falls, Windsor and Coose Bay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: As was the case last year technical assistance and advice will be provided by the departmental staff. First consideration will be given to applications from persons who had plots last year, but others who are interested may also apply. All persons interested in this programme must apply in writing by May 19, 1976 regardless of whether or not they had a plot last year. The applicant will be notified after May 19 whether or not they have been successful in

MR. ROUSSEAU:

receiving a plot.

Information regarding procedures in making application in each of the regions follow: St. John's urban area. If those persons who had a plot at the nursery on Brookfield Road last year apply and still qualify, then they will be given the opportunity to get the same plot they had last year. Unfortunately the area in the Coulds last year is not available for plots this year. We rented it, apparently, and the plot is not available again this year and that is unfortunate because some people put a lot of effort into clearing their plots last year and we would like to be able to give them the opportunity to have the same plot. But what we have done is an area close to the nursery in the New Town area has been prepared for use the year and we hope since this is our own land we will not have to change it every year, so that people who clear the plot this year will have the opportunity to have it in the future.

It is unfortunate that those people in the Coulds area cannot have the same plot they had last year, but it is one of those things. If those persons who had a plot in the Coulds last year apply -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: They do it for the first time on the cultivated lot.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes. If those persons who had applied in the Coulds last year apply and still qualify then they will be given first opportunity to get a plot in the new area. All persons who did not have a plot last year will be considered on a first come, first served basis as written applications are received at the department's regional office building, T-851 Pleasantville until May 19. Applications can be obtained from that regional agricultural office.

Corner Brook area - those persons who had a plot last year and apply and still qualify, they will be given first opportunity to have a plot again this year and all person who did not have a plot last year will be considered on a first come, first served basis as written applications are received at the department's regional office in the

MR. DOUSSEAU:

Shoprite Building in Corner Brook. Applications can be obtained at the regional office in Corner Brook.

In Gander and the Grand Falls-Windsor area, if those persons who had a plot last year near Gander apply and still qualify, then they will be given first opportunity to get a plot this year. All new applicants at Gander and all persons applying for a plot in Grand Falls-Windsor will be considered on a first come, first served basis as written applications are received at the department's offices in Grand Falls and Gander and the applications are available at both those offices.

In the Goose Bay-Happy Valley area, there was no programme in this area last year. So all persons will be considered on a first come, first served basis as written applications are received at the regional office in Goose Bay up until, again, May 19 and the application forms are obtainable at the Goose Bay office. No phone applications will be accepted. All applications will be evaluated as to the criteria laid down and if eligible will be placed on the list. Every effort will be made to satisfy the demand fully.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, in comment upon the minister's statement let me first of all say that this has confirmed a widely held view which is circulating in the corridors of the House of Assembly and in the recesses of the Press Gallery; we have heard in the last few days, we have heard a considerable amount of talk about the minister being involved in plots, and about lunches, and about a great number of lunches, and, as I say, plots in which the minister's name has figured prominently.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: And I am very happy that he has confined this by his statement, because I think it is obvious that the minister is one of the great plotters of all time.

To carry it on, Mr. Speaker, I think, and I know I speak for my colleagues, that the great plot plan just announced by the minister is really one of the better things which this government have done. They are less than perfect in our view in many fields of endeavour or many fields of non-endeavour. But I do feel that this programme is one of the better programmes, and I think it has been carried out on the whole very, very well. It is regrettable that we are not to be allowed to debate the minister's estimates, or we might have the chance to lavish upon him and his officials the praise which is their due for this programme. There might be a moment or two of censure on one or two other things which the minister and his officials do or do not do, but certainly on this one the question will be one of praise.

I am particularly pleased that in the areas where people had plots last year, it is the minister's plot this year that the last year's plotters will be given first right to that plot this year. And I think that is a very good idea because a man or a woman or a family invested a lot of time and effort and energy in tilling the ground, and as all of us who till soil from time to time know, it takes a long time to till the soil in a plot. I think that is good

Mr. Roberts:

and right and proper, and I would hope that in years to come the people who get their first plot this year in the areas into which this programme is being extended will be given the opportunity to have that same plot next year. If the minister is to continue to earn his well deserved reputation of being involved in a great number of plots, and being a great plotter - I am glad to see the Premier is here because the Premier is very interested in these particular plots, I know - then I think he should adopt that principle which I suggest.

Let me just ask one question, Sir, since we are not going to be allowed to debate the minister's estimates, we can either ask it now or on Question Period as he prefers. But I noticed with particular interest the Goulds situation, and I would assume, although the minister did not say so specifically, that that plot of land on which the Goulds plots were plotted last year was rented or leased for a one year basis. And that seems to have been a - I realize the minister was not the minister at that time, and that the minister who was the minister at that time was incomparably less competent than the present minister is - but it would have seemed to be a very foolish move indeed, Mr. Speaker, a very foolish move indeed because a lot of people put a lot of work into tilling their plot and working at it, and getting it in shape and maybe getting a crop last year or maybe getting ready to get their crop this year, and of course that effort is now all gone. And I wonder if the minister can tell us why the department or the government rented a piece of land for only a one year on - I realize it was an experimental programme, and that may have been the reason, but nonetheless it is unfortunate because all the effort that was put into that plot or those plots by people last year is now gone, indeed if anything they will have accrued to the benefit of the owner of the land who presumably now will either farm it himself or lease it to somebody else for farming purposes.

Mr. Roberts:

But all in all, Sir, other than the fact the minister -
it has confirmed what a number of us have been hearing and the
whispers around the House that he is indeed very much taken with
plots, and very much part of plots, we think, Sir, it is a good
programme and for once, Sir, I am in the unusual but quite happy
position of quite genuinely congratulating the minister on what
I believe to be a significant step forward.

MR. ROWE: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. J. R. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, if there is anything that can be said against this programme - it commenced, I think, it was last year, was it? by the government, and now to be continued this year - if there is anything to be said against it, it is only that, good as it is, and fine as it is, it does not go quite far enough. That is to say, it is limited to too few places embracing too small a proportion of the whole population of the Province. It could be extended.

Now I know that that takes time. I fully realize that. I know a little bit about land. I know a little bit about farming. I also know that there is great need in Newfoundland for this kind of thing. I remember the plots of the First World War, I do not remember them too vividly, but I remember. There must have been a couple of thousand plots -

MR. W. CARTER: Victory gardens.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Victory gardens, quite so. In England as you go from city to city, if you do it by rail, by train, which is usually elevated a little above the surrounding countryside, you see vast numbers of garden plots worked by denizens of the towns, who go outside in the suburbs, in the surrounding area, and cultivate a little patch of land and grow some vegetables, and thereby give themselves some exercise in the open air, which does them no harm, and grow some fresh vegetables, which certainly does them no harm, and helps their purse. This could well be done on a wider scale in Newfoundland.

Would the minister give consideration to these couple of thoughts, namely, that if a person clears a plot on crown land, that that person might have the right to that same plot for, say, a period of five years, at the end of which his application for another five might be renewed and considered sympathetically by the government, not, however, for the purpose of subleasing, but only to hold the plots so long as he actually used it for the original purpose.

Then secondly, where no one has had a plot up to now, would the minister not consider the idea that has been in fairly wide application

MR. SMALLWOOD:

throughout the Province in the drawing of trap berths, they are drawn, the annual drawing of trap berths, might there not be some system of drawing for those plots? Then instead of first come, first served, an actual drawing as in the case of trap berths. The whole idea is good and I am delighted with it, and I am delighted with the minister. Indeed, it is the kind of thing precisely that I would expect from that minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Mount Scio.

DR. R. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present a petition on behalf of 622 residents of Airport Heights. The area represented by this petition takes in both sides of Portugal Cove Road from the city limits at Hunt's Lane out to Windsor Lake, including, of course, Penetanguishene and the Airport Road.

Now the petition was signed by approximately 89 per cent, a little over 700 residents of the area. So it is pretty well a unanimous petition by the residents. The prayer of the petition is as follows: "(a) that we totally support our Area Committee which was elected at an open public meeting by us the residents of this area, namely, Raymond Fahey, Chairman, Cecil Ledwell, Vice-Chairman, Douglas Furneaux, Treasurer, Diane Driscoll, Secretary, Bill Lawlor, Member and Larry Kelly and George Moore, Trustees; (b) that we totally support the above committee's efforts to have our area incorporated as a community council under the Community Councils Act; (c) that we desire an immediate freeze on all future development, with the exception of playground facilities, in our area until such time as your department can take some action regarding our application for incorporation as a community council under the Community Councils Act."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the area at present is under the control of the Metro Board and the residents have indicated quite strongly that they do not wish to become a part of the city of St. John's. I realize fully the position of the minister in deferring decisions

Dr. Winsor:

on incorporation until he receives the submission by the St. John's Urban Region Study chaired by Mr. Alex Henley. And I fully agree with his position, and I think this is the only reasonable decision he could make at this time.

The request of the immediate freeze

Dr. Winsor.

with the exception of the playground facilities and so forth, is a very reasonable one. And as one who is very familiar with the problems of that area - and they have very, very severe problems in development - this is why I wholeheartedly support this petition.

I request that this petition be tabled and referred to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure, Sir, to support the petition so ably presented by the hon. member on behalf of 622 out of the approximately 700 residents of the Airport Heights area. I think it is the first time that I have heard it called the Airport Heights, although I am fairly familiar with the area because I had to drive through it every time I went back and forth to Bell Island. I suppose I have driven through that area several thousand times. I want to congratulate the member, too, Mr. Speaker, because I understand this is the member's first petition that the member presented in this hon. House, and I must say he did a pretty fair job of presenting the petition and making a strong case for the people who would like to see the prayer of the petition carried out.

Now, Sir, section (b) of the petition deals with a request to have the area incorporated as a community council. My understanding now, Sir, is that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing has turned thumbs now on community councils. The minister apparently has dug his heels in and is adamant, has taken the arbitrary decision that there will be no more local improvement areas or community councils, that everything now, every area that is incorporated has to be a town council. And yet we are getting requests, Sir - I know in my own district, in the community of Burnt Island,

Mr. Neary.

several hundred people down there have asked for a community council - and now we have this request, and there are others that I know of where the people are asking for a community council rather than a town council. So I am wondering, and I will be anxious to hear what the minister has to say about this, because I believe the minister should reconsider this policy that apparently he has adopted in the last couple of months about the preference of town councils over community councils when the people themselves are the ones who make the decision.

This particular area, Sir, straddles two districts. It is in my hon. friend's district, the Minister of Tourism, and the hon. member who presented the petition, two districts. I believe the Portugal Cove Road is the dividing line of the two districts. So you have houses on either side. And I would assume, Mr. Speaker, that the people are getting very concerned about the area becoming polluted because of the number of houses that are being constructed in the area. I have had occasion recently to discuss this matter with some of the people in the area, and they are very, very concerned about allowing the area to be developed uncontrolled. So I agree that their request to have a freeze placed on future development in the area until some form of incorporation is granted to the area is a reasonable request. It is a good petition. I think we are all familiar with the area. It is just right on the outskirts here of the city. It is a nice area. We should not allow the same thing to happen to this area that happened up in Conception Bay South where it became highly polluted. And it is a good petition, and I wholeheartedly support the prayer of the petition, Sir, and I hope that the minister will grant the prayer of the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I support the prayer of the petition for the very good reason, I think it is a good reason, that I have been asked to do so by a gentleman who must surely be Newfoundland's champion lobbyist in the present year. He has approached various members and very capably explained the situation in the area from which the petition comes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing will fall in line with it, and that his colleagues in Cabinet will do so as well. My understanding of the position taken by the Minister of Municipal Affairs is not that of my hon. friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary). I had not understood the minister was taking a strong stand, or any stand, against the creation of community councils or of an even simpler form of municipal organization. My understanding of his position is that he is opposed to demoting municipal organizations from town council to community council, or if there be a community council, demoting it to a still lower status.

MR. PECKFORD: No, Burut Islands, for instance, has no council at the moment. They are trying to get incorporated.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well, I find it difficult to believe that the minister, who is himself an outharbour man and who knows what life is like in the outports, and who knows that there are many communities in Newfoundland absolutely too small, too small to have a council -

MR. PECKFORD: Good point!

MR. SMALLWOOD: - there are too many of them.

MR. PECKFORD: I prefer the phrase, too small.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, they are too small. There are not enough people, not enough to form the kind of organization that a town council would be, and incur the responsibilities that a town council must assume, or to meet the costs of a town council over and above the help, the financial help that such a council gets from the minister, from the government.

So, here if you have no municipal organization, pending maybe what is a larger and perhaps a better scheme, pending the coming of that why should not the people have a community council to put in at once with a minimum of delay, put in at once some kind of social control over, local social control, not merely the control of the urban - what is it called? The bigger thing around the city, what is it?

MR. PECKFORD: The Metropolitan Board.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Metropolitan Board. I should remember that. I think it was under my administration that it was set up in the first instance.

They want to have the thing in their own hands. They have an intense local patriotism. They have an intense interest in their own immediate area, and surely they might well be expected to take a keener interest in it than the - what is it again?

MR. NEARY: The Metropolitan Board.

MR. SMALLWOOD: - Metropolitan Board would normally be expected to show. I heartily support the prayer of the petition. And if it is the hon. member's first petition, that is not all that - but if it is his first speech then I congratulate him on making his maiden speech in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few short comments in support of the petition. The petition which comes from the people of this area, as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) pointed out, embraces two provincial districts. I represent a number of those people presently, and I had the honour of representing the people, who now find themselves in the district of Mount Scio, since 1966.

Mr. Speaker, I can also say that as far back as some seven years ago, there were a number of people in the area of Penetanguishene, Firdale Drive, Cedar Drive and those areas, who were indeed very keen, and very interested in getting some form of local government. I do not think that the desire on the part of a majority of the people might have been as great at that time, but certainly there were a number of people very active in pursuing this matter which they have brought before us today. I certainly want to add my support to the prayer of the petition presented by my colleague, the member for Mount Scio (Dr. Winsor), and to assure the residents that he and I worked very closely in this matter, and indeed any other matters pertaining

MR. HICKEY: to that area, or the area right on to Portugal Cove.

I am sure that the comments made by my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) with regards to the decision taken by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is not completely accurate. At least, it is not as I understand it, and I am sure that he will, in due time and maybe very soon, clear the air on the issue. I certainly support the petition, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. B. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I feel obligated to just say a few words concerning the petition. First of all, as pointed out by the member for Mount Scio (Mr. R. Winsor) who presented the petition, the position of the department relative to incorporations within the St. John's urban region is fairly clear to everybody. That is that we are awaiting the final report of the commission which deals specifically with the business of local government structure in this region. If that report, if the way the report was phrased was different so that that local government structure part of it came in earlier, well then we would have been in a position to make a decision concerning incorporations earlier than is presently the case. It would be rather wrong to go ahead, I suggest, without seeing what the commission has to say, especially in light of the fact that they have done a fair amount of leg work around the whole area and held public hearings and this kind of thing, and have had fair input from all the people in the region. So that is the reason there.

There are other areas besides Airport Heights, St. Phillips and Portugal Cove and so on that are agitating for incorporation as well. Of course, it always brings up the larger question of the overall kind of local government that one wants to see in this whole region: should we continue to have a multiplicity of separate councils, some of which might be community, some of which might be town, some of which might be local improvement, as is the case with Wedgewood Park, or should we try to work towards a more uniformed system throughout? In any case we shall address ourselves to that larger question when the report is received.

The main part of the petition, as I understand it, is that in the interim, until such time as government does make a decision on incorporations, will the government consider to put a freeze on further development in the area in question, excepting recreational areas and facilities? That I shall look at most carefully when I receive the petition and reply as promptly as possible - that should be within twenty-one days -

MR. PECKFORD:

to the people, or shorter than that if I can, explain to them whether or not I can accede to that kind of request, which does seem reasonable, at least on the surface.

To the larger question of incorporations and the department's policy relating to community councils and so on, let it be clear, Mr. Speaker, that, first of all, the lowest - I suppose it is difficult to do this - the lowest form of local government, I suppose, although one hates to use the word lowest, would be -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The simplest, the simplest.

MR. PECKFORD: The simplest, okay, - that is a better term. - is the community council.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is there not now a still lower one? There used to be.

MR. PECKFORD: No.

MR. NEARY: A local improvement area.

MR. PECKFORD: No, no, no, no, no, no. Hold on now. Just take your time. Community council is the simplest, not only in how it is set up, but also after it is set up and how it operates. I am taking the whole thing. I am not trying to separate. If you look at it all, the simplest is the community council. Next to that would be your local improvement district and rural district council and town council, which are all about the same.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Now you are going up in structure.

MR. PECKFORD: No, no. There are only about two levels. One is community council, and the second level, which becomes more complicated, has three in it, I am saying, local improvement district, town council and rural district council. It is difficult to separate them. On the one hand you can get a board of trustees appointed, whereas a town council is elected, so the appointment system might be a little more simpler than the elected system. But in all its powers and so on under the act they are about equal. That is number one.

Number two, the policy of the department concerning community councils is simply this, and the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) put his

MR. PECKFORD:

finger on it when he indicated the business of small and large. We thought they were too small. First of all, the department's policy is no more local improvement districts. Secondly, community councils still are an integral part of the local government system of the Province. Thirdly, in the case of Burnt Islands particularly -

MR. NEARY: You are backing down.

MR. PECKFORD: No, I am not backing down. In the case of Burnt Islands you have a large community, a very large community,

MP. PECKFORD:

which should be able to operate effectively now, in 1976, with a town council. That is why the position is such. Now in the case of Airport Heights, or smaller places of 400 or 500 people, the community council is the answer for those places at this point in time, question about it. And there is still a place for more community councils where you have a small community which wants to move towards a more complicated local government structure than just a water committee or a waste disposal committee. But in the particular case of Burnt Islands, because of its population and so on, we have taken the position that a town council is most advisable in that particular community.

MP. SIMMONS: What is the population?

MP. PECKFORD: It is over 1,000, I think.

MR. SIMMONS: How would the minister reconcile South Brook, 700 population, and Airport Heights, the same population?

MR. PECKFORD: South Brook?

MP. SIMMONS: Green Bay.

MP. PECKFORD: South Brook is over 1,000 population.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MP. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if the minister and my friend and colleague have finished their conversation, maybe I could say a word or two in support of the petition which the gentleman from Mount Scio (Mr. R. Winsor) presented, and I do so for two reasons, Sir. Let it be recorded that Mr. Fahey, the chairman of the committee, came to see me, and that is one reason why I would support it, because Mr. Fahey is a very persuasive and eloquent gentleman and presented a reasoned and rational argument in favour of it. There is a second reason why we on this side, Sir, support the petition. That is because we think that the request is a justifiable one, a sound one and is merited.

Mr. Speaker, as I understand the request, and as I understand the remarks which have been made by the minister and by the gentlemen who sit to my right, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and successively

Mr. ROBERTS:

the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), the real point of this petition is twofold. First of all, it grows out of the fact that we have been too long in rationalizing the local government structure of the St. John's metropolitan area, by which I do not mean just the area that falls within the Metropolitan Board's jurisdiction, but we have been too long about it. And these people in effect are saying they do not want to wait any longer, that they want some decisions inasmuch as they affect their area, and that is rightly and properly their concern.

So I think in supporting the petition I would say that the minister - I know he is giving it consideration, I know there are studies, and I know Mr. Henley and his colleagues are holding hearings and submitting reports and what have you. And that is all fine. And I know that these things cannot be done overnight. But the fact remains, Sir, that we must have some action soon because decisions are being taken in the absence of a concerted policy. There is a policy. Decisions are being taken. Development cannot be stopped throughout the entire metropolitan area. We are finding that I fear we may be losing control of events. We may be losing control of the development and the way we want it to go as a people in this metropolitan area.

Secondly, Sir, - and I think this is a very important point which underlies this petition - the 632 men and women who have signed this petition and through the lips of their member, who spoke effectively and well and I think made the case, as I understand it to be, as the petitioners wish it to be, what they are really saying is they fear the Metropolitan Board is not responding adequately, or they feel the Metropolitan Board is not responding adequately to their feelings about how they wish their particular community to develop. They have said that since we are not getting any closer, on the surface at least, to the decision as to what form of government the metropolitan area is to take, and in any event we do not want a distant form of government, we want something that is close to us, we want something

MR. ROBERTS:

that we can influence and we can control. I think that feeling, Mr. Speaker, is a sound one and I think also it is not confined to the Airport Heights area.

I think that the minister is going to have to make this a fundamental principle in developing the policy which he will present in behalf not of his department but of the government as a whole. We do not have departmental policies, we have government policies which are administered for convenience's sake through agencies known as departments.

But I think the important point, Sir, is that people in the St. John's area, in the metropolitan area, where we have a variety and a multiplicity of local governments now, running from the local improvement district of Hogan's Pond, which collects no taxes and offers no services but has one of the most effective sets of zoning controls East of Montreal, right through from that to the city of St. John's, a highly developed municipal organization. The people are beginning to feel that local government is getting very much away from them is very unresponsive, often unheeding. I think

MR. ROBERTS: that the people in Airport Heights, that area, very much have that feeling. That is how I understand it through the lips of their spokesman in the House and from my conversations with the Chairman of the Committee.

I think that is a valid feeling, Sir, and I think the minister should meet that feeling and should enable it to be dealt with. I do not know what form of municipal government it should take. The committee have requested a community council, and I think for the time being that is a valid form because, given the range of options, it is probably the best one. But when we come to get the overall pattern of municipal government in the metropolitan area settled, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have got to develop a mechanism whereby people can have control over the things that are very close to them, and nothing, Sir, in that sense, is closer than development, the kind of building that goes down the road, or the kind of industrial development that is allowed in an area, or the kind of pattern of development.

The Chairman told me of an example. The houses were built on a boggy area. The bog was cleared away and lovely houses built, proper septic tanks systems, all approved by all of the authorities. But as a result people living across the street, who never before had flooding in their basements, are now getting flooding in their basements, obviously because the bog was taken away from the two houses from that area and that drainage now comes down across the road and into these other houses.

These questions, Sir, are of utmost importance and the best way to resolve them is by government organization and mechanisms that are very, very close to the people concerned. I think that the minister and the ministers, Sir, should take that principle and make it a very fundamental one in developing his policy.

MR. ROBERTS: Let me conclude, Sir, by saying that there are those in this House, most of them junior, freshmen members, who feel that the petition process is not a valid one and indeed have been so rash as to suggest that we should end it. I think that is wrong. I think that this debate for one, and there have been a number of others in this House in this session, shows that the points raised by the petitions are valid, and the discussion on them is valuable, and I would think the member for Mount Scio should be complimented for raising the matter in behalf of his constituents and for raising the issues and I would think the members who have spoken on each side have raised points which are important to the public weal and which should be considered.

I think the petition is valid, Sir, and, for the reasons I have outlined, my colleagues and I would urge the minister to act upon it and to act quickly and to act positively. Thank you.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further petitions?

The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: I have a petition I would like to present on behalf of 200 or 300 people in the communities of Comfort Cove and Newstead. Mr. Speaker, this is a rather unique petition and when I explain it I am sure members will agree.

In the community of Comfort Cove there is a fish plant operated there by Notre Dame Bay Fisheries and they have a water system that was installed last year by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion at a cost of about \$1 million, and the water flows down to the fish plant through the community of Newstead and through part of the community of Comfort Cove. So here we have a modern water system in those two communities but nobody is availing of this fresh water except the fish plant because nobody can hook up to it.

Now last year, prior to the election, tenders were called for the

MR. WHITE: addition or the adding on to of this system so that it would provide water to the residents, to the homes in the area. And the tenders were called and the lowest tender was announced and so on and the contract was about to be signed except that the great freeze was announced by the Premier and consequently the project was shelved.

So now the people there are wondering whether or not the government can find some means by which the people in the area can connect up whether by themselves or with some government help to this modern water system that is there running from what is called Steady Cove Pond down to the fish plant in Comfort Cove. I think it is a very good idea. You have a situation whereby you have people who cannot get fresh water, they have to bring water for miles on some occasions, particularly in the summertime, and here fifteen or twenty feet from their door is a six inch pipe line going along with all the water in the world. So it is a bit ridiculous and I hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs finds some means by which the people in Comfort Cove and Newstead can hook up to this federal water system that is there at the present moment and I would like for this petition, Sir, to be tabled in the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Premier from the House, although he was here a little earlier, perhaps I could ask the question to the House Leader in his capacity as - I do not know if he is deputy Premier, indeed, I do not think there is such an office as deputy Premier - but, Sir, as the general handyman of the administration, if that is the way to put it. Mr. Speaker, my question is this: In view of the statements made by the Minister of Mines and Energy on the television on Tuesday night, on the Here and Now programme, and in view of the statements made on a news broadcast with CBC last night by an employee in the news report, which I think admit and show that there was a pronounced and a definite lack of ministerial supervision in the Department of Fisheries in 1974 and 1975, will the government -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I must remind the hon. gentleman of the rule with respect to questions, and I would submit that his last statement was out of order.

MR. ROBERTS: In what way, Mr. Speaker? I do not quarrel with your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: In that it was a form of debate, a reflection, a statement of a quite serious difference of opinion with respect to how a department was administered, but was not in my opinion part of any necessary information for seeking the answer to the question. I think apart from the actual question, the words which end up with a question mark, any other words should be part of the necessary information.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I thank Your Honour, and I was trying to give what I regarded as necessary information, and I will try to rephrase it. My question quite simply is, Sir, will the government now - the Premier has returned to his seat, he may wish to answer it - will the government now

Mr. Roberts.

reconsider their decision and grant a judicial enquiry into the administration of that department in 1974 and 1975?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, under no circumstances. The investigation going ahead in that department is a normal one based on a possible wrongdoing that will be investigated. As far as the administration of that department is concerned, Sir, for the past few years it has never been better in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister without Portfolio, the Government House Leader, if the minister has yet received a reply from the Summer Games Committee in connection with the purchase of the land over here on Westerland Road for the Aquarena?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: A reply was received.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker.

Does the minister intend to give the House the information in the reply as was originally intended?

MR. WELLS: Yes. Wait now, I think I have that here.

The reply is here, Mr. Speaker, a letter from the Chairman of the Summer Games Committee, and also attached to it is a copy of a press release which was given by the Summer Games during the early part of April and explained the prices of the property involved and how they arrived at the figures. I could read the letter to the House, but I think it probably better to just table it, and then it is available.

MR. ROBERTS: Will copies be available for all members?

MR. WELLS: I am wondering now. I think what I will do this time is table the original and a copy. I want to keep a copy for our files in the department.

MR. ROBERTS: Will the department make copies?

MR. WELLS: Oh, they will make copies I am sure.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Is this a supplementary or is it a question?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The minister has tabled the reply, as I understand it, from the chairman of the Committee. Is the minister's letter there? If not, would he table that as well because the reply - I assume, I have not seen it, nor do I know what is in it - but the reply is a reply by definition, and it would be helpful in reading it, I think the minister would agree, if we had his letter of enquiry as well.

MR. WELLS: I have not got my letter here, but I will look for it in the files.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile for a supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, does the minister see anything in the reply that would indicate that there should be further action or further investigation into this purchase of the land?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: No, Mr. Speaker. If I might elaborate on this a little, I think perhaps I ought to refer to part of this. "The Westerland property was purchased from two owners, Robert Morgan, who held option agreements dating back to January, 1973, and his wife. The total purchase price was \$787,922 comprised of \$667,922 for 8.55 acres of land and \$120,000 for buildings. The price for this land at \$1.79 per square foot or \$78,119 per acre is well within competitive market values. Investigation by the association showed the current values of land in the relative area, as owned and administered by the St. John's Housing Corporation, run upwards from \$90,000 per acre in valuation. In other words the price paid for Canada Games park land is nearly \$12,000 per acre below minimum values of comparable property being sold or leased by the Housing Corporation.

"It should be noted also that this site had important commercial value as it was to have been developed for a new apartment complex and plans for this project were well advanced at the time of the purchase. Prime land for such developments at various locations in the St. John's area is valued in the price range of \$2.00 per square foot, and the Westerland property was the only property which fulfilled all the conditions required for the Canada Games Park development." As I say it is all here and members will be able to read it. It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I think worthy of note that the price which appeared extremely high, and I would say appeared extremely high to me -

MR. ROBERTS: In total.

MR. WELLS: Yes in total, yes. But when apparently the information given by the Housing -

MR. NEARY: A wack of cash.

MR. WELLS: It is a wack of cash, I agree, but the information given by the Housing Corporation and other people or bodies having knowledge of land values in St. John's substantiate in my view that the price paid

MR. WELLS: was a proper one.

MR. NEARY: Is this information in the letter?

MR. WELLS: Oh yes, this information is in the letter and will be available. So it would appear that the price was perfectly proper and in line with prices that have been paid in various parts of St. John's for prime land for commercial or other similar use.

MR. ROBERTS: He is surely lucky to have that option.

MR. WELLS: He was lucky to have the option and apparently he had the option long before the Summer Games thing came on the carpet at all. So there is nothing funny or hanky-panky about that. So that would appear to be all completely straightforward, Mr. Speaker. With regard to the tender aspect, I think while I am on my feet and referring to this I think I should refer to that also and read the second part of the letter which I have tabled.

"Public tenders were called for proposals to undertake the construction of the Aquarena and Track-Field Soccer Complex at Canada Games Park and the committee advised government at that time. A copy of the proposal tender call advertisements which ran a number of times in the newspapers is enclosed. Of eight firms which asked for the tender forms, three actually responded with proposals and qualification statements. The Board of Directors of the Association chose Newfoundland Engineering and Construction Company Limited to carry out this work based on these statements and other factors.

"The Association had previously negotiated," and I think this is important for members who are interested in this, Mr. Speaker "The Association had previously negotiated the contract with Recreation Development Associates for the construction of the pool," and I understand from the committee that this company, Recreation Development Associates, are the only people in Canada who can put in this kind of pool and they have done it before. So that there was very little choice that the committee had in negotiating with that

MR. WELLS: company and with McKinnon Steel for the structural of steel prior to choosing Newfoundland Engineering to do the general contract.

Now I think it is important to realize also, Mr. Speaker, that these contracts were all turned over to the general contractor, Newfoundland Engineering after Newfoundland Engineering was chosen. Newfoundland Engineering invited tenders for the majority of all the sub contract work and in fact the prime contractor, which was Newfoundland Engineering, is only carrying out approximately \$1,556,000 worth of the work of approximately - and the total value of the contract is \$4,453,000, so that NECO, as I say, is doing \$1.5 million out of a total of almost \$4.5 million. "There was a serious time factor involved in the Westerland project following the problems encountered by government in its original plan to erect a complex on the North campus of Memorial University. In order to meet the necessary deadlines for the opening of the Aquarena, and having the field facilities ready, construction had to start as quickly as possible and a proposed tender call procedure was followed. As you know this practice is accepted for the construction industry and is used from time to time by governments at all levels. In case of other games facilities, there was no shortage of time for construction and project tender calls have and will be invited and publicized. So that basically, Mr. Speaker, when NECO was given the contract for approximately \$4.5 million, it itself is only doing approximately \$1.5 million. Most of the other work had already been let.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Did they submit tenders with regard to the work?

MR. WELLS: I do not know but I presume they ought to anyway. Anyway this is the information and it is now before the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMONS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Mines and Energy. I wonder would the minister indicate whether the government has made any decision on the request or the recommendation of the Tappy Valley Power Consumers Committee, a recommendation and request that hydro and diesel electric rates be equalized up to the first 1,300 kilowatts?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, that has been given careful consideration. Before announcing any decision I think I will discuss it with the cabinet.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It needs changing still.

MR. CROSBIE: Well, I mean, that will require a major change of policy. I can reaffirm now what the position is. The position is the present policy, that there are hydro rates for 500 kilowatt hours a month. So that before any answer can be given to them I will have to discuss it with the cabinet again. I have the facts and figures, and quite frankly it is very unlikely there will be any change. On the other hand the cabinet may wish to change it no matter what the financial consequences, and therefore it will be put before the cabinet. But it has not been put before the cabinet yet.

In addition to a lot of other points that have been brought up by the Committee there, that has been gone into in detail by the Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro. I expect next week to be writing them back a very detailed reply in response to each of their points. And that is about all I can say on it at the moment. So the policy still remains the same. There has been no change in policy. If there is any change in policy it will certainly be announced in the House.

MR. SIMONS: A supplementary. Mr. Speaker, do I understand from the minister that it is his intention to make a recommendation to cabinet concerning this request?

MR. WHITE: That is be changed.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, you know -

MR. WELLS: It is out of order, Mr. Speaker. You cannot ask the advise of the minister.

MR. CROSBIE: - I would not say what as recommendation to the cabinet I would make.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Actually the hon. government House Leader did make a point of order at the time and that was that the question would be out of order and that would be asking a minister what advice he -

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, no, no, no.

MR. SPEAKER: Is not that what the hon. member meant?

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary. Mr. Speaker, I am sorry the question got misinterpreted. I heard the minister say it had not yet gone to cabinet, and I was asking if I could interpret from that that it would go to cabinet without wanting to pry as to what his recommendation would be.

MR. CROSBIE: Actually, Mr. Speaker, we have now gotten the facts and figures and that will be put before the cabinet. What recommendation will be made? There may not be any recommendation. It will be up to the cabinet to make a decision if they want to change this policy or not.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary to the same minister on the subject, Mr. Speaker. I understand from the Power Consumers Committee that they had someone cost the proposal to equalize the rates for diesel and hydro at 1,300 and that the cost would amount to about an additional \$500,000 per year to the treasury in subsidy, you know, applying the same formula for subsidy as exists now for the first 500. I think that costs about \$11 million. Would the minister indicate whether he is in a position now to tell us whether that is a fairly accurate figures or if it would be considerable in excess of that figure of \$500,000?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, I will give all the facts and figures to the House when the government had made a decision on this matter. It

MP. CROSBIE:

is much more complicated than that question suggests. No simple question like that can be answered. So when a decision is made it will be explained in detail to the House.

MP. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MP. ROBERTS: Thank you, Sir. My question is for the Minister of Manpower and essentially is taking him up on the invitation he gave us earlier during the Ministerial Statements portion of the proceedings. That is, would the minister tell us please whether the government have abandoned the plans for the conference which they announced I believe in the 1973 Throne Speech - but I may be wrong on that point - but certainly the plans which were announced to have a great international conference to look into the question of wildcat strikes.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. E. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that there were some announcements regarding a conference to consider wildcat strikes. I am not aware of any statements to the contrary since that time. So therefore as far as I know that there is some consideration being given to such a conference. We have had a Royal Commission on Work Stoppages, which is simplified if one reads it, but very complicated if one wants to implement their recommendations. And wildcat strikes, work stoppages, illegal work stoppages, whatever one wants to call them, it is a problem that has been faced by all the Western nations, and all the Western nations of the world have tried to come to grips with it, none of them very successfully. We have not been able to come to grips with it either.

In relation to the conference I would say that it is an idea that we will have to pursue whether it is held in Newfoundland or some other place, or whether it is held under the auspices of some other organization. But in the meantime there has not been any evidence to the contrary made by anyone that I am aware of in the Newfoundland Government that such a conference was not being contemplated at this time.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the minister I think evaded the point of my question. I am not allowed to repeat the question so of course I will not. But let me ask a supplementary. The minister said, as I heard him, the matter is still under consideration, and it was announced two or three years ago. Your Honour might be able to remind us, if Your Honour were not in Your Honourable's honourable position. But can the minister tell us when there will be a decision. The matter was announced in a Throne Speech I believe three years ago. The minister tells us it now has been under consideration. Can he tell us when he and his colleagues will come to some sort of

Mr. Roberts:

a decision, and let us and the people know whether we are going to have this conference or not?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations.

MR. MAYNARD: Mr. Speaker, the whole matter of illegal work stoppages or wildcat strikes is under continuous consideration and review by this department as well as all of the departments of jurisdictions across North America and the Western World. When we will be able to come to grips with the problem, or when it will be opportune to have an international conference, I do not know.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Minister of Industrial Development in connection with storing oil in the Bell Island mines, and especially regarding a statement made by Mayor Gendreau that tankers may be sailing in the Bay this year, there will be 500 or 600 jobs this year and everything is going to be booming over there. Could the minister give us a factual report on this situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Industrial and Rural Development.

MR. J. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, just in, first of all, very much of a nutshell from my part, I am not contradicting any of the comments made in the press in terms of the reporting of the comments. In other words, there was no criticism of the press. I am glad the member brought up the question because I want to say for the record that I have had no conversations with Mayor Gendreau that would allow him to make the comments that were made in the press and quoted today. The statement that is contained in the press is very, very serious overstatement. And perhaps I would rather for my colleague, the Father of the Wabanew concept, if he would elaborate on that, and perhaps place the record in a proper perspective.

MR. NEARY: Yes, a supplementary to the hon. minister -

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: Okay go ahead the Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I was this article in the paper this morning and I was quite amazed. We have been very, very careful in our handling of this particular situation because the people on Bell Island have been too used to too long for great expectations being raised and then being dashed to the ground. Now I have had conversations on an on-going basis with the Wabanex people, and they are proceeding with their studies, as I have made clear. They have had in a joint venture with a French company, the Geostock people, done some more rock sampling and some more testing on the Island. They have done nothing of any significance. Just a week or so ago I was in consultation with the Wabanex people, the Power Corp. section, the major shareholder in the joint venture, and they told me at that time that things were going along satisfactorily but it was still very much in the studying stage, and they were not sufficiently far ahead to be able to say with any degree of certainty when or even if the thing will be completed, although they do have some reason for optimism. They have been discussing it with the Federal Minister of Mines and Energy, who has promised his co-operation, and their discussions with the American Government, the United States Government, whom they hope to persuade to be one of the major users of the storage facility when it is ready.

This story

Mr. Doody.

that is here now greatly exaggerates the facts as they now exist, and I think that Mayor Jen Dreau, with the best of intentions, has probably been carried away with his enthusiasm and perhaps has exaggerated the situation over there. I am certainly glad of the opportunity to set the record straight in this, as I say, because I do not want to raise the expectations of the people on Bell Island. As far as I know, much as I would like to be able to say so, the possibility of there being 500 jobs available on the island this Summer to work on the wharf and to work on the other facilities as are mentioned in this article, are very, very remote. I hope that it does happen, Sir. But I really would not want to mislead the House or mislead the people on Bell Island to that effect. I thank the hon. member for asking about it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, would the minister inform the House what action he has taken to correct the inadequacies of that department as reported by the Auditor General's report?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: The officials of the department have been made aware of the report and the criticism contained in it concerning the department, and the necessary corrective measures will be taken to ensure that things are set straight in that respect.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Mines and Energy, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman had his question started before being recognized. I plan to recognize the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, who is endeavouring to be recognized. So I will recognize the hon. gentleman after.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Tourism. I am wondering if he has got the answer to the question I put to him two or three days ago relating to the possible flying in of hunters in the Nain area? He undertook to get the answer for me on Tuesday, I believe.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, as I recall it that was the question regarding permission for people to fly in. The answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, is that there are no restrictions on that kind of situation. If a group of people wish to charter a small plane to fly in to a designated hunting area, they may do so as long as they do not violate any existing regulations in terms of harassing or worrying wild life. There are many precedents in that area, certainly in the Goose Bay area, the general area of Goose Bay, and to my knowledge there has not been any problem, of course, except that people did not be as successful as they wanted to be. But there is no objection to them doing it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A question for the Minister of Mines and Energy, Sir, in connection with the linerboard mill. Would the minister tell the House now what the situation is regarding the inventory at the linerboard mill? Has the warehouses been cleared out? If so, has the linerboard been sold or has it been put in warehouses in the United States or in Europe? And if so, would the minister state which countries the government is warehousing its linerboard? Is the government concentrating on the European market or on the American market to sell the linerboard?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, you know, I am not a computer, and there is no lead in to me from some computer out at Labrador Linerboard that keeps me informed from minute to minute or day to day what inventory they have of linerboard in the warehouse at Stephenville. So I cannot say how much linerboard is in the warehouses at Stephenville at the moment, although I would think it would be relatively low since there have been several shipments of linerboard out. The last one I remember hearing about I think was

Mr. Crosbie.

8,500 tons. There is no linerboard sold in the United States of America from this mill at Stephenville. Any linerboard sold is sold outside the United States of America, and it is sold mostly in Europe. There may be several thousand tons of linerboard warehoused in Europe for purposes of meeting the demands of customers from time to time. Otherwise the linerboard is sold direct to the customer. I think that answers the question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile on a supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister tell the House if there is any difficulty with the quality of the linerboard that is stored in warehouses in Europe? Is the linerboard mill finding it difficult to dispose of this linerboard? And how much is in the warehouses in Europe? In what countries are we warehousing linerboard?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. J. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong with the quality of any linerboard stored in Europe or stored anywhere else. From time to time there may be a complaint from customers which has to be investigated as to quality. This is normal in every operation of this type. And from time to time there is some linerboard, a small amount of linerboard, shipped or produced which may not meet the technical requirements and adjustments have to be made. So that is no particular problem with the Labrador Linerboard Limited. And there is no problem of quality with the linerboard stored in Europe, at least that is not to say there might not be a few tons or something like that -

MR. NEARY: A few tons?

MR. CROSBIE: Well, if the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, you know, instead of being so mysterious if the hon. gentleman -

MR. NEARY: I am trying to get information, that is all, for the House and for the people.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. gentleman has some information, or he thinks that there are thousands and thousands of tons or something like that of linerboard -

MR. NEARY: Do not be so touchy and so sensitive.

MR. CROSBIE: - stored in Europe, if there is something wrong with its quality.

MR. NEARY: You shagged up the Department of Fisheries.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: - then the member should say so.

MR. NEARY: You would shag up -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that there is no problem of quality that I know of of any substance in Europe. But from time to time a customer may complaint about quality and the matter has to be checked into.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the minister be prepared to table some time in the very near future, before the House closes, a complete report on the activities of the Linerboard Mill including the management, the marketing, the problems, the difficulties they are experiencing? Would the minister give the House soon, we have been looking for it now for a couple of years, a complete, detailed report on the operations of the linerboard mill at Stephenville? And when can we expect to get that report?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, you know, full information on the linerboard mill I am quite prepared to give, or discuss either during the estimates or on some other occasion. There has never been any difficulty in that regard. The only difficulty will be that as has happened in the past hon. gentlemen will go to sleep when all these details are given as they have done in the past. Any information the hon. gentleman wants on the linerboard mill I will be glad to provide within proper reason.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the minister be willing to have some brighter speaker give the speech and then the House will not go asleep?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SMALLWOOD: There are some fine speakers.

MR. CROSBIE: Is that right?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: I must say the hon. Underling from St. John's West walked into that one, hopefully with both eyes open.

Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Tourism, arising in a sense out of his statement earlier this day, and arising also out

Mr. Roberts:

of the Auditor General's comments on licences. Earlier the minister was asked, Sir, if he would make public a list of the names of all those who have received complimentary licences. He took the matter under consideration, as I recall it. I believe the question was asked by my friend and my colleague, the gentleman from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan).

MR. HICKEY: What is the question?

MR. ROBERTS: My question is simply, is the minister now in a position to make this list public? And in so saying or in so asking I would point out that is the best possible way I can think of to knock on the head for once and for all these nasty suspicions that some at least of these licences have gone to people other than those who won them in the draw.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Tourism.

MR. T. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I indicated earlier today in response to the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) that it seems that is the only way to do it, and I will. I made two statements and apparently it did no good, you know. Surely we are not going to have to table every document that is in every department -

MR. ROBERTS: Only one, the Auditor General's -

MR. T. HICKEY: It is really going to clutter up -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. T. HICKEY: I do not have it here, but I certainly will get it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde. This will be the last question.

MR. ROBERTS: The trouble is nobody believes the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing in his capacity as Chairman of the Committee to appoint the various Standing Committees indicate to the House, Sir, when he will be calling the first meeting of that particular committee, and when he will be ready -

MR. ROBERTS: Next year?

MR. ROWE: - to submit the report to the House of Assembly?

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

MR. PECKBORD: Mr. Speaker, I hope that either this afternoon or Monday I will be in a position to call that meeting together and we can get on with getting the appointment of the committees done.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

On motion of the hon. Minister of Justice, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Registration Of Deeds Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 40).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Justice, a bill, "An Act Respecting Queen's Counsel And Precedence At The Bar," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 41).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Finance, a bill, "An Act To Authorize The Province To Undertake, Organize And Manage Lottery Schemes," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 42).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Department Of Transportation And Communications Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 43).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Tourism, a bill, "An Act To Adopt A Flag For The Province Of Newfoundland," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 39).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Workmen's Compensation Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 47)

On motion of the hon. Minister of Justice, a bill, "An Act For The Avoidance Of Uncertainty Concerning Certain Judgments Issuing Out Of The Supreme Court Of Newfoundland," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 46).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Finance, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Liquor Corporation Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 49).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy, a bill, "An Act Respecting The Acquisition Of Rights To Minerals In The Province," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 50)

On motion of the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy, a bill, "An Act Respecting The Acquisition Of Rights To Quarry Materials Within The Province," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 51).

On motion of the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Mining And Mineral Rights Tax Act," read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow. (Bill No. 52).

On motion that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole on Supply, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Subhead 601-01

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to speak at this point.

All I wish to do, Sir, is to move that the Committee do now proceed with consideration of Head XIV which is the head for the Department of Fisheries, Sir. My reasons for making this, Sir, are very straightforward and very obvious, that I think it is imperative that the Committee be allowed to debate the estimates of the Department of Fisheries, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: Put the question.

MR. ROBERTS: Put the question.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is not debatable.

MR. HICKMAN: I am waiting for a ruling as to whether or not it is debatable, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I am taking the prerogative of the Chairman of Committees to adjourn briefly to consider whether the motion is in order.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I am not surprised by that and I think it is wise, but would Your Honour wish to hear some argument one way or the other on it from members. I am quite serious. As far as I know that motion has never been made before.

MR. MURPHY: Come on! Come on! Have some respect.

MR. POPE: Do not be so foolish!

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will entertain argument but I would hold the argument be very close to the point, and I would ask the hon. members to be extremely brief, because I am sure hon. members do not wish the business of the House to be held up in unnecessary argument. So I will hear arguments but very much to the point and very briefly.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I shall try to heed your admonitions because I think I very much agree with them. As far as I know, Sir, the motion has never been made before and as far as I know we have no precedents to govern us. The first point I would make, Sir,

MR. ROBERTS:

is that this does not conflict with the Standing Orders which say that of course it is the government's prerogative to call the order of the business with the exception of Wednesdays. I would refer Your Honour to Standing Order 14,

MR. ROBERTS:

which is the relevant order, and it says that the government in effect calls the orders. Well the order that was called, Sir, was Order No. 2, Committee of Supply. So the government's right to call the orders was preserved. Within that, Sir, the question is whether or not the Committee are the master of what they consider and further whether they may interrupt their proceedings. And I would refer Your Honour to page 196 of Beauchesne, Citation 230, part 2 of that and the second paragraph which I shall read. It is as follows:

"So entirely is the principle of adjourning debates in Committee of the Whole House ignored, that when resolutions have been proposed and progress reported before they were agreed to, resolutions upon other distinct matters have been proposed and agreed to at ensuing sittings of the committee, and the resolutions first proposed taken up again on a more distant day."

I would then refer Your Honour to page 201, Citation 238, section 2, the first paragraph of it, the first words of which are, "Each grant is a separate motion which must be proposed and discussed as a distinct question." Those two taken together, I would submit, Mr. Chairman, show that the Committee are at liberty if they wish to interrupt consideration of the estimates of Grade VI, I believe it is, the Education Department head, and proceed, if the Committee wishes, to another head, namely Head XIV, Fisheries, as I have so moved.

So, in other words, I think first of all, Mr. Chairman, we can interrupt the business if the Committee wish and proceed to another head. I think that citation in Beauchesne is directly in point and makes it quite clear. Then, Sir, there is the simple question left, whether the Committee are master of their own business. The Standing Order, Sir, does not bar us because the Standing Order, I submit, has been fully observed. The government have called the order and the order is Order 2, Committee of Supply. The question then is simply can the Committee determine in what rotation we are to take the items

MR. ROBERTS:

In Committee of Supply.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Committee has no right.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman says the Committee has no right. I say the Committee have the right, Sir. Only a minister may propose expenditures. I am not proposing expenditures. I am merely proposing that instead of debating education we go on and debate fisheries. And I submit that that is within the prerogative of the Committee. If a majority of the Committee wish to interrupt the discussion of one head and go on to another head, I submit, Sir, that is perfectly in order and that is why I made the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. House Leader.

MR. WELLS: My argument will be very simple and brief, Mr. Chairman. The government as set forth in our Standing Orders has the right to call business on this day. The business that is called is the Committee of Supply, which is estimates. It has been called under the heading of education, and I think that is an end to it right there, Mr. Chairman. I do not think this is a debatable motion, the one made by my hon. friend across. I think that it must be - obviously Your Honour is going to take time to consider it, as Your Honour has announced, and fair enough. But then I think this matter will come down to a vote and that is it. Either the government has the right to call business on government days in this House or it has not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I am sure hon. members realize that this is an important question and I understand a new question for the House. So having heard those arguments we will now adjourn briefly.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please! The point raised is whether in Committee of Supply hon. members are in a position to put forward a motion as to which department shall be considered. Hon. members are well aware of the rule, of course, that the motion to go into Committee of the Whole is a government order, and when the Committee is in Committee of the Whole, which bill to be considered in Committee of the Whole is similarly considered to be a government order, and the order in which bills are to be considered in Committee of the Whole, that these are looked upon as government orders and these have never been questioned or otherwise altered, I understand.

Now the Committee of Supply is similar to Committee of the Whole, the same order to go into Committee of Supply is given from government side and the similar proceeding in the Committee of Supply applies as in Committee of the Whole. That is that the government may call the order in which the departments will be considered.

I might point out that under Standing Rule 44 (a), "The Standing Orders of the House shall be observed in the Committees of the Whole so far as may be applicable, except the Standing Orders as to the seconding of motions and limiting the number of times of speaking." And 16 (b) points out, "Whenever government business has precedence, government orders may be called in such sequence as the government may think fit." After consideration of these points the ruling of the Chair therefore is that the motion put forward by the hon. Leader of the Opposition is not in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a few comments on the estimates of the Department of Education. First of all, Sir, I would like to express my disappointment over the fact that the question of whether or not the estimates of Memorial University of Newfoundland should be tabled or brought before the Committee or

MR. ROWE: before the House developed into nothing more than a great confrontation that appeared to be anti or pro university, and I think the main issue was lost in that particular confrontation or argument between the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), and the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Crosbie).

It seemed that we were into a great debate as to whether we should have a university - well, an anti-pro university debate - and we lost sight altogether of the fact that the real issue at stake was whether or not the detailed estimates of the university should be tabled in this House or tabled or brought before the Committee of Supply.

Mr. Rowe.

I for one, Sir - and I think all my colleagues are in agreement - hold that when the government of a province is financing the major part of the expenditure of the university - in other words it is the taxpayers' money that is being used to make the university function - I think the elected representatives of this Province, the people who are paying for this university, should have a right to have a close look at the expenditure of the university. And I might even go further, Sir, - and I may be accused of infringing upon academic freedom at this point - I would submit that if the people of this Province are paying for the university through the government, that the government - and I do not mean just the administration, I mean the government, the administration and members of the Opposition - should have some say as to the direction and relevancy of the university as it pertains to the future development of this Province.

Now I do not mean that we should get into the area of interfering with academic freedom. But if we are going to pay the major costs of the operation of this university, I feel very strongly that we should have an opportunity to examine the estimates of a province-owned university, a state university, or a provincial university.

MR. NEARY: That is a reversal.

MR. ROWE: It is not a reversal, Mr. Chairman, and the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) knows it.

MR. NEARY: It is a reversal.

MR. ROWE: And the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) should realize that he is playing with words here, because in most instances when the question of tabling the estimates of the university have come up that we got in the realm of an attack on the university or protection -

MR. NEARY: The hon. member might have. I did not.

MR. ROWE: No, no, no, no! The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) -

I think it was quite clear to everybody last night that we had a kind of a polarization where it appeared, you know -

MR. NEARY: I will react to that.

MR. ROWE: If I could continue, Mr. Chairman, without interruption?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: I agree whole-heartedly with the principle put forth by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). But in his usual style the appearance was in some cases that he was attacking the university. The appearance was just that, Sir. And then, of course, we have the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy taking the other extreme and viciously attacking the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in his stand. So we had a polarization, and lost sight of the main issue and that is the tabling for an examination of the university estimates.

MR. NEARY: Now you are going to straddle both sides of the fence.

MR. ROWE: I am not. Mr. Chairman, there is one thing, you know, I would like to be able to do and that is I do not mind if I provoke statements or questions from hon. members to my right or opposite, I would be quite willing to take it on the cheek and try to answer it. But I do not think it is within the rules of the House for an hon. member at the extreme right to not only interrupt me but to in fact misrepresent what I am saying. If he wishes to say I am straddling both sides of the fence or there has been a reversal of policy, he has an opportunity to do so in the course of debate, and I would ask him to reserve his utterances for the appropriate time.

Now the hon. member knows what we stand for and that is simply what I have just stated, and I will not repeat it any more other than to suggest that public money put into

Mr. Rowe.

an institution should be examined by the representatives of the public as long as it does not interfere with the academic freedom of the univeristy, and I think that hon. members should -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. gentleman yield a moment?

Would he be kind enough to spell out a term that we hear quite frequently, a great term, a very honourable one, with tremendous meaning and depth and breadth to it, would he please - he is himself a former academic - would he spell out what is meant by academic freeddm ? I think I know. I have read book after book on it, but the House maybe has not all read them.

MR. ROWE: Basically, Mr. Chairman, there is no set definition for academic freedom.

MR. SMALLWOOD: What does it mean?

MR. ROWE: And I think the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr.Smallwood) realizes that. I think the phrase has been abused and misused, and in certain instances

Mr. Rowe:

has been used as a cover up for certain things that have taken place in certain universities.

The way I see it, it basically boils down to the simple fact that a professor in the course of his duties, in teaching a course at the university or a topic is free to say what he wishes to say on a particular topic that he is talking about, whether it is insecticides, or whether it is a course on Communism, or a course in religion, he is free to say what he wishes to say without fear of being cracked by the law or cracked by a government or cracked from some outside external force. To me that is what it basically means.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes. Would the hon. gentleman not carry that much further. He refers only to the teacher in the university, the lecturer or the professor, the assistant professor who is teaching and lecturing. Would he not apply it to the university as a whole? What subjects should the university be able to have taught? What subjects should be adopted by the university? Are they to have absolute freedom in that?

MR. DOODY: They put a different emphasis on it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In what different emphasis?

MR. ROWE: I can very easily get drawn into the point, Sir, where I can say something that I would be sorry that I said it in answer to the hon. member's question. But let me say this, I do not think it is the job of this Legislature to determine, number one, course content, nor to determine faculty courses or what should be taught in the university.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course.

MR. ROWE: That should be left to the so-called experts at the university.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course.

MR. ROWE: However, I will modify that statement just a little, and

Mr. Rowe:

the modification is this; that if the people of this Province are paying for the operation of that university I think that it is incumbent upon this Legislature - or the Committee, in this particular case - to try and ensure that the direction of the university is such that it will serve in the best interest of the people of Newfoundland. For example, I cannot see a university in Newfoundland that is wholly and solely devoted to the study of blood parasites in birds. Now if that was the major purpose of the University in Newfoundland, I think this Legislation should have something to say about it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course.

MR. ROWE: But I am not saying I am against a little department in the university conducting studies in that area. However, what I am saying is this, is that since public money is being spent I think it is our, not right, it is our duty and responsibility to see to it that the University is as relevant to the needs of this Province as possible and still maintain the true meaning of the university.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Now would the hon. gentleman yield once more, and this boils it down. If the university authority, the senate, the scholastic, the scholarly authority of the university feels that -

MR. ROWE: Senate or the Regents? The senate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Senate, not the Regents. The Regents only -

MR. ROWE: Right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Handle the business -

MR. ROWE: That is right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: - side. The Senate handles the academic, the scholarly side.

MR. ROWE: The scholars, right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the Senate decides that the university, our university in Newfoundland that this House pays for should, and in Newfoundland's interest, adopt a certain course of study, and this House disagrees, who then should prevail?

MR. ROWE: That is a very, very difficult question to answer,

Mr. Chairman, -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Are we talking about academic freedom?

MR. ROWE: - because then we are into the area of interfering with academic freedom.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Exactly.

MR. ROWE: Now the question is, you say 'prevail', or probably we can use another word, 'control' or 'determine', who should then determine what is done at the university? I

MR. POWE:

submit that we should not necessarily determine or control what is done at the university, but we should have, and it is our responsibility to have a say and make public. If this whole Assembly, fifty-one members, who represent every single living soul in this Province, are unanimous in their decision that something is being done at the university or any other institution in this Province that is not in the best interests of this Province, I think we should be allowed to register that in this Assembly or in the Committee and speak out on it because we are - as far as the actual, you know, nuts and bolts running of the university is concerned obviously that has to be left to the experts.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Only to speak on it or to legislate on it, or to withhold funds to pay for it?

MR. POWE: Well this is a matter of -

MR. SMALLWOOD: This is big stuff.

MR. POWE: I was only going to spend a few seconds on this but we can spend hours on it obviously. I think the best way I can answer that question, Mr. Chairman, is simply to say this, that this would only be determined by the magnitude and the nature of the particular instance. For instance, if this university decided to - let us take an extreme case: supposing the university decided to set up a school of political science or faculty of political science or a department of political science that was based wholly and solely upon the preaching of Communist doctrine, or a school of religion was set up to preach only Mohammedanism or something like -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Or agnosticism.

MR. POWE: Right. You know, I am taking extreme examples. I think that this legislature should have something to say about that and question it -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not only say, but do.

MR. POWE: - and possibly legislate -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Right.

MR. ROWE: - for only one reason, we are paying for it. Now if this was a private university they could preach anything under the sun if they are using private money.

AN HON. MEMBER: Unless they break the law.

MR. ROWE: Unless they break the law, yes right. You know, as it happens the Communist party is legal in Canada. So you know we can get into some pretty dicey -

MR. SMALLWOOD: And in the home of freedom, the United Kingdom, it is legal.

MR. ROWE: Exactly. So it is a dicey -

MR. NEARY: Is it not up to the parents to decide the kind of education they want for their children?

MR. ROWE: Of course it is up to them. It is up to everybody who has an interest, and this is the problem with education, Mr. Chairman, and I think somebody alluded to this earlier, that everybody is an expert on education, the parents, the teachers, grandparents, school boards, church authorities, members of the House of Assembly, everybody is concerned and everybody thinks they are an expert on education.

But the only point that I wanted to make - and I would love to have a dialogue or trilogue or a multilogue on this whole business of academic freedom, but that is not what I want to get into - I want to simply go on record as saying that we firmly believe that when it comes to the expenditure of the peoples' money in an institution such as the university, we should have something to say about it, we should be able to examine it and we even got to the point, I think, in the dialogue back and forth between myself and the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) that there might even be a point reached in such discussion or debate where legislation might be necessary. And I can imagine the scholars and the academics reaction to that kind of a statement. It would be vicious. If I am quoted in the paper tomorrow as suggesting that there are certain things going on at the university that we should legislate in or out, it would be a vicious reaction from the university. But I think I have made my point on that one.

Now, Sir, I would like to get back to a few other things. This is the business of school tax authorities.

MR. ROWE: Well at least we did not get a great moan about it.

But, Sir, the Minister of Education did speak about School Tax Authorities and the necessity for retaining them. First of all, let me point out that we admire and thank the many people who have served on School Tax Authorities in an effort to raise money for their school boards. In practically every case they are dedicated, hard working citizens, working without pay to try to help finance their school boards. We have no arguments with the personnel or the make up of School Tax Authorities. But we have said this over the years, and I think we have to repeat it, that we think the concept of School Tax Authorities is totally wrong in this Province.

The minister says that with School Tax Authorities you have local control. That is complete and utter foolishness, Mr. Chairman. There is no control whatsoever, there is a control. The only control is that they have to control to collect money. But the School Tax Authorities have nothing whatsoever to do with curriculum, they have nothing whatsoever to do with the building of schools, As a matter of fact, it is not even the government determines where schools are built, what extensions are made or what apparatus and materials go into a particular school. This is done through the Denominational Educational Committees and through the school boards. And the \$9 million that the minister said that is now made available to the school boards that would not otherwise be made available through this Committee is completely incorrect, for this simple reason that \$9 million that comes from the School Tax Authorities, the \$9 million that are to be collected by the School Tax Authorities, that \$9 million comes from the same source as any Provincial income tax or sales tax or liquor tax or any other kind of tax, it comes from the peoples pocket. The only difference being that with School Tax Authorities - how many now, thirty-one? - with thirty-one School Tax Authorities you have thirty-one separate administrations which have an administrative cost, and you cannot deny that. The magnitude of the cost is irrelevant, but there is

MR. ROWE:

an administrative cost. Even the jacking up of the sales tax or the personal income tax or the liquor tax or any kind of a tax will not cost the amount of money that is being spent on the administration of the School Tax Authorities.

MR. MURPHY: You could go on the unemployment role.

MR. HOUSE: Would the hon. member allow an observation?

You could take that down to municipal governments also. But one thing about boards having an input into it is that the School Tax Authorities determine their rates and the amounts of money by school board budgets. The school boards themselves determine their needs, and they present it, and the School Tax Authorities determine their levies at that particular time. And there is an input -

MR. ROWE: Yes, there is an input, Mr. Chairman, and it is an unfair input, a very unfair input, a very inequitable input, if the input the hon. Minister of Education is speaking about is the fact that school boards and School Tax Authorities get together and determine what is necessary. They do just that. And you have

Mr. Rowe.

situations like this - at least my latest research in this is a year or so old, it might have changed a little bit - where we have our poll taxes ranging from \$20 in one school tax jurisdiction, to \$75 in another school tax jurisdiction. Now what is fair about that? What is fair about that? And then we have a minimum property tax of 2.8 mills and a maximum property tax of 5.5 mills. What is fair about that, Sir? Because there are certain places in this Province, to list a few, St. John's, Gander, Corner Brook, etc. - I am leaving out a few - who can afford - the people in these communities - there may be a high level of employment, there may be a high - for instance, Corner Brook up to a few years ago was amongst the top ten in Canada of towns with respect to personal income, individual average personal income. Amongst the top ten in Canada which meant that Corner Brook - by the way, where the first where school tax was imposed - could well afford at the request -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Very much at their request.

MR. ROWE: Very much. And, Sir, what was requested and what was done in the past does not mean that it cannot be changed. I am being dragged off the point that I was trying to make. As a matter of fact I have forgotten it.

Corner Brook can well afford to impose a school tax. They can collect the revenue. And then you go up coast to St. Barbe, high unemployment, low personal income, people being dragged into Magistrates Court because they are not paying their assessments when the assessments are to be in.

MR. MURPHY: If you are unemployed you do not have to pay.

MR. ROWE: Just one second. I know they do not have to pay if they are unemployed. Ah! that is about the only reaction I can utter to the minister.

Mr. Rowe.

The point that I am making, Mr. Chairman, is
this -

AN HON. MEMBER: You lost -

MR. ROWE: Oh, no, we certainly did not.

MR. MURPHY: The people in my district were never better off
with the school taxes.

MR. ROWE: Exactly. And I was never better off under the
school tax. I am paying less than I was paying before.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: Now, Mr. Chairman, please, am I afforded some
protection from the Yahooing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: What I am saying is this, is that different
areas of the Province obviously have a different potential tax
base. You have rich areas, and you have poor areas. And if you
got the School Tax Authority set up, the fact that you are collecting
\$20 poll tax in some areas and \$75 in some other areas, and you got
a different make-up of the population with respect to high or low
income means this, that some school board jurisdictions or some
school tax jurisdictions have a great advantage over others, and,
therefore, we will have continuing inequality of educational opportunity
throughout the Province. And even within a School Tax Authority area
or within a school board area. I have heard the criticism levied
that the School Tax Board is set up in this community, they are
collecting money, and it is being spent in that general area and
us poor guys out in the little coves, out on the outer fringes of
the School Tax Authority, we do not get the money that is being
collected by the school taxes.

Now, Sir, it has been demonstrated by hon. members
on this side in years gone by, in the last three or four years, that

Mr. Rowe.

the most regressive type of tax that can be imposed on anybody is a poll tax. It is the most regressive form of tax because it is not in any way related to a person's ability to pay, a poll tax. The property tax has its obvious problems, and that is you got to get into the area of assessments. I heard of a case, Sir - and this is one example which I should not really use because it is not general - but I know a person who had to move to St. John's because of a job change. They had their house on the West Coast. They got a piece of land in Deer Lake. You might even know the person I am thinking about. Maybe the minister is in the same position. He is paying a poll or property tax in Corner Brook, paying a property tax in Deer Lake and a poll tax in St. John's,

MR. ROWE: and if his wife was working they would be in the same boat. Look, the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Chairman, last year said, "Is the hon. member for St. Barthe," at the time, "advocating increasing the provincial income tax or the sales tax?" And of course I did not bite for it. Because he could go out and say, "Ah, Fred Rowe on radio suggested we up the sales tax and the personal income tax to pay for education." Well I will say now, however I am quoted, that if this Province, however heavily we are into taxation, I think we are being bled to death. we personally argue against increases in personal income tax and sales tax, but I can say this categorically and without fear of contradiction that if the sales tax or the personal income tax, or the gasoline tax or the oil tax or the booze tax or the cigarette tax, were increased by this administration to recover the \$9 million that the hon. Minister of Education is talking about, it would be a better way of getting the money for educational purposes than through school tax authorities. Because, number one, these forms of taxation are based on a person's ability to pay, yes Sir -

MR. HICKMAN: The SSA tax is not based on a person's ability

MR. ROWE: It is so based on a person's ability to pay.

MR. HICKMAN: On his needs, on what he needs, on what he wears -

MR. ROWE: But there are exemptions.

MR. HICKMAN: How much he drives.

MR. ROWE: Food is exempted, clothing is exempted on sales tax. They are exempted. The major necessities for a person to survive physically in this Province are exempted as far as the sales tax is concerned. And nobody can tell me that these taxes that I have just listed off are not fairer than a foolish old poll tax. I am hit the same \$75 in St. John's as some poor character making \$5,000, as some lucky character hauling in \$100,000, and the hon. Minister of Justice is trying to suggest to me that that is fair. -

MR. HICKMAN: What is fair -

MR. ROWE: In no way is that fair, Mr. Chairman. It is not based on a person's ability to pay. And further, the hon. Minister of Education was talking about this is the way they do it in the municipal governments, you know, got to go for the property tax, municipal taxes, or the poll tax or property tax. Of course they have got to go that route, because that is the only way they are legally able to do it. But the Provincial Government can go through the provincial income tax route, the sales tax route and wipe out this foolish school tax. It is the most regressive thing that has ever been imposed on this Province and if ever - for me to be able to say that is something, because it was my own father who was Minister of Education when this school tax authority was brought into Corner Brook to meet a need. And I will not get into whether he was right or wrong. But I am telling you that at this point in time the school tax authority is regressive, unfair, inequitable and stupid and it has nothing to do with local involvement control, or local autonomy or anything else. You can still have a heck of a lot of local involvement without having a mandatory school tax authority or school taxation. Now enough on that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Carried.

MR. ROWE: Not carried, unless the clock carries me.

Now, Mr. Chairman, so far we have had some very reasonably civilized debate. As a matter of fact, I think this has been the most civilized debate that we have had on the Education estimates since 1972.

MR. MURPHY: At least up to this point.

MR. ROWE: You talk about politics, Mr. Chairman, the

MP. PONE:

hon. minister is provoking me so I shall bite. This administration, Sir, is guilty to the gills of raising the aspirations of the people of this Province with respect to educational development. Now let me say one word before I launch into what the hon. Minister of the Environment thinks I am going to launch into. I realize that this Province is stuck, stuck, sunk or sinking with respect to getting its money in cash to spend in this Province.

My colleague from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) has gone into his feelings on the economic status of this Province. It makes me shiver. I cannot in all conscience get up here, and neither was my colleague, the spokesman for education, as he was accused of, asking for more and more and more and more money for education. He did not get up and say that.

AN HON. MEMBER: A very tangible speech, I must say.

MP. PONE: Yes, because my colleague for Terra Nova (Mr. Iush), the spokesman for education, did not take the government to task for certain things that they have promised and they have not fulfilled. And by the way, my colleague has ample opportunity to continue on. But anyway, without further interruption from the hon. member for St. John's Center (Mr. Murphy), I was attempting to say that this government is guilty to the gills in raising the expectations of the people of this Province with respect to development in education. We have reached the point now, Mr. Chairman, where it is obvious that the government is spending, I think, its maximum in education, its maximum in possibly every other department because the government are dead broke. They got themselves in a horrible mess. They said they inherited a mess. They created a bigger mess, economically speaking.

Sir, they did not discover that two months ago, three months ago, four months ago or six months ago or a year ago. This government knew that they were getting the Province into further and further trouble, economically speaking, from the day they took over. But, Sir,

MR. HOWE:

what happened in the area of education? In spite of their knowledge that we were sinking economically, that the bottom had fallen out of the treasury, so to speak, the government did promise in as late as 1975 to begin work on a new polytechnical institute, 1975 when it was obvious that we could not afford it.

MR. HOWE: Would the hon. member permit -

MR. HOWE: One moment now. I forgive the Minister of Education. He had nothing to do with it. He just took over that particular department, the hon. minister, and he has not promised a polytechnical institute. As a matter of fact the budget speech contained the exact opposite. But as late as 1975, three years after this administration had taken over, four years, the Premier of this Province, as late as 1975, in speeches, documented speeches, was promising a polytechnical institute and residences for this Province at a time when he knew full well that this Province could not afford to do it.

MR. HOWE: Would the hon. member permit?

MR. HOWE: Now do not blame it on the federal government.

MR. HOWE: I am not going to blame it on the federal government. I just want to make the observation that one of the things I did in preparation for my own estimates was read the debate on the estimates last year. The Minister of Education last year stated that we would be doing it if we could get the input we wanted from DREE, and he stated that specifically over and over again and he said we would do it. And we are still looking for that input and if we can get the input we will do it.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, what would the government do about DREE? It is the only protection they got. When they get nailed, look! why did not the Premier come out and say in his great speech, if we can get an agreement with DREE, if the Federal Government can help us, if we can make a proposal to DREE and it is acceptable to the Federal Government we will built a polytechnical institute and residences. But, no. The Premier comes out and says, "We will build." And believe me, Mr. Chairman, if DREE provided money for the building of that polytechnical institute I can assure this Committee that it would not be DREE that would be patted on the back in all governmental announcements; it would be the Minister of Education and the Premier of this Province announcing that they are now building a polytechnical institute.

Another thing, Sir, a great educational television system, province-wide, was promised to the people of this Province.

MR. HOUSE: Television has a great role to play in education.

MR. ROWE: A great province-wide educational television system was going to be instituted in this Province, again from the hon. Premier. Sir, listen to this little tidbit to try to get the teachers attraction, "Subsidies for teachers and for professionals in rural Newfoundland." Moores says in a campaign speech that the government would pay special incentives to teachers and other professional people to serve in smaller communities." Where is that little tidbit of a promise gone?

PREMIER MOORES: Shame!

MR. ROWE: When they knew full well they would not afford it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: We kept hearing right up to last year before the election this province-wide regional colleges. The government intends to establish regional colleges in various sections of the Province. Sir, I realize the need for some of these things, but I am not here asking the government to fulfill these promises, because I do not think we can afford to at this point in time.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. ROWE: But what I am saying is why in the name of heaven did this hon. crowd opposite go roaring throughout the Province handing out these little educational tidbits and great expectations to the people of this Province when they knew in their own hearts that there was no way in God's name that they could fulfill these promises?

MR. MURPHY: The first time in the history of Newfoundland.

MR. ROWE: No way. Well, two wrongs do not make a right, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MURPHY: I agree.

MR. ROWE: Two wrongs do not make a right. And if the hon. member from St. John's Centre wants to keep going back to the previous administration, and other ministers want to get up and say, oh, it is all depending upon DREE, DREE, DREE, DREE. Everytime they cannot come across with something, DREE, DREE, DREE, DREE, DREE will not come through.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: But everytime DREE comes through with something you have a minister going like Flash Gordon to the T.V. stations making the announcement that the government of this Province is proud to announce -

MR. PECKFORD: In consultation with DREE.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right!

MR. ROWE: In consultation with DREE. The government of this Province is proud to announce. That is the kind of thing we hear from the hon. crowd opposite.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is incorrect.

MR. ROWE: It is not incorrect.

MR. LUSH: He is not incorrect!

MR. ROWE: Well, I will show the minister within two weeks how correct or incorrect I am when certain meetings are over and done with.

But, Sir, this is the point that I wanted to make, and I think my time is practically run out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have one minute.

MR. ROWE: One minute, yes.

That I am, you know, really sorry for the people of this Province who have been sucked in and taken in and hookwinked by the great and glorious promises in the area of education by this administration, that continued from 1971 right up to the last election, at a time when they were saying that this Province was on the verge of bankruptcy, at a time when they knew they could not fulfill any of these promises that they were making. And in fact, some of the things such as student-teacher ratio that they did implement, which was a good promise, and they did implement it, but they have had to hold back on it.

MR. DOWE:

They have had to cut back on some of their policies.

MR. CROSBIE: Sit down, boy. Sit down and retire.

MR. DOWE: I have the same comment for the Minister of Mines and Energy as I have for the Minister of the Environment, 'Ah!' That is about the only thing I can say.

Well, Mr. Chairman, that ends my remarks because I have run out of time and I would like for the minister to reply to some of these questions, particularly the school tax authorities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Bay Of Islands.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few words on this very important topic of education. I would like to say before I get on with my remarks that I have never heard such a political speech in all my life as from the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Dowe). You know, it is really amazing. You would think hon. members would be interested in the Province, in doing what is good for the Province instead of trying to just get after the administration for things which are certainly not justified.

MR. NEARY: I thought it was only the Minister of Mines and Energy and myself who were like that.

MR. WOODROW: It is a lot of bunkum, I would say, and a lot of bunkum has been said in this recent speech. Now I would like -

MR. DOWE: I would ask the hon. member to give us the definition of bunkum.

MR. WOODROW: It means half-truths, things without any foundation.

In any case, it is highly unlikely, Mr. Chairman, that I can add anything further to what has been said or even propose anything further, any further programmes or alterations to what has been already proposed. Let me first of all congratulate the Minister of Education, my colleague for the capable way, the knowledgeable way and the cool manner in which he is dealing with his estimates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: The member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), the Opposition

MR. WOODROW:

speaker for education, and also the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) deserve praise for their responses as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: The member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) in speaking about the handicapped of our Province showed to my mind a lot of compassion and understanding, and is bringing home the fact that even though people who are not quite normal still have a right to all the rights that we have even if it costs a little more to give them those rights. Of course what I mean by that is they need some extra bus transportation or extra care in other fields.

The illiteracy rate is still high in our Province but we have gone a long way, and under this government and the present Minister of Education we are going to go a lot further. We cannot do everything in a moment. We cannot do everything, in fact, in a day or a year. It takes a lot of time. Now it is true we have many great and beautiful schools in the Province and hopefully we will get more. But I have to agree with the minister when he says that the quality student does not always come from the large and beautiful schools.

Mr. Woodrow.

The majority of our good Newfoundlanders got their foundation in small schools and from dedicated teachers. Now on special education programmes, a lot has been done in this field, and much more could be said in favour of it. Of course, this shows that this government are trying to reach out to all classes and types of people in our Province. The fact that the young people today are learning about fishing, farming and the like is a long way ahead from the days when fishing and farming was looked upon as drudgery, and if you had such things in mind, you did not need to go to school. In fact, it was more or less a great thing to be pulled out of school when you were maybe in Grade II or Grade III or in many cases not even go to school at all.

Now on the topic of school buses. I do believe that school buses are here to stay, and whilst I understand some of the problems connected with them, which could be classified as follows; first of all, granted there is a certain danger connected with travelling on school buses, although I have not heard of too many serious accidents that occurred on school buses since their inauguration into our Province. However, there is a danger especially in Wintertime. There is also the problem of distance. I think this was brought out forcefully some while back by the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) when he was speaking on the school bus transportation from Badger up to Grand Falls. Now children in many cases have to leave home early in the morning, and return late in the evening. I do not know if travelling on the school buses does them any good physically, because I recall that, in fact, I think about nine years I walked to and from school six miles a day, and it certainly did not hurt my physical constitution any.

MR. ROBERTS: What about your mental capacity?

MR. WOODROW: Mental? Perhaps it did. Maybe walking such a distance would make one too tired to study when you got home. That is a good point.

MR. NEARY: It woke you up in the morning.

MR. WOODROW: It woke us up in the morning is right, yes.

Now, of course, an objection to it, and I think this was pointed out, is the fact that pupils are not able to take part in sports. For example, if the school bus is leaving at four o'clock then, of course, the children got to be on board, otherwise they will perhaps have to hitchhike their way home. So perhaps it has some drawbacks. But there is another thing about it. I think it brings people together. It brings the children together from the different communities in the Province and they get to know each other. And I believe that this to my mind is a wonderful thing.

Now speaking of the university. Anybody would have to be out of his mind and mad not to go along with the university. It has done a lot of good for Newfoundland, and it has done a lot of good for Newfoundlanders.

MR. WOODROW:

And I think, speaking not only of education but of anything, you take out of it only what you put into it. I am reminded of what the late President Kennedy said in his quotation, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." And I think we can have great schools, we can have very plush buses and so on, but I think ultimately the good that the pupil is going to get out of the school depends upon himself or upon his best tutors. The best tutors of all to my mind are the parents of the child.

In speaking about the university I am very proud to say - and I take this now as an example - of a brother I have living in St. John's who is now retired. He had a family of five and all of them without exception have gone to the university and they have specialized. They have graduated and they all have their specialty. One specialized in French. She is working for the federal government in Ottawa. Another one, which is well known to the Minister of Justice, is at present a magistrate. He furthered his studies in Winnipeg. Another one is teaching at St. Bon's with an MA degree. Another one has finished a course in psychology and is working at the general hospital, and finally the last of the family graduated with a BA degree and is working with the Memorial University Extension Service.

I want to say in this particular case - I do not want to get too personal about it - but a lot depended upon the example and the sacrifice that came from the parents of the children.

MR. WELLS: Would the hon. member permit me?

MR. WOODROW: Yes.

MR. WELLS: Would the hon. member like to allow me to rise the Committee and come back to his remarks again when we resume, as it is very close to one o'clock?

MR. WOODROW: All right, then I will adjourn. I have some more remarks to make. Thank you very much, Sir.

On motion that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted, Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. WELLS: I do move that this House adjourn until tomorrow Monday, May 2 at two o'clock in the afternoon.

On motion that the House at its rising do now adjourn until tomorrow, Monday, May 2 at two o'clock.

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By Dr. Winsor in behalf of residents of Airport Heights seeking incorporation as a community council.	6376
Spoken to by:	
Mr. Neary	6378
Mr. Smallwood	6380
Mr. Hickey	6382
Mr. Peckford	6384
Mr. Roberts	6387
By Mr. White in behalf of residents of Comfort Cove and Newstead asking that arrangements be made for the DREE water system supplying the fish plant be expanded to supply the communities.	6391
<u>ORAL QUESTIONS</u>	
Judicial enquiry sought into administration of the Department of Fisheries in 1974 and 1975. Mr. Roberts, Premier Moores.	6393
Reply from the Summer Games Committee concerning enquiries about the purchase of land on Westerland Road. Mr. Neary, Mr. Wells.	6394
Request that the letter to the Summer Games Committee as well as the reply be tabled. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Wells.	6395
Indications in the reply to further investigation in to the land purchase. Mr. Neary, Mr. Wells.	6395
Government decision on the request of the Happy Valley Power Consumers Committee that hydro and diesel rates be equalized to to the first 1,300 kilowatts. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Crosbie.	6399
Query as to whether the minister intends to make a recommendation to Cabinet on the request. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Crosbie.	6399

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<u>ORAL QUESTIONS (continued)</u>	Page
Query as to whether the matter will go to Cabinet without requesting what the minister's specific recommendation might be. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Crosbie.	6400
Query as to whether the equalization of hydro and diesel rates for the first 1,300 kilowatts would cost an extra \$500,000. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Crosbie.	6400
International conference on wildcat strikes. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Maynard.	6401
Query as to when a decision can be expected on such a conference. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Maynard.	6402
Oil storage in the abandoned iron ore mines on Bell Island. Mr. Neary, Mr. Lundrigan.	6403
Redirected. Mr. Neary, Mr. Doody.	6403
Action taken to correct the inadequacies of the Department of Fisheries as pointed out in the report of the Auditor General. Capt. Winsor, Mr. W. Carter.	6405
Answer sought to a question asked earlier concerning permission for a group of hunters from Coastal Labrador to fly into the caribou hunting grounds to take game for food. Mr. Simmons, Mr. Hickey.	6405
Inventory at the Labrador Linerboard mill. Mr. Neary, Mr. Crosbie.	6406
Quality of the linerboard stored in European warehouses. Mr. Neary, Mr. Crosbie.	6408
Complete report sought on the Labrador Linerboard Limited operation. Mr. Neary, Mr. Crosbie.	6409
Query as to whether the Minister of Tourism would table a complete list of those who received complimentary big game licences. Mr. Roberts, Mr. Hickey.	6409
Meeting sought of the Striking Committee. Mr. Rowe, Mr. Peckford.	6410
 <u>ORDERS OF THE DAY</u>	
Bills Nos. 40, 41, 42, 43, 39, 47, 46, 49, 50, 51 and 52 read a first time, ordered read a second time on tomorrow.	6412
Committee of Supply - Head VI - Education Estimates (continued)	
Mr. Roberts moved that the committee proceed with consideration of Head XIV - Fisheries.	6414
Mr. Roberts presented argument.	6414
Mr. Wells	6417
Mr. Chairman recessed the Committee.	6417
Mr. Chairman returned to the Chair and ruled that Mr. Roberts' motion was out of order.	6418
Debate continued of Head VI	
Mr. Rowe	6418
Mr. Woodrow	6440
On motion the Committee rose, reported progress, asked leave to sit again, and was ordered to sit again on tomorrow.	6445
ADJOURNMENT	6445