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VERBATIM REPORT

FRIDAY, MARCH 5, 1976

SPEAKER; THE HONOURABLE GERALD RYAN OTTENHEIMER

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

This afternoon I would like to welcome to the House of Assembly some students from two schools in the Province. From Eugene Vaters Collegiate in St. John's there are twelve students in grades ten and eleven, accompanied by their teacher Mr. Andrews, and from Labrador City Collegiate in Labrador City eleven students, grades ten and eleven as well, accompanied by their teacher, Miss McCormick. I know that all hon. members on all sides of the House join me in welcoming these young men and young women to the House of Assembly and we hope that your visit here will be instructive and interesting.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, thank you, Sir. May I present some more of the petitions which were presented yesterday and which I did not get an opportunity to present yesterday because, as Your Honour will recall, when business closed at 5:30 P.M., or closed in the sense we went on under Standing Order 32 to the so-called late show we were still presenting petitions and I have a number of others, Sir, some of which came this day.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, they are all in relation to the price of electricity, and I do not propose to say a great deal because we had a very thorough discussion of that yesterday. But the first of these, Mr. Speaker is from Local 569 of the CUPE, the Canadian Union of Public Employees here in St. John's. These are the St. John's Municipal Workers Union and they strongly protest the action of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in permitting an increase in electrical rates of 40 per cent to Newfoundland Hydro which has caused a substantial increase in the rates charged by the Newfoundland Light and Power Company to the Newfoundland consumer.

MR. ROBERTS: Since this was written, of course, on the 30th. of January, the government announced their temporary price freeze, but it did not take away from the point of the petition.

The prayer of the petition, Sir, goes on, and is signed on this part by Mr. O'Leary, the President; Mr. Stanley, the Vice-President; and Mr. Fanning the Treasurer of that Union, "The government indicated that it was in complete agreement with the Federal Government wage and price controls and while we, the wage earner, tried to co-operate to the best of our ability to convince our membership to accept an 8 per cent increase, feeling that the figure was inadequate but we felt that it was in the best interest of our Province and Canada as a whole, we now find that the very leaders who should be showing the example in this case are ignoring the guidelines while we are forced as wage earners to accept the wage and price controls without any legal means to by-pass or ignore these guidelines."

MR. NEARY: To whom is the petition addressed?

MR. ROBERTS: It is addressed to the hon. Edward Roberts and it is also addressed to the hon. Stephen Neary, and my name is on the -

MR. NEARY: Who presented it yesterday?

MR. ROBERTS: Well fine. My name is on the top and since I did not have the opportunity to present it yesterday and since then it is an original, I have every intention of presenting it as I was asked to by Mr. O'Leary, Mr. Stanley, and Mr. Fanning.

MR. MURPHY: What happened to the original?

MR. ROBERTS: That is the original. I do not know whether what was presented yesterday was an original or not. But I know that this is an original. And so it will be presented.

MR. SIMMONS: He must have had a copy.

MR. NEARY: That is a very insignificant detail.

AN HON. MEMBER: I think it is a very -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it may be insignificant in the hon. gentleman's mind. It may also be very equally insignificant in his mind that it was addressed primarily to me and secondarily to him but what I have said is the truth and he can like it or lump it.

May I also present a petition, Mr. Speaker, from a number of the residents of St. Julien's in my constituency of Straits of Belle Isle, another one from over 100 people in the Community of Anse Eclair, in the constituency of Straits of Belle Island, another one from the district of Straits of Belle Isle from the Community of Goose Cove,

Mr. Roberts.

one from Woody Point in Bonne Bay in the district of St. Barbe, from the Labrador West Integrated School Board in Labrador City in the district of Menihek; one signed by 212 people from Corner Brook, in the districts of Humber East and Humber West; one signed by over 189 - if I can read my own writing - from people in St. Pauls in the district of St. Barbe; and some which have come this day all to the same effect from the community of Crow Head in the district of Twillingate; from St. Joseph's in Salmonier in the district of St. Mary's - The Capes; from the town of Holyrood in the district of Harbour Main - Bell Island; from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, in the district represented by my friend and colleague from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rowe); Local 1567 in Baie Verte itself; from the community council of Coachman's Cove in the district of Baie Verte - White Bay; from a number of people in Marystown, in the district of Burin - Placentia West; from the town of Bishop's Falls in the district of Exploits; from 363 people in the town of Summerford in the district of Twillingate; from a group of people in Little Bay, Marystown; from South Brook in Green Bay; from Lumsden, in the district of Fogo; by another forty people in Corner Brook. And that is a copy of one, I do not know to whom it is addressed. It has been sent to me by David H. Burton, the town clerk in Durrells, in Twillingate district, but it is not an original so I will not present it. It has the typed names of 266 people.

MR. NEARY: It was presented yesterday.

MR. ROBERTS: Well I thank the hon. gentleman, Sir, for presenting it yesterday, and they obviously -

MR. NEARY: As usual you are running behind.

MR. ROBERTS: - they obviously, Mr. Speaker, expected me to check up on the hon. gentleman and that I have done and very happy to do so.

Mr. Speaker, the prayer of all these petitions, Sir, is essentially the same. The matter was well rehearsed yesterday, but it is worth saying again. These people, Sir, object strenuously to the government's

Mr. Roberts.

action. They object to the secrecy in which the government acted. They object to the complete and utter lack of explanation by the government. They object to the fact that they believe that the government are ignoring the needs of the electricity consumers of this Province, and they are ignoring it by the way in which they have gone about trying to impose this rate increase.

I present these petitions, Sir, and I present them with the request and in the hope that they will receive full and proper consideration and that the government will heed the request of people and not put through this increase and not put through any increase unless and until they have shown some justification, which they have not done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the prayer of the petition. As a matter of fact I find myself in a most awkward position, Mr. Speaker, where some of the petitions read out by the hon. member, the hon. Leader of the old-line Liberal Party, have already been presented in this hon. House, presented yesterday and, Sir, as a matter of courtesy I rise to support the prayers of the various petitions. That is more than I can say about the Leader of the Opposition. He did not have the courtesy yesterday to support the 183, I think, or 193 petitions that I presented on behalf of 24,000 citizens of this Province. He did not think that it was important enough to stand in his place in this hon. House and support these petitions. But I have no hesitation at all, Sir, in supporting any new petition that might be there. The others, I think, we went through the procedure yesterday and had them tabled in the House already. So some of it is just merely a duplication of what we had yesterday.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comment on this petition?

The hon. member for St. John's South.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the prayer of these petitions. As I understand the intents of the prayer, the petitions

DR. COLLINS:

seek to remunerate the undue or excessive hardship of any increase in electricity rates. In making these comments on these petitions, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I would be allowed to offer my congratulations to the whole House of Assembly in the way that these discussions have been conducted in the last day or so and also, of course, to yourself, Mr. Speaker, as the servant of the House, in allowing the latitude, both in time and in content, in these discussions.

Now I think the reason why the House has allowed this - and I hope that I will be given somewhat the same latitude here - is that this is an important issue. It affects all households as many people said, and it certainly is very serious for some people.

I would like to comment, therefore, on certain points that were raised in the discussion, and I do so because I think that we may be seeing here the first joining of the battle between two divergent views on how the

DR. COLLINS:

public affairs of this Province may be run. The first point I would like to comment on, Mr. Speaker, is the question of reality. Now it has been said that electricity costs are a necessity of life in our society, and this may well be so. But a necessity of life does not automatically qualify something for a subsidy. I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition said yesterday that air, water and bread were necessities of life. But I do not think that anyone can hold therefore that we should subsidize these just because they are necessities of life. So that therefore we must maintain a certain sense of reality in discussing these matters.

The realities of the situation demand that changes in the cost of life necessities should be reflected in changes in the individual family budgets of the individual citizen. In other words, it is a question of individual priorities and individual sense of responsibility. Many claim that we are living in an unreal world, not only in this Province but in Canada as a whole, and indeed in the world as a whole. We have been living in an unreal world, a sort of fool's paradise, since the 1950's and I think that the requirements of a sense of reality take it that we recognize this.

The second point I would like to comment on, Mr. Speaker, was the universality of government measures. Now the universality surely is justified in that something is a hardship for all. If it is otherwise surely we should use selectivity. We should identify if and where a hardship exists and then do something about it. Universality is recognized as one of the causes of the tremendous overruns of expenditure in social services, and for the last twenty years we have seen this lesson driven home time and time again and I am sure none of us wish to fall into that trap once more.

The third point out of these discussions, Mr. Speaker, was the question of priorities of government. Many see an imbalance between government expenditures in the social service field opposed in particular to expenditures in the developmental field, that is

DR. COLLINS:

in the fields of developments which ultimately end up in jobs for our people so that they themselves can acquire services for themselves. I think that Newfoundland in particular is a striking example of this imbalance between expenditures on social services and on resource development. So here again I think our consideration of this matter should take this into account.

The fourth point - and I have not many more others, Mr. Speaker - is the credibility of the parliamentary system. As we know this is under attack now and has been downgraded and is looked upon as essentially dealing in patchwork remedies and based to no small extent upon considerations of partisan advantage. I do not think that we, in the discussion of such serious matters before us now, want to lend any support to any lack of credibility in our parliamentary system.

And the final point I wish to bring up that I saw coming out of these discussions was the accountability of quasi-autonomous public bodies. I use that term to refer to those bodies who are responsible for the expenditure of large amounts of public funds, or whose decisions have widespread or deeply felt effects upon individual citizens. We may be seeing a principle evolving here whereby the operations, the details of the operations of these bodies are given greater scrutiny by elected representatives and also held up more to the public view.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I

Mr. Speaker:

hesitate reluctantly to interrupt the hon. gentleman, but the rules require that the expiry of five minutes that I do in fact do so and that the hon. member may continue with the consent of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: By leave? The hon. member for St. John's South.

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, your sense of timing is absolutely perfect as always because I just terminated my remarks. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I may rise to a point of order.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I gather that the hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) intimidated to the House in speaking to this petition that some of the petitions which I have presented were copies. I would invite Your Honour to direct the clerks to search these petitions to ensure that they are all originals, because they all are. None of them is a copy of anything else. They are all original petitions because it would be most improper to present anything else under the rules of this House as they exist.

MR. NEARY: That is not what I said.

MR. SPEAKER: The point made by the Leader of the Opposition has been noted and the officers of the House will undertake that request. Are there any further petitions? The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, just to sort of change the pace, Sir, I want to present a petition on behalf of practically all of the adult population of Harbour Le Cou in the great and glorious, historic district, Sir, of LaPoile. And the petition reads -

MR. SMALLWOOD: They do not want to stop that song, do they?

MR. NEARY: No. They do not want to stop the song. I wish I could sing it today, Sir, but - I could say it is a petition addressed to the hon. House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador, a petition of the residents in Harbour Le Cou and some residents of Rose Blanche.

The prayer of the petition, Mr. Speaker, is as follows: "That the breakwater protecting the harbour of Harbour Le Cou is badly in need of repairs; that for the last three or four years the breakwater is washing away a little more with each heavy storm; that recently during

Mr. Neary:

the height of a heavy storm two families on the lower waterfront had to leave their homes for safety; that this is causing much concern to the families in this area, also to the fishermen, for the safety of their fishing boats, fish stores and wharves. Therefore we the undersigned humbly beseech your hon. House to give consideration to this petition, and your petitioners.')

Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to present this petition. I think it is the first official petition that I have had the honour of presenting for my new district of LaPoile. I do not think, Sir, it is necessary for me to point out to the House that in the Rose Blanche, Diamond Cove, Harbour Le Cou area you have some of the finest fishermen, Sir, in this Province, and as the hon. Premier probably knows more than any other member of this House, and I was not really aware of it until I went down in that district, that you have a Winter fishery in that part of Newfoundland. They are just the opposite of what we are on the East Coast. They have a Winter fishery down there. When I was campaigning in September they were just getting their boats ready then to go fishing when we were just about finished the inshore fishery here, and they were just getting ready to start fishing. And this is the peak period now, they are right in the height of the fishing season right now, Sir.

So in view of the fact that the hon. Premier and several of the Cabinet ministers travelled through Europe recently to look into the possibility of establishing small industry in Newfoundland, especially developing the small fish plants and handicrafts and cottage type industries, animal husbandry and that sort of thing, that I am sure that the Premier will be more than interested in this particular petition because this is just the type of thing that the hon. Premier has been talking about. It is right up the Premier's alley. And I do hope, Sir, that whatever minister is responsible for small crafts, small harbours, and breakwaters that he will see to it that the necessary repairs to this breakwater are made in this current fiscal year so that when the fishing season starts around next September or October that at least the fishermen

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Mr. Neary:

in Parbour Le Cou will have protection for their longliners and for their small boats.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon, the member for Burgeo-LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Just a second! Hold it! Do not get impatient! Take your time!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: One at a time.

MR. SIMMONS: I am talking to the Speaker. He has already recognized me. The other speaker has recognized me so I guess I can speak, Mr. Speaker. I would like to very heartily and whole-heartedly support the prayer of the petition so ably presented by the member for LaPoile. I am not the member for Burgeo-LaPoile but Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir, a distinction which becomes increasingly important every day.

I support, Mr. Speaker, the petition from the people of Harbour LeCou and those petitioners who signed from Rose Blanche for a break-water. I found it significant that the member presenting the petition said that it was the first petition from his district. One can only assume that the bundle that he presented yesterday did not include any from his district, and I wonder why. But that is another subject.

MR. NEARY: I had a call from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the winter fishery has been going on -

MR. NEARY: They love me up there. I should go up.

MR. SIMMONS: They do love him up there, Mr. Speaker. No doubt he did have a call up in Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir. This kind of thing goes on all the time where people call the members in the adjoining districts and as long as we all get the petitions in between us, that is the main thing. Indeed, mentioning petitions, Mr. Speaker, and mentioning Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir and places nearby, and I believe this is very relevant to my wanting to support this petition, I did have a telegram in the last couple of days indicating that there are some petitions on the way. The telegram reads: "Your electricity petition circulated in every community throughout the district. It is receiving full support from individuals, organizations, press and radio. Signature sheet should be forthcoming this weekend."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that particular telegram, while it is not from

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MR. SIMMONS:

Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir, is from a nearby district, Channel. That would be LaPoile district.

MR. NEARY: From Lew Blundon, no doubt. Lew Blundon?

MR. SIMMONS: It goes to show, Mr. Speaker, that there is a bit of give and take. There is a bit of give and take, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: Lew Blundon? Who is it signed by?

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, it does not matter whom it is signed by. It is a legitimate telegram.

MR. NEARY: You are browned off now.

MR. SIMMONS: I am not going to give the name of the person so you can go out and harass him.

AN HON. MEMBER: Tell him to table it.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Table it.

MR. NEARY: Table it! Table it!

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker, I have read it into Hansard. There it is. There is the telegram.

MR. DOODY: Prove to the House that you have it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: I see. You want it tabled? Mr. Speaker, just for the Minister of Finance I will table the telegram. Just for the Minister of Finance.

MR. NEARY: I know who it is. I know it is Lew Blundon.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Are you talking about breakwaters or electricity?

MR. SIMMONS: Ha, ha! The Minister of Industrial Development is confused as usual. We are talking about breakwaters, Mr. Sneaker. Of course we are talking about breakwaters. The subject of the petition is a breakwater for Rose Blanche and it is a petition that needs the whole-hearted support of this House. The winter fishery has been going on up there for centuries, not just since September when the member (Mr. Neary) went up there for the first time. It has been going on for centuries, Mr. Speaker. Secondly, of course, I can appreciate that the member (Mr. Neary) would have to present the petition, it was sent to him. It

MR. SIMMONS: was sent to him and so he presents it. But I hope he is also aware that it is a federal matter and I hope he will take it up with his friends in Ottawa and see what they can do to help meet the prayer of that petition.

MR. NEARY: They are your constituents.

MR. SIMMONS: On behalf of my colleagues here in the official Opposition, Mr. Speaker, we are delighted to support the first petition which the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has presented on behalf of his constituency. He has been busy presenting them from all over the place, but this is the first one from his constituency. We congratulate him. They know where he is. We hope he gets some more petitions and if they are in the spirit of development in his district we will help him, we will support them all the way.

MR. NEARY: You had better get down there and let them know where you are.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

MR. WOODROW: Which one is that? Which one?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Bay of Islands.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Speaker, I have here three reasons for supporting the petition from the member for LaPoile. Before I give these three reasons, I would like to say that I am happy to see the galleries today crowded with the children from the two schools in the St. John's area. I think what I am going to say will have a bearing on them. My first reason for supporting it is because, number one, we are forgetting a lot of the old folklore of Newfoundland. When

MR. WOODROW:

I speak of folklore I am thinking now of the late Gerald S. Doyle, and I am also remembering what the former Premier of the Province did, the member from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), to try to keep alive the folklore of the Province of Newfoundland. I think this is terribly important and I would like to say to the pupils in the galleries that unless we as members of this House try to keep the folklore of Newfoundland alive you are going to lose something. Something is going to be lost which played a big part in the Province of Newfoundland. Number two, when you think of names like Harbour Le Cou - in fact, it is an outstanding name. Think of a name, for example, like Sally's Cove again. I believe these are places named -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not for the same reason.

MR. WOODROW: No, no, no, absolutely not! Oh no, no! But at least it has some historic value. I think that we should try to keep names like that well alive in our history so that the generations to come will remember just how Newfoundland was started. Thirdly, of course, and perhaps not thirdly - I should put this one firstly: The people, I think, of Harbour Le Cou, they certainly deserve to be thought about. So I really think for these three reasons that we certainly should give the member of LaPoile (Mr. Neary) backing on this petition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Any further comments on this petition? Are there any further petitions? The hon. member from Ferryland.

MR. C. POWER: Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to present petitions on behalf -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. POWER: Not yet, my friend, not yet! - the petitions from the people of Cappahayden, Renew's, Fermeuse, Port Kirwan, Ferryland, Calvert and Cape Broyle on behalf of the 1,200 residents of the Southern Shore, 1,200 residents of the Southern Shore. The prayer of the petition says, "That we vigorously protest recent and proposed increases in electricity rates in our area. We feel that these increases are unwarranted and that impose a severe financial burden at a time when householders' incomes are restricted by anti-inflation measures." I just want to say at this moment that the 1,200

MR. POWER:

persons and all the residents of Ferryland unite with the other many tens of thousands of Newfoundlanders who are protesting the proposed or future electricity increases. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. J. NOLAN: Mr. Speaker, if I may address myself and support the petition from the hon. member from Ferryland (Mr. Power). I must say if you were new at all in the House of Assembly, no matter where the harassment comes from, but I, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, I do not think the member, at least in his first effort there halfway through presentation of that petition had half a chance with the noise that was going on in the House. I think that not only is it a mark perhaps of disrespect of the House or to the member but also to the people that he is attempting to represent in the petition that he presented there. We are led to believe that what we are here for and taking up so much time with these petitions is that they are important, that the matter before us is important, the electrical rates, the heat, whatever it is, that people are finding very, very trying with other other expenses that they have to deal with at this time in our economic history, at least. So I certainly do regret very much the non-reception, if you like, that I feel the member got. No matter what side of the House it came from, the disturbance, I think it was disgraceful, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly support the member of Ferryland in his efforts to be heard and not shouted down in presenting that petition on behalf of the people concerned who are not here in this House to present it themselves, and that is what he is here for. I thought he did a good job and I certainly support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Before recognizing any other hon. gentlemen I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the legislature this afternoon of Mayor Sam Hoddinott and two councillors, Councillors Baird and Maynard from Hawkes Bay, and to welcome these hon. gentlemen on behalf of all hon. members.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition presented on behalf of the residents in Ferryland District and I must agree with my hon. friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) that it was awfully annoying, I think it was the Minister of Justice was up talking to the Speaker at the time. We just could not hear what was going on across the House. I presume that was what the member was referring to.

MR. NOLAN: The same thing is starting to go on again now with you.

MR. NEARY: Well no it is not. I mean -

MR. NOLAN: We need order in the House.

MR. NEARY: No, but I presume that was what you were referring to, the Minister of Justice was up talking to the Speaker at the time. But anyway, Sir -

MR. HICKMAN: Point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has been raised.

MR. HICKMAN: Just for the record, I have not been out of my seat since 3:00.

MR. NEARY: Oh, I am sorry, Sir. It was the Premier. I am sorry.

MR. HICKMAN: All right.

MR. NEARY: However, Sir, be that as it may, I heard practically every word the member for Ferryland said and I must say I have to congratulate him for making a very fine presentation on behalf of his constituents. Members will recall that in his maiden speech in this hon. House the member for Ferryland I think topped all the rookies in the House, all the new members who have -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: And again today. Sir, he has excelled himself in the presentation of this petition and I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that the member will be with us for a long time to come.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I want to lend my support to the petition presented so ably by the member for Ferryland (Mr. Power). I am glad that the petition finally got to the House and I give it my full support.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

Are there any further petitions?

The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. WINSOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present a petition, as a matter of fact I have four petitions, and as they are all pertaining to the same subject matter I will present them all at once.

The petitions are from different communities, namely Clarke's Head, Gander Bay South, Rogers Cove, Wings Point and again to Bay North. The prayer of the petition is for the building of a new elementary school in Gander Bay and the upgrading of educational facilities throughout the Gander Bay North school system.

Mr. Speaker, I know here the people concerned have made strong representation to the Terra Nova Integrated School Board, making their request known to them and I believe since this petition was signed and mailed to me that they have had favourable replies from that board.

I certainly support the petition, Mr. Speaker, and ask that it be tabled and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition.

The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition from the residents of Horwood. It is along the -

MR. SPEAKER: Before doing so actually I had asked if there were any further comments on this petition, I want to make sure there are not because if they are then it becomes rather complicated when another petition is being presented.

The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HOUSE: I rise to support this petition to the extent that we can. As the hon. member presented the petition he stated that he believed there has been some progress made with the various boards. I think I have had news of that fact also. The point is this hon. Fouse must realize that the Department of Education does not build schools for the various school districts. The Department of Education supplies money to the Denominational Education Committees who distribute it to school boards for the building of schools. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I have a petition along the same line as the one presented by my colleague, the member for Fogo. It is signed by the residents of Horwood who would be involved in this particular school and they are calling for the building of a new elementary school in Gander Bay and the upgrading of educational facilities throughout the Gander Bay North school system. I too would like to lend my support to this petition and would have it tabled and presented to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: Any further comments on this petition?

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further petitions?

The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a number of petitions, all certified originals, Mr. Speaker, every last signature on them in the original, on the subject of electricity rates once again. I believe fully enough has been said on the subject so I shall make my comments very brief and try not to be repetitious. The petitions come from a number of communities in my own district of Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir. For example, the community or the town of Burgeo, over 900 names there; the town of Ramea; the community of Conne River; the community of Morrisville in my district; and then a number of other communities throughout the Province, Heart's Desire for example; St. Joseph's, Salmonier; St. Mary's, St. Mary's Bay, and so on.

These petitions represent, I believe, well over a couple of thousand signatures and a couple of thousand people, mainly in my own district but as I say, some petitions in my colleague's district, the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) who is not with us, and also in certain other districts throughout the Province. The petitions all address themselves to the same matter, the growing concern, the mounting frustration over escalating electricity costs.

The member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) yesterday in speaking to certain of these petitions made reference to the need to bring before the House the facts of the case that we are discussing, to have a full revelation. On that certainly I agree with him whole-heartedly. I believe that is what has to be done, and I do hope we will have a full-fledged debate on this matter fairly soon so that we can see what are the facts of the matter. I certainly concur with members who have spoken, that electricity costs have to relate to the cost of production and certain other related factors. But we are flying blind here, Mr. Speaker, on this matter. We are not being told what the facts of the situation are.

MR. SIMMONS:

We do know that the cabinet in December made a decision, a decision that did not come to the light of day insofar as the average consumer of electricity is concerned until January 22 when my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) made the fact public, having found it out the previous day himself. One wonders how long it would have been a secret decision had he not brought it to the attention of the public. I am glad he did, I am not glad for the information he had to disclose, but I am glad that the public, the consumer did find out albeit a month or two later, but they did find out the kinds of decisions that had been taken. Now I can only assume that the cabinet had at its command the facts of the situation, and so it is only a matter now, Mr. Speaker, for the cabinet and the House Leader to decide when that debate should take place in the House so we can have the same advantage of the facts that the cabinet has had.

I have referred, Mr. Speaker, to the comments of the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) and that part of the remarks with which I agree. At the appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, we will be able, I hope, to enter into a full debate on that. This presenting of petitions the last day or so has gone awfully close to being a debate at times. But I do want to reject, Mr. Speaker, the suggestion that has been made - certainly I do not endorse it - that the couple of hours we devoted yesterday and now again today to presenting petitions, I want to reject the assertion made by one member that somehow this was presenting petitions ad nauseam. Mr. Speaker, what we are doing here, at least what I am doing, I feel and I think I speak for my colleagues, is exercising a basic democratic right, and I do not see it as being properly described when a member refers to it ad nauseam. This, Mr. Speaker, is the right of the people of this Province to petition their House of Assembly. They have done so and they are very serious about this matter.

MR. SIMMONS:

I have been disturbed with the attitude in the House in the last few days as though somehow people are going to take this increase for granted. Well, Mr. Speaker, they are not, and the net message in those petitions, and petitions which are to come, Mr. Speaker - and I know there are many others to come from Cartwright and Goose Bay and Woody Point and Corner Brook and from Howley and Clarendville and Trepassey and St. Lawrence and a number of other communities, yet to come,

Mr. Simmons.

I am told, from telegrams we have received and telephone calls, and they all state, Mr. Speaker, unmistakably and clearly the same message. This is not the end of the protest. This is not something people are going to become reconciled to. This is just the beginning, Mr. Speaker, the beginning of a legitimate protest which must find its answer in a proper examination of the facts in this House in the not too distant future, I hope the next week or so. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, the message is clear. The message must be clear, clear to all who sit on the government benches, clear to those who sit in Cabinet. The government has got to come to grips with this matter. They did not with its decision in December. It certainly did not even to pretend to come to grips by keeping that decision secret in December. It has got to come to grips with the matter, Mr. Speaker, and these petitions - though they have taken two or three hours yesterday and an hour or so today - these petitions will bear fruit if the freeze, the temporary, the three weeks or so freeze that the Premier announced, the freeze in the rates until the end of April, if that freeze continues for a significant period, for an extended period beyond April 30 then, Mr. Speaker, those petitions, those signatures will not have been in vain. It will not have been a charade. It will not be described accurately as 'ad nauseam'. Rather, Mr. Speaker, it will be the proper exercise of a basic democratic right which has borne fruit, and the fruit in this case, Mr. Speaker, I hope, will be that the electricity rates will be kept within reason and that whatever the rates will be in the future, they will be based on consultation with this House, based on full dialogue in this House and not instead a decision made secretly in Cabinet and kept under cover until somebody finds it out and exposes it to the electricity consumers.

It is my great pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to present these petitions on behalf of the petitioners and to request that they be referred to the appropriate department.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the prayer of the petitions just presented by the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons). I presume, Sir, the petitions the hon. member presented are the ones as a result of a spontaneous reaction from his constituents and not the organized movement that has been undertaken by the Leader of the Opposition in preparing a petition here in Confederation Building and sending it out right across the Province. Some of these petitions, by the way, have been returned to me.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Did you present those?

MR. NEARY: I might say for the hon -

MR. SIMMONS: Did the hon. member present those?

MR. NEARY: Yes, I presented some of these.

MR. SIMMONS: They were not addressed to you.

MR. NEARY: They were addressed to me.

MR. SIMMONS: No way!

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon. The hon. Leader of the Opposition's name was torn off the bottom, and they were signed by people and returned to me.

MR. SIMMONS: You presented those? Shocking!

MR. NEARY: And I might say for the benefit of the hon. member, Sir, that these petitions have been circulated in my own district, even the water committee down in LaPoile. I was down there the other day for two days and the chairman of the water committee got one of these petitions that were circulating and he asked me what to do with it, and I told him what he could do with it! But in the meantime, Sir, I am happy to support these petitions. The member did not indicate whether they were just a spontaneous reaction from the people or the organized movements of the type that Jim McGrath, the technique that Jim McGrath uses in Ottawa.

Mr. Neary.

I might say, Sir, also for the benefit of the House, to correct an erroneous statement that the hon. member made, about 2,000 or 2,500 of the names I presented yesterday were from constituents in my own district of LaPoile, but I was presenting them with a group. They were included in the 24,000 signatures. But the first official single petition that I presented was today in this hon. House. So although, Sir, I am happy to support the petitions presented, I would like for the hon. members when they are presenting their petitions to indicate whether they are a spontaneous reaction or an organized movement on behalf of the Opposition. Because, Sir, this nastiness, this rudeness, this matter of accusing the government of doing something secretly of, "I am shocked! I am amazed! Or too little, too late." is not going to help the situation, Sir. We see that happening now in the case of the oil refinery. "Oh, they were hiding something, they should have told us before the election." Well that is not going to restore the jobs down in Come By Chance. The government did not secretly do this because they notified Newfoundland Light and Power Company. Newfoundland Light and Power Company notified the Public Utilities Board. They were getting ready for a hearing. Everybody knew it, and it was not something that the Leader of the Opposition discovered, suddenly one day he woke up and he was shocked or amazed as he usually is. Everybody knew it, Sir. I took it for granted that everybody knew it. I was on the campaign trail ten days before that crowd even got wound up.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: And so, Sir, politics -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I must require the hon. gentleman to keep his remarks within the subject matter of these petitions.

MR. NEARY: Well the point I am making, Sir, is getting rude or nasty about the thing is not going to help the situation. What we have got to do is keep this matter above partisan politics. We have to work together

Mr. Neary:

on either side of the House and not start sniping at one another like the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) was just doing with the government. Let us do it man-fashion. If we are going to do it, we all do it together, we sink or swim, we rise or fall together. Forget the petty little politics, game of politics that they are playing. The election was over in September.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Let us get down to brass tacks and do something for the people for a change. And when we do it this House will do it. And we will do it together.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Never mind this little -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: - nasty, snide remarks that you get flung across the House.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: We are getting tired of that, Sir.

MR. SIMMONS: Physician, heal thyself!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I stand to support these petitions. I find it absolutely disgusting, absolutely nauseating that people should be trying to gain credit for the presentation of petitions. If the people of Newfoundland could only see what is going on here today I am sure they would wonder at the seriousness of the presentations. I want to address this House to say I take credit for nothing other than to the spontaneous reaction and the spontaneous response to the people who elected me and I presented these petitions in that spirit, and I obviously feel -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: - that other petitions were presented in the same spirit and I wish to support the petitions presented by all members and hope that we take it in this light that we not make a joke out of it. It is

Mr. Lush: a serious matter, these petitions from thousands and thousands of Newfoundlanders and -

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: - hoping that their members would present these things in the matter in which they were intended. I wish to say that I support the petitions presented by the member from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) and all other petitions presented in this House yesterday and today.

MR. ROBERTS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any other further comments on this petition?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Naskaupi.

MR. J. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, I wish also to add my support to the petition presented by the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir. I support the prayer of that particular petition, and also to point out that I do not have a petition from my own particular district to present, but that does not mean that we do not have similar problems in our district. As a matter of fact, I can substantiate the fact that we do have problems by presenting bills to this House, if it were necessary, of about \$130, \$140, \$150 a month for electricity in my district right now and that is just for lights, not even talking about electric heat for the home. So I just wanted to let the House of Assembly know that we do have the similar problems in the district of Naskaupi and in other districts in Labrador and I heartedly support that petition.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any comments on this petition?

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, may I say just a word or two in support of the petition presented so very effectively by the gentleman, my friend and colleague from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir and in respect to which remarks, very pertinent, and very helpful remarks that were made by the gentleman from Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) and the gentleman, my colleague and friend from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush).

I am not going to respond to the provocations of the gentleman from LaPoile who would dearly love to try to embroil me in that. I do

Mr. Roberts:

want to say, though, with respect to some statements he made that I have had a search made through the petitions which he tabled yesterday, and I will not say that he did not table the petition from the Municipal Worker's Union, all I will say is that it is not among the petitions which the clerk's office are holding which he tabled yesterday. So it has become lost at some point Your Honour, assuming in fact that it was tabled. It has become lost at some point between here and the clerk's office. It is not there at present.

Mr. Speaker, I think these petitions are well -

MR. NEARY: As a matter of fact somebody -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: put a whole box of them back in my office this morning.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman has not got the floor. The hon. gentleman had the floor and I did not interrupt him. I would ask him to extend the same courtesy unless he wishes to rise on a point of order or some proper procedure, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Do not get nasty. Just carry on.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. ROBERTS: And I would ask the hon. gentleman please to contain himself. His dislike of me seems to be growing daily and that, Sir, is his problem, not mine or anybody else's. But, Mr. Speaker, the -

MR. NEARY: That is why you are not Premier of Newfoundland.

MR. ROBERTS: - point which I wish to make, Sir, -

MR. SIMMONS: That is certainly a compliment!

MR. ROBERTS: The point which I wish to make is that I think these petitions are very well taken. Of course, many of them are responding to initiatives which I took as Leader of the Opposition. There is no secret about that. I am quite proud of it. Indeed I would suggest one could be doing less than one's duty as Leader of the Opposition if one did not give people the opportunity to express their feelings.

The petitions were prepared obviously by me. They were sent out with a letter from me, which said if you

MR. ROBERTS:

support the position we have taken, sign the petition. The people who signed the petition did so freely and voluntarily and because they believed in it. That is fine. I make no apology for that. I am quite proud of it and I think the thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who have signed these petitions, their signatures speak for themselves. There were no copies in any which we tabled. The hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) might want to look at his own lot and see the one from Howley which had a photocopy in it despite the rules to the contrary.

Mr. Speaker, this matter of electricity rates is extremely serious. I would hope the House Leader or the Premier will assure us that we will get an opportunity to debate it, not just on the estimates when it could be brought up, presumably, although I am not so sure because I do not know what the estimates will contain for the Hydro Corporation or what they will contain for the Public Utilities Board, the two subjects to which it might be related, but I think this is worthy of a debate. There have been a lot of good comments made on the petitions these last two days. I would assume there will be more petitions to come. I know of a number of people who have told me they are taking up petitions and intend to send them in. We will have more comments. But I think this is important enough that at some point in the next two or three weeks perhaps we could set aside a day or two. It should be a fixed limit and not one of these open-ended debates that goes on forever, but a day or two by agreement among all sides in the House, and then have a debate on this question of electricity rates.

Let the government state their case. They obviously feel they have one. Let them state it. Then the Opposition and the other members of the House can state their views, and the press, of course, will inform the public of this Province, and we will let the people then decide on the basis of full information. Our main complaint has been the secrecy with which the government did it. They adopted a cabinet decision in

MR. ROBERTS:

December and no communication was made of that until my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) discovered it, not by any improper procedure but discovered it in the normal course of his work as a member for that district and he made it public and of course all followed from there.

Mr. Speaker, I think the debate - I am sorry, it is not a debate, Your Honour - the comments have been well taken and I think the exercise has been most useful. Indeed, Sir, I think it has been more useful than many other things which this House will do in this session or the rest of this session because it has shown the people of Newfoundland that there is a means of making their feelings known directly on the floor of this House of Assembly. I think that is crucially important and I think it is something we should do more often.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further comments on this petition?

Are there any further petitions?

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, I have to table the annual report of the Newfoundland and Labrador Computer Services Limited. There are copies available in your office for distribution to the hon. members of the House. We also have here special warrants which have to be tabled in the amount of \$4,683,500 on the various subheads: Legislative, \$203,000; Salaries - they are mostly salary increases and increases in costs of homes for the aged and that sort of thing. Anyway, Sir, there are copies here for all of the various parties represented on the opposite side of the House if they are interested. They are both there.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the regulations pertaining to the insurers of automobiles. It has been Gazetted and

everything else but this is just a formality.

MR. ROBERTS: This is a board?

MR. MURPHY: Yes, pertaining to compulsory insurance.

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: I would like to table some regulations that were made and published in the Newfoundland Gazette from March 14 through December 12, 1975 in respect to the Newfoundland Egg Marketing Amendment Scheme and the Natural Products Marketing Designation of Inspectors Order, 1975; the Natural Products Marketing Designation of Inspectors Amendment Order, 1975; the Natural Products Marketing Newfoundland Miscellaneous Provisions Amendment Regulations, 1975.

NOTICES OF MOTION:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following resolution:

WHEREAS the wreck of the longliner San Juan on or about the twenty-fourth day of February, 1976 off the East Coast of Newfoundland resulted in the loss of life of the two men on board that ill-fated ship has once again clearly indicated the need for adequate Air-Sea Rescue Services in Newfoundland;

AND WHEREAS it is in the public interest there be a judicial enquiry into the loss of the San Juan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this House urges the government of Canada and/or the Minister of Transport of Canada to immediately appoint a judicial enquiry to enquire into the wreck of the longliner San Juan and that the terms of reference of such enquiry be sufficiently broad to enable the judge so appointed to enquire into the loss at sea in January of this year of two men out of St. John's, Newfoundland and two men out of Morton's Harbour, Newfoundland, and to enquire as well into the procedures of Air-Sea Search and Rescue operations in Newfoundland;

AND FURTHER the government of Canada to be urged to establish an adequate Air-Sea Search and Rescue in the Province of Newfoundland without delay.

MR. HICKMAN:

Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet I also give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce the following bills:

A bill, "An Act To Amend The Newfoundland and Labrador Amateur Sports Federation Act, 1972."

A bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Quieting Of Titles Act."

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, let me first of all congratulate the Minister of Justice on, we will call it the San Juan Resolution. I think it is an excellent one and I think it should be, I hope it will be called for debate early on in the session. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the unanimous consent of the House to introduce the following motion. I must ask unanimous consent because there is at present on the Order Paper a motion standing in my name. I have proposed that the motion be adopted without debate because of the urgency of its subject matter. I believe it does reflect the feeling of every member of the House. "Resolved that this House reaffirms its belief in the desirability of the seal hunt and the methods by which it is carried out by landsmen in particular and that this House deplores the threatened acts by members of the Greenpeace Foundation of Vancouver, British Columbia who have threatened to attempt to disrupt the 1976 seal hunt and this House in the strongest possible terms urges the Government of Canada to take all steps within their power to prevent any disruption of the lawful activities of those engaged in the seal hunt and further this House urges in the strongest possible terms that the Minister of Justice for the Province take the necessary and appropriate steps to insure that the rights of those lawfully engaged in the seal hunt are fully protected."

I have copies here, Mr. Speaker, for Your Honour and for gentlemen opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has now asked for leave to introduce the motion which he has just read because the hon. gentleman has a motion on the Order Paper I must therefore ascertain whether he does have leave.

The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, what I would suggest, if it is agreeable, is that having just heard this for the first time, we would like to see a copy of it and perhaps later this afternoon by leave we could indicate our feelings on the matter.

MR. ROBERTS: That is fine with me, Your Honour, and a copy is available for the government members.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

HON. C. BRFTT: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Child Welfare Act, 1972."

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

HON. H. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Medical Act," and also a bill, "An Act To Amend The Pharmaceutical Associations Act."

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

HON. J. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I will on tomorrow ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Crown Lands Act," and also, Mr. Speaker, a bill, "An Act To Amend The Development Areas Lands Act."

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN (See index)

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: The hon. the member from Twillingate, no. 260, no. 288 which I have just tabled but I would like to if I may have a few words on this one because this question pertains to the number of forest fires in the Province for the past five years. It will take a few minutes of the House, Mr. Speaker, just to indicate the difference in last year's situation in respect to the past five years which I think is one that should be brought to the attention of the people of this Province. It was a very bad season in respect to forest fires as my colleague, the present Minister of Health is well aware of. He worked quite hard last year and I think spent more time in forest fire areas than he did in the House of Assembly doing all he could and I am sure he is aware of the problems we had last year during the forest fire season, and I think deserves the compliments of the people of this Province for the job he did during a very bad fire season.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROUSSEAU: But in 1970-71 - I have to go across or down, so I will go down - the number of forest fires we have had per year: 194 in 1970-71; 142 in 1971-72; 247 in 1972-73; 102 only in 1973-74; 1974-75 we had 246; and last year we had 253. Now these numbers are not great in a sense

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MR. ROUSSEAU:

that there is no widespread amongst them. We look at the areas burned in acres, Mr. Speaker. There were 22,000 - 23,000, I will round off to the nearest thousand, in 1970-71; there were 6,000 in 1971-72; there were 107,000 in 1972-73; 22,000

MR. ROUSSEAU: in 1974-75, and last year, Mr. Speaker, there were in acres burned in this Province, 431,000 acres. The wood destroyed in cords, Mr. Speaker, 16,000 in 1970-71; 7,500 in 1971-72; 70,000 in 1972-73; 500 in 1973-74; 1,200 in 1974-75; and 153,000 cords in 1975-76.

MR. SMALLWOOD: For the whole Province.

MR. ROUSSEAU: For the whole Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Including Labrador.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Including Labrador, yes. We consider Labrador to be part of the Province.

MR. NEARY: For the time being.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Oh no. The value, if I may, the other figure we have which is the last question the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) asked, the value in dollars and of course these are estimates of the department and they are used in the same relative terms; \$24,000 in 1970-71; \$10,300 in 1971-72; in 1972-73, \$115,000; 1973-74, \$1,000; in 1974-75, \$3,600 and last year, 1975-76, \$459,000 of a very prime resource of our Province.

So last year's figures 253 fires, 431,000 acres burned, 153,000 cords destroyed of a total value of \$459,000. I think that these figures alone will indicate the problems we have in respect of that, a very bad season. We have had one before many years ago but this of course is not unlike the problems we might have if the fisheries became depleted that quickly. It is a resource that we have and it is going to be a very bad one if this continues in the future years.

We also have answers to question 289, 292, 295, 296, 297 and 294, 303 and 313, 315, 318 and number 695. That is the question by the hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: What one was that?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Position of the General Manager, and or Secretary of the Board of Newfoundland Farm Products.

MR. NEARY: For Farm Products?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Farm Products, the General Secretary and so on. The rest are in the name of the hon. the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), and that leaves about two questions, Sir, or three questions left.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, I asked just over three months ago on November 24, something around 450 question. They were all printed in the Order Paper of that day. I want to thank the ministers who have given me about 139 answers, including those from the minister today, and I want to suggest gently to the ministers that they have a little swifter action in giving me answers to more than 300 questions to which they have not given answers after these three months or rather more.

I fully appreciate the fact that Christmas intervened and the New Year and other holiday intervened and that ministers, some of them, have been extraordinarily busy, I appreciate all that. Nevertheless may I suggest gently that with regard to more than 300 answers that I have not yet received there might be a little swifter action from now on.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier. It relates to the Come By Chance issue. I am aware that government intends to have a full-scale debate, which I welcome. In the meantime I am wondering if the Premier - notwithstanding the debate is scheduled - if the Premier would indicate to the House whether subsequent to finding out that the refinery was in financial difficulty, whether there were some efforts made in an attempt to keep the refinery open? And if so, if he could indicate what the nature of these attempts were?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, only too gladly. I think that is the subject for debate hopefully within the next week because obviously the answer to that question is going to take much more than the half hour that is allowed in the question period.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary by the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, would the Premier then indicate whether there are now any efforts ongoing, with or without his government's involvement to reopen the refinery, if he can indicate whether that is the case? And if so, what kind of progress is being made? I cannot see how this would in anyway prejudice what is going on in the courts and I would hope he could give us even a brief answer. I am aware that to explain the negotiations would take hours but could he, at least, indicate whether there are discussions going on with a view to reopening the refinery? And if he could indicate what progress is being made and indeed if it is not confidential, who is involved or what companies may be involved?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, that would be totally inappropriate before the hearings on Monday or Tuesday. The hon. member should know that. The situation is that every effort is being made with all parties who are presently involved in the refinery, and any other interested parties at this time would be dealing with the Interim Receiver as opposed to

Mr. Moores.

the government. I think it would be very wrong for this government to undermine any other interests at this particular time before the courts have made a decision.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Premier. Would the Premier indicate to the House the position of his administration in connection with this crowd of crackpots that are coming into Newfoundland, if they have not already arrived, called the Greenpeace and what steps his government has taken to protect the seal fishery in this Province against such crackpots?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I think the position of the government is very similar to every other member in this House. Regarding the Greenpeace group from Vancouver, I think these people have been very badly informed. I think they are very badly guided in the present action they are taking. I think the federal government's position of any interference unlawfully in the seal hunt itself, that prosecutions will be determined from that, I think, is wise. I think co-operation from anyone in this Province other than one of kindness and more or less mental help to these people would not be in order. I think in fact that the Greenpeace society in this particular case - they have done some good work in the past, Sir, I might say - in this particular case have been totally misdirected and are totally uninformed. And this government, as I am sure every Newfoundlander, will try to set that record straight upon their arrival.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a supplementary?

MR. NEARY: No, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I will come back to the hon. gentleman later.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Roberts.

My question relates to Come By Chance again, and it has nothing to do with anything which will be discussed in the hearing before the Supreme Court on Monday. I want to know, Mr. Speaker, what is the situation with respect to the severance pay for the men at the union? I understand that the collective agreement under which they worked does not provide for severance pay except for technological change and this is not such a situation. The question is: Whether they will receive any severance pay at all?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. MOORES: The position is, Mr. Speaker, in that regard, we are dealing here with a bankruptcy proceeding. The hon. Leader of the Opposition says that it has no bearing on the court decision on Tuesday or Monday. It has a very definitive bearing as to whether in fact there is a bankruptcy or not, because the rules under our bankruptcy proceeding would be very different than if it was another, if you like, more normal sort of transaction. What we have done as a government is have assured the union that we will underwrite the cost of a lawyer to see that their rights are protected, plus the government itself in any way possible and legally will also do all possible to protect the same workers.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications, Sir. Would the minister inform the House if the government, or his department, have taken any steps to restrict the load limit on the Trans-Canada Highway on tractor trailers and other heavy equipment on the Trans-Canada Highway, especially the Trans-Canada Highway west of Deer Lake, and if any action has been taken would the minister inform the House what action that his government have taken on this matter?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, no action has been taken to date.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development tell us if it is his intention to report orally or in writing to the House on his recent admirable and I would imagine exciting visits to Finland and Norway and Sweden and Denmark and the United Kingdom, and tell us in some detail what he did in each country, how long he spent in each country, how many meetings he had, and generally give us something to perhaps encourage us on the work that he did and, if I am permitted, Your Honour, I would address the same question precisely to the minister of Forestry and Agriculture in connection with his visits to Iceland and Scotland and Sweden and Norway and Finland and Denmark, and I am sure that this House would be greatly enlightened, and, I hope, encouraged by the remarks that they would make, and if the Minister of Fisheries were here, I would ask him if he intends to do the same thing with regard to his visits to Norway, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and the United Kingdom.

I am not to be counted among those who sneered at those visits. I approve thoroughly and I would hope that other ministers, I am looking at the Minister of Transportation, is it, and the Minister

MP. SMALLWOOD: of Municipal Affairs and others and wondering why they too are not hustling about looking for business for Newfoundland that might end in creating jobs for people.

MP. NEAFY: Do not encourage them.

MP. SMALLWOOD: I encourage them warmly and ardently, and the way to get jobs for Newfoundlanders is to go away from Newfoundland and seek the people who will create the industries. I found that and they are finding it and I applaud them for it. Could I have an answer from perhaps the two ministers who are here?

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

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I would like to thank the hon. minister for his breadth of vision as the elder statesman in the House and it always fascinates me that he has this kind of preception of the position of the Province in international matters. The rules at the present moment perhaps would not permit a detailed answer but I will assure him as the minister, I am sure perhaps the Premier will want to make an addition to my comments that given the first opportunity we will make a statement of significance in the sense of reporting at least to the House and perhaps I might advise him that I just got back from Guiana and I have made some brief preliminary comments to the public, perhaps I will make some statements to the House on the given occasion.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: On the same question, it is of such major significance in effect as to the direction that this government will be going in the next two to three years that I think it should be pointed out now that not only will various programmes, not just from these trips but from the reasoning behind these trips be coming forward in estimates and in various times in this House but I think in this particular case it would be very wise to set aside a couple of days in this House when exactly what the objectives are of the government can be clearly defined to the members of the House, what type of projects,

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PREMIER MOORES: what type of programmes are being approached
and in which manner.

I think, speaking on behalf of all the resource departments
involved and also on behalf of the government, I think that would
be a fair comment.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the hon. minister is answering a previous question?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Yes. Just a few comments and that will come, but I can assure, and I can appreciate the words of the hon. member from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). By the way, I might say that I was there for twenty-five days. I had a Saturday and a Sunday off in Oslo, and a Saturday and a Sunday -

MR. SMALLWOOD: How many days?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROUSSEAU: Twenty-five.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Days off?

MR. ROUSSEAU: One second now. You know, twenty-five days, and I am willing, as we all are -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, I am willing as we all are to table the number of meetings, we had five, six, seven a day - you know,

PREMIER MOORES: Do not get on the defensive.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No, no. But quite apart from that, and two days in Copenhagen in which we had a de-briefing session when the Premier came over, and I can assure the hon. member for Twillingate, who is the only gentleman I am referring to now who had enough faith in us to say what he has just said, and I can assure the gentleman that he will not be embarrassed by his faith in the trip that we had.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the hon. Premier. Would the hon. - if I can get the hon. Premier's attention there for a moment - would the hon. Premier indicate to the House what kind of an affect in the federal government's new policy on redfish - the reduction in redfish quotas - what affect it is going to have on fish plants in Newfoundland, especially those on the South Coast? And would the Premier indicate what plants he thinks might be affected by this new federal regulation?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, first of all the plants that will be affected, obviously, are all those plants that handle redfish which are

Premier Moores:

located on the South Coast from Port aux Basques, I guess as far East as Harbour Breton.

AN HON. MEMBER: Gaultois, Harbour Breton -

PREMIER MOORES: Gaultois, Harbour Breton that area. The Burin Peninsula lesser so, I think that is mostly flat fish.

Obviously, Sir, the stand taken by the Federal Minister of Fisheries is one of major concern for employment in that area, and equally the very fact that the quotas could be taken so rapidly is also of great concern, particularly when I understand some of the quotas, some of the catches that were taken just holus-bolus and a lot of the fish possibly not handled in a quota conservation sense.

There is a great deal of concern about the whole approach in this particular regard. We have made our stand clear. Of course, we are very concerned about the welfare of the plant employees in this regard, and the fishermen fishing redfish in the Gulf. Probably our greatest concern is Newfoundland's share of the Canadian quota at this time. There is also a great deal more tonnage allocated to the Russians this year, in areas other than the Gulf, for redfish which we believe was very bad judgment in the Canadian representation in ICNAF to ensure that we did not have more redfish reserves in areas other than the Gulf which could have done in now the same job as the lack of, or the cancellation of the quota in the Gulf. It is something that we are looking at obviously with deep concern and one which we will be operating with the fish trades, the unions and hopefully the federal government in trying to resolve.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct this question to the Premier. The Premier and the government have indicated that they are making legal advice available to the workers of Come By Chance to ascertain whether or not they are entitled to servance pay. What one is entitled to in this life and what one gets is two different things. My question, Mr. Speaker, is that assuming there is entitlement will

Mr. Flight:

servance pay take precedence over any other liens against Come By Chance, both from the secured and unsecured creditors?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, this is why, exactly one of the reasons why we asked or we suggested to the union representation yesterday that a lawyer be attained to make sure this happens. I understand - that it is only an opinion, it is not a fact - that the rights of the employees come before any preferred secured or unsecured creditor, this is as I have been led to believe so far. Definitely under various acts it is typical, and this is why we suggested getting a lawyer and this is why we will work on the employees behalf, but certainly the inclination at this point certainly would be that way. But to make a definitive statement on it would be wrong for me.

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

MR. F. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary with respect to the question asked by my colleague from Windsor-Buchans and the answer by the Premier: The problem is not so much with money that may be owed to the men in respect of wages. You know, the legal advice which I have is to the same effect that that does take a degree of priority over creditors, both secured and unsecured. The question is with respect to servance pay which is not money owed, it would be money that would be paid to the men as compensation of the fact their jobs are lost.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: I guess I am the wrong

PREMIER MOORES:

one to be arguing this, Mr. Speaker, because there are lawyers on both sides of the House here. As I understand it, back wages automatically come first. Vacation pay under the Vacation Pay Act comes first. Severance pay, if it is decided that it is legitimate claim, I would assume would come first. If it is not, and some special arrangement has to be made, that is where the grey area comes in to decide the whole thing.

MR. ROBERTS: Decided by whom?

PREMIER MOORES: Pardon?

MR. ROBERTS: Decided by whom?

PREMIER MOORES: Well, that is just it. By the receiver, by the legalities that presently exist. We have got our people working on it, giving them a lawyer to try to come up with obviously what is most beneficial to these people.

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

MR. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Fisheries. It relates to the new redfish quota in the Gulf. I am wondering if the Premier would indicate what the government's stand is with reference to the new quotas and whether it supports the action of the Federal Government or what; and secondly, whether the government, either the Minister of Fisheries or the Premier or some officials of the Department of Fisheries, were consulted prior to the decision having been made to limit the quota in the Gulf?

PREMIER MOORES: The first part of the question I answered just a moment ago, Mr. Speaker, to the best of my ability. The second part of the question is one that I will have to ask the Department of Fisheries exactly what consultation, if any, was held.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there a supplementary?

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the hon. the Premier. Would the hon. the Premier tell the House what effect the decision made by DREE recently not to grant a \$3 million grant or loan to Eastern

MR. NEARY:

Provincial Airways, what effect this is going to have on EPA's expansion, proposed expansion in Gander?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORFS: Mr. Speaker, first of all, to get that straight there was a \$3 million programme of which fifty per cent, I think it was, was asked for in the form of a grant and the rest as a lease to be paid through a guaranteed situation over a period of years. The situation, as I understand it now, is that DRFF have turned down this particular application, for what reason I just cannot understand because they have approved a very similar type application for the same company in Halifax for training of people there for flying and so on and all the various aspects of it -

MR. NEARY: True. I was coming to that.

PREMIER MOORFS: - while here in Gander in this Province they had turned down an application which in effect leads for technicians to be developed for the servicing of jet aircrafts, not just for EPA but for similar type aircrafts that could be attracted from other airlines. I found it one of the most unfortunate and one of the most disappointing DRFF decision in a long while. Obviously, this government has the regional airlines involved. We will do all we can to co-operate. Now, the detail of that will be announced at the appropriate time. But I must say and reinforce, Sir, that the DRFF decision in that particular one, they talk about industrial incentive, regional development of skills and this probably stood out more as a logical programme than just about any other we have applied for for a great many years.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to that question, Sir. Would the Premier tell the House if his government has registered an official protest against this decision to DRFF and to the Government of Canada?

PREMIER MOORFS: Official, I suppose you could say by verbal communication, written communication and just about every type of other communication - the answer is yes.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Sir. I presume the wires are burning between here and Ottawa. Would the Premier indicate if the Government of Canada is

MR. NEARY:

adamant and refuses to co-operate in this matter, will the Province then make this \$3 million or whatever the amount is, \$3.5 million available to EPA so that they can carry out their proposed expansion in Gander?

PREMIER MOORFS: Mr. Speaker, the proposed expansion, as I understand it, is about fifty per cent complete. Mr. Speaker, we were involved with the triangle on this one a year ago now and certainly hopefully we will be able to work out some position acceptable to EPA and hopefully with the Federal Government involved in it as well as our own.

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

MR. N. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Premier. It relates again to the Come By Chance situation. It view of the debate which we are told will be forthcoming and in the interest of helping us on this side of the House particularly to be informed for the debate, I am wondering if the Premier would undertake to table any correspondence which the government might have in its possession relating to the shut-down or the financial difficulties at Come By Chance?

PREMIER MOORES: I think the answer, Mr. Speaker, has to be no. But certainly also having said that, any knowledge we have we will only be too glad to sit down and discuss it. But when you talk about the correspondence involving Come By Chance there is, Sir, with all due respect, I think that would be impossible and also inappropriate.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I do not think the Premier understood my question. At least it would appear he did not from the answer. All I am asking is that he consider or undertake to table any correspondence, obviously not the kind of thing that is confidential and could not be tabled, but the correspondence that could be brought before this House so that the members can be more informed on the subject, correspondence that is otherwise not confidential so that we can get a clearer picture of the financial difficulties which precipitated the shut-down of the Come By Chance refinery. It is always understood, the rider, Mr. Speaker, is always that anything that confidence requires be not tabled, well that is another matter, and I am sure he and I both understand that.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, just so I can clarify, the hon. member thought I did not understand his question. I said that we would be totally prepared to sit down and discuss it and look at correspondence. There are lawsuits pending. There are all kinds of things pending. So, in other words, to answer this question very simply so the member can understand, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. SIMMONS: The old cover-up.

MR. HODDER: A question to the Minister of Social Services: In light of the statement by the Minister of Mines, Energy and Resources the day before yesterday in Stephenville that payments to social assistance recipients would be increased this year, and in light of the government's previous promise that payments would be increased this January, will the increases be made retroactive to January 1st of this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member will get the answer to that question when the budget comes down later on this month.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo.

CAPT. E. WINSOP: Mr. Speaker, may I -

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Fogo and then the hon. member for LaPoile.

CAPT. E. WINSOP: May I direct a question to the hon. Minister of Finance? Can the minister inform the House what if any effect the closing down of Come By Chance oil refinery will have on the borrowing ability of this Province, if any?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: During our most recent issue in the United States, a \$50 million issue, the Come By Chance situation, as it then was, was discussed thoroughly with the fiscal agents and with the people involved down there. Subsequent to that we have sent them an updating and have kept them up to date to the present time on the situation. The most recent prospectus is here and it is available for anybody who is interested in looking at it.

MR. ROBERTS: Will the minister table that?

MR. DOODY: Yes, certainly. I will table it now.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could the minister table more than one copy?

MR. DOODY: Table two copies.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I already have a copy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is two alright, two? Anybody else?

AN HON. MEMBER: Could I have a copy?

MR. DOODY: I have two. Maybe your leader might loan you his after he is finished or maybe you could get it duplicated. I do not have any others with me.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I have no leader.

MR. DOODY: And never have had, and never have had, and probably never will have.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I am not supposed to have one.

MR. DOODY: That is right. That is right. With God walking a respectful four spaces behind you.

The answer in a nutshell is that the people in the financial community in the U.S. and other places have indicated to us that they see no material difference in the Province's credit rating. Our exposure of forty-some million dollars is not sufficiently large to endanger our credit rating. This is the reply on the feeling that we got from the investment community. We have had no adverse affects. As I say that \$50 million issue was sold while the Come By Chance discussions were ongoing, and they were aware of them in the financial community. They have been subsequently advised of current developments and we have had no adverse reaction.

MR. SPEAKER: Now I will ask the hon. gentleman first if this is a supplementary to his last. I will allow a supplementary, and then the hon. gentleman from LaPoile.

CAPT. E. WINSOP: Would the Minister of Finance say what Newfoundland's rating is now on the market?

MR. DOODY: There rating is the same as it was last year. The BAAL is what it is referred to. There has been a recent study done by the rating agency and that was thier conclusion, that the rating should not be changed.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Now that the refinery has shut down would the Premier tell the House if it is the intention of his government to hold a public meeting or a series of public meetings in the Come By Chance area to explain the whole suggestion to all the people who were affected by the shut-down? If so, would the Premier tell the House the dates of these meetings? And also, when the debate takes place here in the House, will Mr. Shaheen and his group be invited to come in on the floor of the House to give their side of the story?

MR. MURPHY: Are we going to go through that again?

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, the first half of the question - yesterday, when we met with the representatives of the communities and the union executive, it was decided that on an ongoing basis every two weeks in the beginning, and possibly after that once a month, that representatives of the union and communities and government would sit down - this is other than the task force - but to sit down and keep a total - well a liaison in committee - to keep them totally updated on exactly what is happening as far as new prospects are concerned, and as far as the present difficulties are concerned so that they in turn, reporting to their town councils, reporting to the union membership, could relay to the very many peoples in the area as to exactly what the situation is and how it is developing over a period of time. I think this is probably more effective and more efficient and certainly better in the world of communication than just having public meetings for the sake of having them. So that is the answer to the first part of the question.

The second part of the question is that it has not been something we have considered as yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, a question to the hon. Minister of Health. Is it still the government's intention to open the Carbonear General Hospital on April 1 of this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, it is very doubtful that that hospital will be opening on April 1. For one reason, it is not ready to be opened, but just as soon as we are in a position to say when we will make any announcement.

MR. SPEAKER: There is time for actually one question and one answer. I recognize the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. In view of the fact that the price of gasoline in this Province is the highest in all of Canada, and in view of the fact that at least three provinces at the conference in Ottawa have taken the position that there should not be an increase in the price of oil in Canada - those provinces being Ontario, Manitoba and Nova Scotia - could the Premier tell the House why his colleague, the Minister of Energy, has taken the position that the price of oil should go up by \$1.05 a barrel, which I am told will mean at least a nickel a gallon on gasoline in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, first of all on the subject of the prices of petroleum products, I was surprised to find in Ontario the other day in getting gas at a station that it was \$.93 a gallon where just a very few years ago it was considerably less than that. But our position is that at this particular time its - and some of the premise, the qualification to the hon. Leader of the Opposition's question were quite inaccurate - our position is that we should be increasing the price of oil at the well head as little as possible at this particular time because of the unusual problems that we have in our country. But also, Sir, we are also taking the position in that we have to face reality in Canada, as have the federal government in this particular regard as have a great many other people and whilst energy generally, whether it is electrical rates or whether it is the price of oil and gas, I think

Mr. Moores.

to put our head in the sand is an ostrich attitude and say it should not go up because we are not used to it as opposed to facing the reality of where we are in this world would be a terrific mistake.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the Premier venture to guess as to when it will be \$2.00 a gallon?

MR. MOORES: No, I would not like to venture a guess on it, Sir, but the one thing I think it would be safe to say, as I think the hon. gentleman and other people in this House would agree, is that there is no question that it is going to eventually get there.

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MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I move that the regular order of business of this hon. House be suspended to debate matters of urgent public importance to the people of this Province; namely, (1) the uncertain situation at the Stephenville Linerboard Mill; (2) the severe restrictions on the redfish catch in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which will affect fish plant and fishermen on the south coast of Newfoundland; (3) the extremely low volume of construction work contemplated for the year ahead in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!

I must point out to

MR. SPEAKER: the hon. gentleman that under the procedure of asking leave for the suspension of regular business to introduce a matter of urgency, only one specific matter may in fact be debated and leave may be asked only to debate one specific matter, rather than a series.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, my specific matter will be Sir, the rapidly deteriorating condition of the Trans-Canada Highway, especially west of Corner Brook and the impact that this may have on the tourist industry in this Province if we do not take immediate steps to restrict the load limits of the tractor trailers and the heavy equipment travelling over this highway.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair must now decide not whether the hon. gentleman, of course, has leave or not but whether asking leave for debate on this specific matter is in fact in order. Matters to be taken into consideration are the urgency of the topic which no one need necessarily dispute, the urgency of debate or the urgency of debate at this particular moment and also of course, the opportunity for debate. In looking at the Order Paper I see that the Address in Reply is there and actually very little legislation, and while I would have no way of knowing what order of business is to be called, I could make a reasonable surmise that the Address in Reply will be called if not today in the very near future, therefore in my opinion there will be ample opportunity to debate this specific subject.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

MR. SPEAKER: Order 1, Address in Reply. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, this is the first opportunity we have had in this session to debate the Address in Reply, or the Throne Speech debate as we normally refer to it, because of course when the House met in November the Throne Speech was given on the first day that we met and on the second day that we met we went into the Budget Speech or the - yes, it was a Budget Speech and I believe that

MR. ROBERTS: still has not been, or that debate has not been concluded although it has largely spun out its course, and that debate was adjourned and it was followed in turn by the debate on the Churchill Falls situation, the government's proposals with respect to Churchill Falls and their handling of their assets, their interests in the Churchill Falls and in Labrador power since they acquired those assets and those interests about two years ago. And that took us up to a day or two or three before Christmas Eve and of course the House has stood adjourned since then.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it is high time that we have the Throne Speech debate. I am unable to understand any valid reason why the government chose to adjourn the House on the 22nd. of December and keep it adjourned until the 4th. day of March. Nobody begrudges a Christmas holiday to the government or to any of us. It would have been reasonable to adjourn the House from the 22nd. of December until the 3rd. or 4th. or 5th. or even the 10th. day of January. But it was completely unreasonable to keep the House adjourned for all of the month of January and all of the month of February and then to have it come back as it has, as we did on the 4th. day of March.

Mr. Speaker, I know the reasons why. I think every member of the House knows the reasons why. I think that all of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador know the reasons why the government decided not to meet the House. There are two sets of reasons in my opinion, Sir. The first is that the government are scared of the House. They are most anxious to be anywhere but in the House of Assembly where they cannot escape answering the comments and criticisms that are put to them by hon. gentlemen on all sides of the House, and particularly comments and criticisms that are put to them by hon. gentlemen on all sides of the House, and particularly those of us who sit here to Your Honour's right. And the secondary reason, very much secondary, was that the government wished to go off on their jaunt to Europe, a holiday jaunt or not we will find out in due course, but their jaunt to Europe and

MR. ROBERTS: then of course we had the edifying display of every minister but one or perhaps two I believe taking off to Ottawa to the convention to elect the PC leader and that is not the offence. It was quite right and proper for members of that party to take part in the election of a new national leader of their party, a man who will not be Prime Minister of Canada, but a man who at least is a contender for that honour.

But what I object to, Sir, and what the people of this Province object to of course is that it took the entire government about an entire week to do it, a needless expenditure of time and presumably a needless expenditure of money. In due course we will have the opportunity to find out just when each minister went to Ottawa, what he did in Ottawa, how much he charged the people of the Province for the pleasure of his being in Ottawa. Most of them I suspect will claim they were in Ottawa on public business. We all know they were there primarily and mainly, and some almost totally on private business, business in connection with the Tory Party, legitimate business but business in respect of which no charges should have been made against the government, the public account of this Province. They will all have

MR. ROBERTS: the opportunity to table their expenditures over that period and we will see how many have the nerve and the gall to charge off their trip to Ottawa against the public of this Province, the public who are paying a 10 per cent sales tax, the public who are going to do without new hospitals and so forth because we are in an era of austerity.

Mr. Speaker, it is really shameful that the house did not meet, because there has never been a time in my knowledge - now my knowledge is not as extensive as other hon. gentlemen, The gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) can speak with first-hand knowledge of events thirty or forty or fifty or sixty years ago because he has been interested in public life in this Province for at least that period of time. His recollection is superb. He can remember what went on and what happened and what was in people's minds and what was being discussed. But, Sir, in my years in public life, and I venture to say with the significant exception of the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) my years are as extensive as anybody who sits in this house today, never, Sir, has there been a time when the public mood of this Province has been as it is today. I see the public mood of the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, as being one of deep and dismal doubt, almost one of despair. Uncertainty, Sir, and self-doubt stalk this land today.

We do not even have to look any further than today's edition of The Evening Telegram which has on page 4, a story the headline of which is: "Economic Outlook Dismal Says Board Of Trade Head." There is a picture there of Mr. Creighton the President of the Board of Trade. I will just read the first two or three paragraphs: "The President of the St. John's Board of Trade last night painted a dismal outlook for the economic prospects of the St. John's area for the next year. Andrew G. Creighton, speaking to a meeting of the Data Processing Management Association at the Battery Motel cited the effects that the closing of the Come By Chance oil refinery will have on the city as well as the restrictions placed on business under the federal government's anti-inflation programmes." This is a quotation, Sir, quoting Mr. Creighton.

MR. ROBERTS:

"The immediate economic prospects in the next year or so for the city area seem dim," he said, noting that the unemployment rate is at an all-time high." Mr. Speaker, all over this Province people are expressing a similar view. Any hon. gentleman who has been the least bit around this Province, any hon. gentleman who has opened his ears and his eyes to what people in this Province are saying and what they are thinking knows that that is a very, very true statement.

It is more than that though, Sir. It is more than just a slough of despondency. Mr. Speaker, what troubles me very deeply is that in addition to that great feeling of deep and dismal doubt I am encountering, and I have talked to my colleagues in the Liberal caucus and we find that we are all encountering, for the first time, a feeling among many of our people, a belief among many of our people that they doubt their destiny. For the first time since Confederation, Sir, ordinary people in this Province are beginning to doubt whether we can do it. Can we build anything in Newfoundland and Labrador or are we doomed and condemned to be a nation, a country, a Province that just cannot provide a decent way of living for our people? Many people, Sir, are losing their self-confidence, their belief in the future. Many people feel that we just cannot do it anymore. They hear statements made in this house and outside that we are going to have to go down in the world, that we are going to have to reduce our standard of living, that we are going to have to - I think the hon. gentleman from Kilbride, (Mr. Wells) the government House Leader yesterday said we will no longer be able to drive large cars, and he put that forward not as a wise thing, which I would suggest. We should do it for sensible reasons. But he put it forward, I think, as an instance of economic difficulty and almost amounting to economic depression.

Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned about this and so are my colleagues.

MR. POBERTS:

If we were the government we would make this the major thrust, the major effort of our administration in these months. We are not the government. But, Sir, we want to do what we can to remedy it, to help to remedy it. So, Mr. Speaker, we have decided now that the House at long last is open, a month or two months after it should have been opened, we have decided to pursue a somewhat unusual course. Normally, Sir, in the debate on the Address in Reply, the Throne Speech debate, the Opposition move a non-confidence motion at the end of the first speech by the lead-off speaker, whoever he may be. Usually that non-confidence motion comes after a lengthy and detailed indictment of the sins of the administration or of the government. Heavens knows, Mr. Speaker, that we have lots of justification for doing that this time.

I could go through the unemployment figures being up, the sad and sorrowful litany. On every hand unemployment up. The figures are absolutely staggering. Even the decision by the Statistics Canada people, the Government of Canada, to redo the unemployment figures which apparently, or would lead one to believe that there is an apparent improvement in the unemployment picture, those figures of course when they are looked at cease to hold up or do not hold up any more because of course when the retroactive calculations are done the trend holds on. Unemployment is up. It is continuing to rise. We are not even keeping up, Mr. Speaker, we are not even keeping up with the growth in our labour force. We are falling further and further and further behind.

Let me take the figures for December which are the most recent ones that I have. In a labour force of 175,000 - and these have been restated, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of the new methodology adopted by Statistics Canada - in a labour force of 175,000 people we have 151,000 employed and 24,000 unemployed, an actual unemployment rate of 13.7 per cent. More significantly even than that, a participation rate of 47.9 per cent which means that out of a work force of - I am sorry, out of a population of 365,000 people, fifteen years of age and older, only 479 out of every 1,000 are participating

MR. ROBERTS:

in the labour force. That is significant because the participation rate, which is a division of the labour force as calculated by Statistics Canada into the population fifteen years and up, the potential work force, is 47.9. These are not my standards or my methodology. This is the standard methodology, I would point out to the minister, 365,000 people, I am told, over the age of fifteen or fifteen years and over. Although sixteen is the school leaving age, you know, that is the definition they take.

If we go back we will find that that participation rate which has always been lower than that of the rest of Canada, that the participation rate has been dropping over the year. It is a fairly seasonal one but, you know, it was 49.5 in November, 50.7 in October, 51.7 in September, 53.2 in August, 53.6 in July, 50.8 in June, and it goes back to 45.4 per cent in March. In other words, people are dropping out of the labour force, a measure, I would submit, of their lack of faith in their ability to find a job because of the course the number of unemployed has gone up equally steadily throughout -

MR. MURPHY: But they are staying in school longer than they used to.

MR. ROBERTS: That may be part of it. Part of it might be, Mr. Speaker, married women who would like to work and would work if they felt - and would consider themselves in the labour force, but feel there is no going in it. Some of them might be married women who are in the process of having, you know, are pregnant and are in the process of having children and thus drop out for a year or two.

MR. MURPHY: I have five in my department now.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman has five children or five -

AN HON. MEMBER: Ready to go.

MR. ROBERTS: Five ready to go. I do not know if that is a matter of ministerial responsibility or not, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY: It is not my achievement.

MR. ROBERTS:

I accept the hon. gentleman's assurance without any qualification.

Mr. Speaker, I could talk about unemployment but I do not want to go on at any length about that. I could talk about the broken promises, and that is good for three or four days of debate from any individual in this House, just listing them. You know, what about the first priorities in health? The people in Happy Valley are expecting a first priority in health, as they have been told that their hospital - the gentleman from Kilbride (Mr. Wells) when he was Minister of Health told them their hospital would be a first priority. So were the people in Clarenville with their new hospital. I was talking today with a friend of mine from the town of Burin who said, well we are going to get our hospital. And I said, why? What makes you say that? They are all called off. No, he said, sure the platform is still up down there. They came down just before the election and put up the platform and turned the sod for it. Then there is the Grand Falls extension which was all gung-ho before the election is now been put on a very long finger. The project to put a hospital in the Channel-Port aux Basques area to replace the hospital there is gone. You know, one could go on and on listing endlessly the broken promises.

In Ferryland district one will hear a great deal about - we could talk about the fine people of Brigus South and Admiral's Cove, I believe I have the communities correct, who were told before the election by the previous member, Mr. Doyle, that they would have their roads paved this year, and they went ahead, and lo and behold! the equipment went in magically, and things started to happen. And lo and behold! two or three days after the election the equipment was pulled out.

AN HON. MEMBER: Doyle was pulled out too.

MR. ROBERTS: Well I have nothing to do with Mr. Doyle being pulled in or out of the equipment, Mr. Speaker.

MR. POWER: Could the hon. gentleman permit a question?

MR. ROBERTS: No, I am sorry. At the end of what I have to say if the hon. gentleman, the present member for Ferryland (Mr. Power) would like to ask

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a question I shall be delighted to have him ask it, and equally delighted to try to answer it. But I cite that as an outstanding example of a broken promise, a broken commitment.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to talk about that. I could go on for days, and we will have loads of opportunity this year and throughout this session to list some of those promises, the promises that have not been kept,

I could go on and talk a little bit more about the Churchill Falls project which continues to fall into more and more difficulty. The administration might as well realize, too, the way the people of Newfoundland are coming to think about that project. I do not know whether Your Honour had the opportunity to see the CBC News last night, you know, the start of it, the start of the Here and Now portion, the local news, and they had on it a film clip of an interview with a gentleman from the Come By Chance area, my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) was there looking handsome, alert, smart, and very interested. But this gentleman at some length went on about what he felt was the - and I believe rightly so - to be the very poor way in which the government have handled the Come By Chance thing. And then he said, you know, he said I am going to go on - all this is because we are paying for the Lower Churchill, I am going to go on the rest of my life paying for the Lower Churchill, why do they not do something for Come By Chance? Now the merits of his view are one thing. Mr. Speaker, that view is widely held. The view is widely held throughout this Province today. There is obviously a certain amount of truth in it. Indeed at times I feel there is a great amount of truth in it. But I do not propose to go on on that tack at this time. I could. There is enough in that to justify a motion of non-confidence. Indeed there is enough in that to justify the defeat of a government in the House or in the country.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think either of that would be the right course at this time. I do not feel that it is appropriate. My colleagues do not feel it is appropriate for us to bring in an amendment to the

Mr. Roberts:

Throne Speech which condemns the government. Although, you know, it is tempting, There are so many reasons to say so, so many grounds, so many arguments can be brought forth, arguments that would convince any reasonable person - it might not convince the government or their supporters - but any reasonable person would be convinced, and would say that this crowd of, this hon. crowd must go. A new group, no matter who it be, will come. That is another story. But this group of men must go. They have failed. They have failed in their duty to administer the affairs of this Province. But that is not what I propose, Sir. That is not the way I think this debate should go. Other hon. members may disagree. My caucus are in agreement with me because we talked about this at length, and we have agreed on the position we are to take. Other hon. gentlemen may feel that the debate should be a negative one. And, of course, as long as they are within the rules they have every opportunity and every right to say what they wish.

But we feel, Sir, this debate at this time in this Province should take a very different course. Accordingly

MR. ROBERTS:

I propose, Your Honour, to move an amendment now to the Address in Reply. I have some copies of it here for Your Honour and for the Leader of the other party, the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) and for the clerk and I have some which perhaps we can arrange to get up to the press. If it is in order I will read it and then Your Honour can decide whether it is in order or not, but let me read it. There is one there of course for the hon. gentleman, the House Leader. He will understand why I did not give it to him in advance anymore than he does not give us any notice in advance of his amendments. But perhaps could the clerk do the kindness to take one to the House Leader on the other side? But in any event, the amendment which I would propose, Mr. Speaker, seconded by my friend and colleague from Port au Port, is to amend the motion - the motion before the Chair, as Your Honour knows, is that the following Address in Reply be presented and then the words of the motion - "To amend the motion by striking out all the words after 'that' and to replace them with the following: This House reaffirms its faith in the future of Newfoundland and Labrador and calls upon the ministry to present to the House and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador a detailed and a specific outline of their goals for the development of this Province and the means by which they plan to achieve them."

Now, Your Honour, I put that forth. I believe it to be put in order. I put it forth as an amendment to the motion. I would be grateful if Your Honour would rule upon it. I do not know whether Your Honour wishes any argument or anything but I believe it to be in order and really we cannot go much further until Your Honour says whether it is in order or not. So I must now yield to Your Honour.

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. Collins): It was moved by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and duly seconded that the amendment as stated by him be now debated. I would rule that the amendment is in order.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour. So we are now debating the amendment. Does the House Leader wish to make a comment?

MR. WELLS: His Honour has ruled.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I agree. But I mean I believe it to be in order too, certainly, or I would not have moved it. Mr. Speaker, let me state at the outset

MR. ROBERTS:

where we stand as a party, as a group, as a body on this amendment. We shall vote for it. That is why we moved it. We believe it is the right and the proper way in which this House of Assembly should take its stand. I shall be somewhat taken aback if any hon. gentleman chooses to vote against it because the motion is a very positive one and a very reasonable one. I do not see how anybody in this Province - maybe there are people who do not wish to reaffirm their faith in the future. I think it is necessary for us to state it. Normally it would not need to be stated. Normally it would be a stunning insight into the obvious. But in view of the public mood and the public feeling and the way in which people in every part of this Province feel, it is appropriate that we stand and be counted. We should not need a lot of argument on it. We should not need a lot of discussion on it. But we should certainly make our voices heard.

The second part of the motion is, I would submit, equally substantive. It gives the government the opportunity to do that which the Premier indicated in response to a question earlier this day, a question I believe put by the gentleman from Twillingate, it gives the government and all of their supporters, the members of the government and all of their supporters the opportunity to bring before this House what they see as our goals and how they plan to move so that we can achieve those goals. We believe in our future, Sir. Every man and woman on this side of the House believes in the future of this Province. We may have our differences about some of the tactics or even some of the strategies to be employed to achieve that future. But, Sir, it is not enough just to say that. What really counts is, where are we going in this Province? Can we build in this Province

MR. ROBERTS: an economy and a society that provides a meaningful and a worthwhile job for every person who wishes to have one. Must we go on tolerating unemployment rates of 10 per cent, 15 per cent, much higher than they have been. They averaged 8 per cent in 1970. They averaged 9 per cent in 1971. These are these new calculations now Statistics Canada have done. They averaged about 8 per cent in 1972. Now they have come up. In 1973 they averaged about 10 per cent and about 12 per cent in 1974 and in 1975 the lowest unemployment rate we had during the entire year was in the month of September, month of blessed memory, when all the election projects were at full fever pitch, when they were down in Brigus South getting a road ready for pavement; when they were hard at work putting up the platform down in Marystown, at Salt Pond near Marystown for the hospital; when they were hard at work getting ready for the Grand Falls Hospital. Even in that month of blessed memory, Sir, the unemployment rate was 12.3 per cent, higher than it had reached at any point in 1970 or 1971 or 1972 or, and with one exception in 1973. The lowest unemployment rate we had in all of 1975 was higher than the highest we had at any point in 1971 or 1972 or 1973 or at any point in 1973 with the exception with the month of January, the depths of the winter.

Must we tolerate that, Sir? Must we tolerate a society where 24,000 people want to work, are available for work and cannot work, cannot find work? There may be those who say that they do not want to work and I hear that. I hear people who should know better saying that. And there may well be some rotten apples in the barrel. It is quite a large barrel, a work force of 175,000 people which peaked in July at 193,000 people. There may be a few people who do not want to work. Of course there may be. There may be quite a few. But there are very, very few in proportion, Mr. Speaker, The great part of that 24,000 people who are unemployed want to work and want to work at meaningful and productive jobs. We have seen that time and time again.

Down in Labrador, the Labrador portion of my district where there are a few measly jobs on the great tunnel project, there may be twenty or

MR. ROBERTS: thirty people employed there now putting up a few trailers to house some of the staff there. For every job that is available there are ten men looking for it, trying to get it, looking for the job. Only one can get it. The other nine want it, Sir, and that is true throughout this Province. People might not be willing to accept any work, no, and there are some jobs I might not take either, or Your Honour might not take. And people do not necessarily want to leave their homes and their families and go forever, and go long distances. That is too high a price. That is not employment in the sense in which I use it now, not if they are forever having to go. You do not mind if for a year or two or three, but when a man looks forward and all that he can see -

MR. NEARY: What is he asking for?

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman asks what - I will deal with that if he bears with me and is patient I shall do my best to deal with it and I shall then listen with real interest to what the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) says, because he may very well have some thoughts on this, some useful thoughts, because if there is no answer, if there is no answer then, Mr. Speaker, perhaps that gentleman, that scholar whom none of us thinks should be hired to work in this Province again, at least not by a public body, Dr. Parzival Copes, may well be right. Dr. Copes is one of these people who has concluded on the evidence which he has gathered, and he is being intellectually honest about it, I reject his conclusions but he

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has set forth his evidence and his conclusions. They were voiced, I think, most prominently by Mr. Jay Parker in a speech to the Board of Trade - was it, or whatever - a number of years ago that caused quite a furor.

AN HON. MEMBER: Rotary.

MR. ROBERTS: Rotary, was it? I thank the hon. gentleman. I believe that speech reflected the views Dr. Copes put forth. But can we support our people? I believe we can, and I think we can create some of those jobs.

MR. NEARY: All right, where?

MR. ROBERTS: If the hon. gentleman will bear with me! I may not be as mentally quick as he is or is able to - I have to build an argument as best I can, one small step at a time.

MR. NEARY: Pious statements.

MR. ROBERTS: But in the words of the hymn, Sir, by that great Anglican turned Catholic ecclesiastic, Cardinal Newman, John Henry Newman, "One step enough for me." And I must take it one step at a time. If the hon. gentleman will but bear with me I shall do my very best to provide him with the answers.

MR. NEARY: I could never get them out of you.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, the hon. gentleman could never get them, Sir. That, Sir, is another story, and we will have, I hope, ample opportunity to debate that.

Mr. Speaker, the point which I am making is, I believe, a very vital one, perhaps the most important of all. What can we build in this Province and how can we build it? It is the job of the government - the ministry in the term I have used in this resolution, because I want to pin it down to being that group of sixteen or seventeen or eighteen men who together constitute the Queen's ministers, the government of this Province - it is the job of the government to answer these questions and that is why this motion, this amendment, is framed in the terms in which it is.

Mr. Roberts.

It is the ministry who must present to the House and to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador a detailed and a specific outline of their goal.

MR. NEARY: Can you not give them a few hints?

MR. ROBERTS: How many jobs can be created? One hundred, one thousand?

You know, Your Honour, it has been said often, but it is worth saying again, the problem in absolute numbers is not terribly great. If we could find 24,000 jobs in this Province, we would have eliminated the unemployment problem as it exists according to Statistics Canada. Our work force, I am told, is projected to grow over the next three years by an average of between 5,000 and 6,000 persons, and that would be a net figure given continuing migration. There is a significant emigration from this Province to other parts of Canada. Some of it may be stemmed, some of it may not be stemmed, some of it would be people who go elsewhere to seek the opportunities that they believe exist elsewhere, others are people who go elsewhere because they see no opportunities in Newfoundland, and they feel they must go if they are to live.

Mr. Speaker, it is the job of the government to provide some answers to this. It is the most important job that they do. It is the most basic job that they do. Every citizen of this Province today looks to the government for leadership.

MR. NEARY: Do they not have a right to?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is determined to try to provoke me. I am not going to be provoked by the likes of the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: Do you have any recommendations, then?

MR. ROBERTS: But, Mr. Speaker, I would merely as Your Honour's protection from the harassment of the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) who is as well aware of the rules of this House, I venture to say, as any member of it. He knows that he is not allowed to interrupt. I do

Mr. Roberts.

him the courtesy, Sir, not to interrupt his remarks. I would urge him to do me a like courtesy. Whether he chooses to or not, Sir, I do not intend to respond to him.

MR. NEARY: Do not be so nasty, boy.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: What recommendations -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have said that I do not intend to respond to the hon. gentleman. He may go on. I cannot stop him from speaking.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has expressed the wish to be heard in silence, which is his right, so I would ask him to continue and the House govern itself accordingly.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Now I just said that I believe it is the job of the ministry and the government to bring ideas of this sort, plans of this sort, proposals of this sort to the House of Assembly. Now I know there are other important things the government do. Running the public services

MR. ROBERTS:

are important. Snow clearing services, particularly when they have been run as badly as they have been this year by the Minister of Transportation, they are important. The running of our hospitals and our schools insofar as that is part of the government's job as opposed to the hospital boards or the denominational education commissions or the school boards throughout the Province, that is important. Running municipalities insofar as that is the duty of the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, that is important, and police and fire services. I could go on and on. But none of those, Mr. Speaker, is as important as this task which I now put before the government. All of them pale into insignificance beside this great question, this great cause. Governments are not elected, Sir, merely to administer. The public service do it far better than most governments ever will or ever can. Governments are elected to lead and that is what this government must do, because only the government can lead this Province. Gentlemen on this side of the House cannot lead. It is not our job to lead and we do not have the means at our disposal to lead. Only the government can lead, Mr. Speaker. That is the great need and that is the great opportunity. I call on them now to lead and to lead in this way at this time. That is what the motion is all about.

Mr. Speaker, we know how many people are unemployed in this Province. I have read the figures. I will read them again if any hon. gentleman wishes. We know how many new jobs we will need, 5,000 to 6,000 a year at our present participation rates, given our present out-migrations from the Province. We know what our resources are in this Province. I do not think there are any significant resource bodies in this Province we do not know about. We may not know all about them. We certainly do not know in any detail the extent of the oil and gas resources on the coastal shelf or off the shelf of Labrador. But I think that in this building or in the public service, perhaps with some help from the Federal public service, we know with a reasonable degree of certainty and precision what resources there are. I do not believe there are any or very many great mineral bodies in this Province that have not yet

MR. ROBERTS:

been discovered. I do not think there are any magic -

MR. SMALLWOOD: You cannot say that.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) says we cannot say that. I can say it. He may not agree with it. And I am told by people who should know that almost all of this Province has been not prospected but has been surveyed in a scientific process that would indicate the existence of any possible - we know of many, many that are not delineated. Certainly we know of even more that are not developed. But perhaps the hon. gentleman knows of something I do not, in which case I shall gladly and with great interest look forward to hearing him talk about that. I do not think there are any magic fishery resources. I suspect we know and I suspect - I am sure we know the extent of the fishery resources. We may have overestimated it in fact. That is one of the tragedies of the ICNAF approach. We are seeing it now in the redfish industry. We may not act on what we know. We certainly did not, we, as a society did not act on what we know about the redfish. We knew, we ought to have known the information was there that the resource was limited and subject to trouble. We know, I think with a fair degree of precision, what our forestry resources are. We know, I think with a fair degree of precision, what our agricultural potentials are. We know, with a fair degree of precision, what types of skills are now here. We do not know what we can develop because our people, I believe, have an unlimited potential in development of skills. I think Newfoundlanders in their thousands, and it need not be said - let it be said just the once - a Newfoundlander given the opportunities and given the training and education can handle any job in the world. We have shown that time and time again.

There are no magic answers as yet undiscovered. There are no Eldorados just over the hill. There is no land of milk and honey other than that which we now know. Offshore oil, sometimes held out as being - if only we can find it - being the answer to all our troubles. Well it may be, but it has not been the answer to the economic difficulties of those lands which have discovered it.

MR. HICKMAN: Except in Alberta.

MR. ROBERTS: Except in Alberta says the hon. gentleman. Alberta has problems. Alberta has real problems, not the least of which their oil is running out.

MR. WELLS: It has done a great deal for Norway.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman says it has done a great, and it has done a great deal for England. But it has not solved all their problems. For all the joys of living in Norway, there are a number of things about their way of life that does not particularly appeal to me - the highest suicide rate, a high alcoholism rate. I am not sure those are social goods. I am as concerned, Sir, with a society that has all the good incidents as well as the economic opportunities. Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would not the gentleman agree that England and Scotland may be saved, it looks as though they will be saved from utter economic collapse by the oil and gas that has been discovered but are not yet developed.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) feels perhaps they may be saved by this. They may be saved for a while. But the solution to England's economic problems, Sir, does not lie in the resources, some of which are now developed. The first oil from the N.K. fields has now come ashore from the Forties fields. The other -

MR. WELLS: They will be self-sufficient by 1980.

MR. ROBERTS: They will be self-sufficient. Of course they will be. And they will have a surplus thereafter. Because they are developing it in a state partnership they may very well be economically in very good shape for a while, very good shape. Of course if we have resources we must develop them. Perhaps we should consider developing them in a state partnership as opposed to letting private industry do it on whatever basis. But that is another long argument and again one well worth pursuing.

The point I am making, Sir, is that those directing the public policy of this Province, and that is everyone in this House and many others besides, should

MR. ROBERTS:

not for one minute feel that the fact that we do have oil and gas off Labrador in particular, oil and gas which I believe this Province owns, the government of this Province, and not the government of Canada, that fact in itself and that belief in itself should not justify a public policy founded on that coming in. We must prepare for it by all means, we must. We must try to fit ourselves to cope with it because the English experience, particularly the Scottish experience, I should say, with respect to the development of oil and gas in the North Sea has been far, far from a happy one. The problems of Aberdeen on the North Eastern Coast of Scotland, I am told, are very immense. They have paid a high price in human terms. Leaving aside economics entirely they have paid a high price in human terms for that oil that is now coming ashore from the Forties and Ninevah fields.

The point I am making, Sir, is that what we can achieve in this Province must be achieved with what we now have. If we get more, well and good. But let us not count on getting more. If we do get more, if we do get new resources, let them come as icing on the cake or as butter on the bread, but let us not look to them. Let us not look to a wishful dream, pie in the sky. Let us not make that the foundation of public policy. That should not need saying, Mr. Speaker, but there are many -

MR. NOLAN: Could I ask a question please?

MR. ROBERTS: I want to finish the sentence. I would be delighted to let the hon. gentleman. But, Mr. Speaker, let us not make that the foundation of public policy. That should not need to be said, Sir, but it does need to be said because there are those who would pretend that the development of our resources is imminent. It is not imminent. It may happen within three or four or five years. We may get oil coming ashore or gas being brought ashore in ten years, and Sir, there are ten long years between then and now. My friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan)?

MR. NOLAN: It is very simple and very short. I am wondering on the basis of what you have said if you are implying - and maybe it is something for all of us to think about - if as a result, if we do look, and there is a natural tendency to do so, I suppose, as I am sure the Scots do with their offshore resources, Norway and the others, are we guilty - I am not talking about political partisanship here now - are we guilty of slackening off on other fields of endeavour that might be open to us as a result of this possible bail-out that could result with any kind of huge strikes and so on and perhaps enormous wealth off our coast. I am wondering if we are, unconsciously perhaps, slackening in our efforts to pursue other goals that might be available to us as a result of this thing that is over the horizon?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) has asked a masterful question. I think there was a question mark somewhere in that. I hope the Hansard reporter will get it. But I think he made an extremely valid point because, Sir, that is precisely the danger to which I am alluding. He has put it another way and perhaps even more effectively. There is a very real danger that in our pursuit of this oil and gas thing we may neglect what we now have. There is a very real danger. If we get the oil and gas, then well and good. We should prepare for it. We should prepare ourselves to receive it, to cope with it, to let us avoid some of the problems that other countries have encountered. Let us not have social and the human problems which they have encountered in Aberdeen and along the North Eastern part of Scotland. Let us not get the difficulties that have occurred in Norway, and there have been difficulties although the Norwegian experience has been infinitely happier and infinitely more successful than the British and particularly the Scottish part of England or the Scottish, not of England, but the Scottish part of the United Kingdom.

MR. ROBERTS: Let us concentrate on what we now have. Let us build on what we now have and let us look for what we know we have. When the rest comes let us be ready for it and let us be ready to take advantage of it. But if it does not come let us not be found standing wanting which is the fear my friend expresses.

Mr. Speaker, I am calling for a new thrust in the economic development of this Province. There has not been any study made of which I am aware - I am aware of a lot, I may not be aware of many more - of the economic development strategies which this Province has followed, not just since we were a Province but going back long before. I am not aware of any single authoritative study. It is one of the great lax of - the university perhaps should have done it. It is unfortunate that they have not published it. There have been a number of very good papers done. A man named Dr. Alexander has done some extremely thought-provoking work. Professor Kierans had a long piece in the newspaper the other week, in the Saturday edition of The Evening Telegram, which certainly should give rise to some discussion and some thought, a lot of good points. And there have been a number of some good speeches made in this House. But, Sir, I am not aware of any study of just what we have done. There are some themes that run throughout our policy,

We have had a long history of one big project paying off, or at least in the hope that it would pay off. Back in the days of the railway, the great leap forward it represented, and then the paper mill at Grand Falls, then the paper mill on the Rumber at Corner Brook, and then the Churchill Falls, the Upper Churchill project and the third mill and the fourth mill, the Come By Chance Refinery, one thing after another. I just picked a few high lights. There are many, many, many more. Sir, all of them have succeeded to some extent, some have been signally more successful than others. But they have all had difficulties. The mill at Corner Brook is going terrifically now. But it went through, I believe, two or three bankruptcies. At one stage the Province was, or the Country as we then were, was going to have to

MR. ROBERTS: honour its guarantee of \$10 million, which in the late 1920's -

MR. SMALLWOOD: No. No. Honour the interest.

MR. ROBERTS: I thank the hon. gentleman, the interest on the guarantee which was a form of honouring the guarantee. But in a day when the public expenditure was of the order of \$10 million or \$12 million the interest on \$10 million was a very significant chunk, a very -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The first quarter of the interest.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman says the first quarters of the interest and I have no doubt he is right, no doubt at all. The point I am making is that that project at Corner Brook which is now the great Bowater mill and which has brought prosperity to a whole large section of Western Newfoundland and many other parts beside, that great mill only stabilized after a number of years, a number of bankruptcies, a number of near bankruptcies -

MR. SMALLWOOD: No. No. No. There was no bankruptcy.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman can lecture us on history, Sir. He often does. I thank him for his information.

MR. SMALLWOOD: There was no bankruptcy.

MR. ROBERTS: I understand they committed acts of bankruptcies, Sir. If the hon. gentleman wishes to get into the argument I would be very happy to discuss it with him because my understanding is that they did commit acts of bankruptcy and there is perhaps a very precise legal definition. The Come By Chance people at this stage are not bankrupt but they have certainly committed acts of bankruptcy and that is why the Government of this Province, acting as mortgagees under the second mortgage have appointed a receiver, and why the ECCB - or Klienwort Benson, I should say acting under their mortgage as mortgagees, the first mortgage have appointed a receiver. No matter what the outcome of that hearing on Monday, let there be no doubt of this, that refinery is still effectivly out of the control

MR. ROBERTS: of the Shaheen people because they have committed acts of bankruptcy and that is an act of default under the mortgages. Whether or not the various companies that had title to what is now the Bowater interest, the Bowater estate, ever went through a formal bankruptcy, they committed acts of bankruptcy and there were re-organizations and rescue ventures and it all worked out very much for the best in the long run. But there were anxious moments.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. gentleman will allow me, I know he wants to be right, but I have vivid personal recollection of this. They were never bankrupt. They had never committed acts of bankruptcy. They were never in any danger of bankruptcy. But the ownership changed. The original company sold out to the Great International Power and Paper Company and they in turn sold out to the present owners, Bowaters. There was never any suggestion of bankruptcy.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I have no - I thank the hon. gentleman. As always, you know, was very knowledgeable about what went on in the past, and I am grateful because I have no personal recollections and other than newspapers and the odd, unusual unique study that has been done by people such as Dr. Sid Noel, there was very little written on the period, one of the great gaps in Newfoundland history is that period of the twenties or the thirties.

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying here now to get away from the precise difficulty of Bowaters, is that I do not think any great leap forward has in it the solution to our problems in this Province. A lot of people may feel it did. I am not sure that was ever a valid view. I think we may still need great projects or we may still have to risk much to gain much. But I do not think that should be the underlying thought, the underlying feature of our strategy of economic development in this Province today or for the years to come. What I am asking for is intelligent and rational planning based on the known resources or the ascertainable resources and based on utilizing those resources. Many mickles make a muckle! And I would rather have a muckle made of many mickles than a muckle made of some of the muddles that we have had over the years in this Province. There are those who will say, and I suggest the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is probably one of them, judged on what he said so far, why do I not produce this great plan?

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me destroy that canard now. If the hon. gentleman can produce a plan, I shall be the first to stand and say huzza. All I will say is that in his years in public life he has made many statements but I have yet to hear anything approaching an intelligent, rational plan. But if he can produce it -

MR. NEARY: You would not know one if you heard it.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if he can produce it I for one should welcome it and be very grateful.

MR. NEARY: You clown!

MR. ROBERTS: I, Mr. Speaker, do not have access to the resources of the -

MR. NEARY: You will never be leader of this Province!

MR. ROBERTS: I do not have access to the resources of the civil service or the information which they have. If I were Premier - the hon. gentleman feels that I may never be Premier - well, we will see in the fullness of time. That will be -

MR. NEARY: If you were Premier, what would you do?

MR. ROBERTS: That will be decided, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Be a professional disaster to Newfoundland!

MR. ROBERTS: That, Mr. Speaker - Mr. Speaker the hon. gentleman will have his turn and we will see. If I were Premier I would get the job done. I think the hon. gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) when he was Premier for twenty-three years, and he and I have had our differences. Indeed if Your Honour has not had a look at the Canadian magazine, they did a most interesting article on the hon. gentleman and myself recently which detailed -

MR. DOODY: It was clever.

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry?

MR. DOODY: It was a clever cover.

MR. ROBERTS: I wanted to get the - the Minister of Finance says it was clever. I wanted to get the original but I am told it sells for \$1,800 or \$2,000.

MR. DOODY: I think so.

MR. ROBERTS: And being in Opposition it is just not possible, but it was an excellent article in many ways, parts of it I did not like but it certainly detailed some of the differences which the hon. gentleman and I have had and have. But when he was Premier for many long years I believe he did his best, and a very considerable best it was, a devil of a lot better than anybody else could do at the time or did at the time.

MR. MORGAN: Worked hard trying.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, he worked hard trying which is more we can say of the present Premier of this Province, but he worked hard at accomplishing as well, Mr. Speaker.

I had rather thought that the present government were going to produce this kind of intelligent or rational plan, and I do not mean a plan such as we have in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. We are not a centralized state. We are not a socialized state. We have a large government presence in the economy, and it will presumably get larger. In many ways, the great problem in Newfoundland today is that we do not have a significant enough private sector that much of the entrepreneurship in Newfoundland consists of trying to hook money out of the government instead of the traditional entrepreneurship which abhors government and tries to operate despite the government. Here many times the idea of any man who wants to get a job or an industry going is to go up to the government, the first place an idea comes is in the hands of a minister with a request for money.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does the hon. gentleman know any province in Canada or state of the American Union where there is not the same onslaught on the government to borrow capital?

MR. ROBERTS: I agree with the gentleman from Twillingate if he is saying that a businessman will try to get money from a government anywhere in the world, and more power to them. But I will say that I think one of the lacks in Newfoundland, and I suspect he will agree with me, I think he must agree with me, is a lack of entrepreneurship.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And a lack of capital.

MR. ROBERTS: A lack of capital.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is the main thing.

MR. ROBERTS: But, Mr. Speaker, I believe that capital follows entrepreneurs, not entrepreneurs following capital. The government in this Province has taken a far larger role in the economy not for any philosophical reason but because they have had to. The present government which philosophically is opposed to government intervention in the economy as a philosophy, and I have heard that eloquently

Mr. Roberts:

articulated by the gentleman from Kilbride (Mr. Wells). It is a valid point of view. I do not accept it. But it is a valid point of view and one with integrity and honesty and intellectual unity. The present government have continued that trend and indeed have enhanced it, purchasing Churchill Falls, carrying through with the Liberal project of the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation, the Rural Development Authority, there are other instances of continued government interventions. It will always be so.

Mr. Speaker, I thought the present government were going to produce a plan, and not a five year plan saying that individual 'X' shall go to place 'Y' and shall do this, but a general plan with some goals.

Mr. Roberts.

How many jobs can we create? How many can we create in the fisheries? How many can we create in mineral development? How many can we create in forest development? How many can we create and what do we have to do to create them?

MR. NEARY: Instead of asking questions why do you not make a few suggestions?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can make his suggestions when he gets the floor.

MR. NEARY: You are leader of a party. What would you do if you were Premier?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I shall listen with a very great deal of interest to the hon. gentleman, and I would ask him if he does not want to listen to me at least to be quiet.

MR. NEARY: At least I will have the courage to make a few suggestions. What are your recommendations?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman insists upon trying to interrupt and to harass. All he is doing is showing his lack of knowledge. I do not expect courtesy from him, but I do expect, Sir, for him to adhere to the rules, which he knows full well and which Your Honour has reminded him of earlier in the debate, Sir.

MR. NEARY: You will never become Premier that way, boy. You have to take a more positive approach.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I had thought the present government was going to do this. When they took office, they held out this promise. Indeed if there was a central thought underlying their campaign, their approach to the electorate, their basis for soliciting peoples' votes and which people responded to, and they did respond. It was that they would provide this Province with intelligent and rational articulated, economic development plans, goals and objectives and strategy. I thought that is what they were going to do and many people felt that

Mr. Roberts.

the Smallwood Administration, of which I was a part, had fallen down, that we were no longer capable of doing that or no longer capable of meeting that need. They figured that the present Premier and a group of men who stood with him could do that. That contributed mightily to their victory in 1971 and their greater victory in 1972. Mr. Speaker, they came in and they then set up a series of task forces, which was not a bad idea. I believe there are eighteen or nineteen of them and for about a year or a year and a half we had public servants here and from the Government of Canada scurrying around. I know not what they produced. There may have been a shelf of books. There may have been just one or two books. We have seen, I believe, one report and that is the report of the Task Force on Forestry, which was tabled here in this House. But I thought it was an excellent idea to set up these task forces. And there was the Royal Commission on Labrador, a very sensible idea as well, the Royal Commission on Municipal Government, headed by Dr. Whelan, these two royal commissions have produced reports, and they have been made public. But we do not know anything more than that now. This government have been in office for four years, not four days or four months, but four years. The hon. Premier only has nineteen years to go before he equals the mark of the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). He has been in office for three general elections which is not bad, not bad. I believe there is only one other Premier in the history of this country who has survived three general elections, or won them if

MR. ROBERTS:

the hon. gentleman wishes, and that is the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). Nobody in all our long history as a province or as a country was in office, as I recall it, subject to correction, the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) knows infinitely more than I do.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Whiteway was elected four times, not in a row.

MR. ROBERTS: But not in a row, not in a continuous span of office. He was in and out of office. But, Sir, they have had time. I want to know how many of these reports have been acted upon, and what did they produce, what ideas, what suggestions, what has been done with them? Now I can outline some of the requirements that should go into what I consider to be an intelligent and a rational plan for this Province. I mentioned some of them.

I think we have got to reject the big industry syndrome if any still subscribe to it, and I am not sure any do. I said many years ago that I did not think we could build a Phur Valley in this Province, and I did not want to see us do that.

MR. NEARY: No, that was Ank Murphy said that.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, Sir, is persistent but incorrect.

MR. MURPHY: Make him correct it.

MR. ROBERTS: Well I agree the gentleman from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) needs correction, Sir, but that is a problem for the Minister of Justice, not a problem for the gentleman from LaPocle (Mr. Neary).

Mr. Speaker, I believe we should reject the big industry theory. There may well be some who hold it, but I find it hard to believe that there are very many after the difficulties that Come By Chance is going through. Whether Come By Chance goes bankrupt or not, it has gone through great and vast difficulties. After the Exco experience, after the difficulties we are still encountering at the linerboard mill in Stephenville, the cost in dollars is too high, the cost in human terms is too high, the cost

MR. ROBERTS:

in the environmental price is too high. So there is no single answer. There is no big breakthrough. There is no magic project that will solve all.

The present Premier, I think, would agree with what I am now saying but he did not always agree with that. He stood here in the House on February, 1973 and read a statement about the second refinery which would have been a grand thing if it had happened. But it was the big industry syndrome, the big breakthrough. I think we should reject that, Sir. It is not the foundation for the economic development of this Province. I think we need a lot of smaller projects. Many mickles making up that great big muckle. I think they have got to be resource based. I think they have got to be people oriented. We know what resources we have. We know how many jobs we need. I think we should bring them together. The government have had enough time. They have had four years now. I would hope during this debate they would produce some concrete and definite answers.

Again we hear it today from the Premier, oh, we are going to be developing the programmes, and we will be hearing them in the next few months. Well, Sir, they have had four years. We have heard all this before. I venture a modest wager that every word the Premier said today on Question Period in response to that question about tabling reports of visits to Europe and one place and another, every word and every thought had been enunciated in this House by the Premier not last year, although it was done last year, and not the year before, although he did it the year before, but even before that. Of course nothing has been produced, nothing but a great big heap of nothing.

Earlier, Mr. Speaker, I spoke of a loss of confidence in our people, or a decline in confidence that people feel in this Province, and this bothers me very much. I think it should bother everybody in this Province, everybody concerned with public life and everybody who lives here. I feel it is a very real problem and I suppose there

MR. ROBERTS:

are those who will say that - it is easy to say and some will do it I guess - that I should not mention it. Maybe it is like separatism in Labrador. There are some people who say we should not mention that, that there is a Separatist feeling in Labrador. It has not gone away. It is still there. Well I feel, Sir, that ignoring a problem is not the way to make it go away. Everybody in the Province is talking about this, not every day in every way but you do not have to stretch very deep to find among our people today - and I know the Premier has run into it, I know the people from Come By Chance expressed the fear yesterday - can we do it, where are we going, what can we achieve, what can we accomplish or is it hopeless? Should we bring Parzival Copes back and say, tell us how many must move and we will all move. Because that seems to be the alternative. I reject it. It is unthinkable. The Premier would reject it. The gentleman from Kilbride (Mr. Wells) would reject it. Every member of the House would reject it as unthinkable. But rejecting it

MR. ROBERTS: is not enough. We have got to provide the alternative. One of the big reasons why our Province, this feeling that is here today is obviously Come By Chance. Now I do not propose to debate it now. We will be debating it next week. I had a number of points I wanted to make and will make at that time -

MR. DOODY: Did they not bring you up one, Sir?

MR. ROBERTS: I do feel however that we should ask the principles to come before this House -

MR. SMALLWOOD: It does not matter.

MR. DOODY: I will get you one.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I have already read it but I have not got it.

MR. ROBERTS: Would the gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), and the gentleman from Harbour Main Bell Island (Mr. Doody), please be a little more quiet. The gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) has one of these voices that is piercing and can carry. It is a superb speaking voice.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is the Minister of Finance.

MR. ROBERTS: No, Sir, the Minister of Finance has many attributes but not that. But if the two of them, Sir, could carry on their jocular coalition comments outside the House or could do it in the House a little more quietly I would be grateful.

Mr. Speaker, I do feel we should ask the principles in the Come By Chance matter to come before the House. There is a precedent for it. Mr. Shaheen and his associates -

MR. SMALLWOOD: With the Minister of Mines and Energy doing the interrogating as before?

MR. CROSBIE: Hear! Hear!

MR. MURPHY: - may have a television show.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And televise it?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes. I believe that the public of this Province have a sufficient right and a sufficient interest to know and the Minister of Mines and Energy, who was such an inquisitorial cross-examiner at that time may well not find it quite as interesting this time, but I believe the people of this Province, Sir, should have that opportunity.

MR. ROBERTS: I find it interesting now that the gentleman from St. John's Centre would agree with me. It should be done.

MR. MURPHY: Perhaps that was spoken in the prophecies.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would hope, Sir, that the hon. gentleman is not a prophet without honour in his own land and I think these people should - I find it interesting, Sir, that those who stood, as did the gentleman from St. John's Centre in 1970, for truth and freedom, now Sir, adopt a different tack, the shoe is on the other foot now, Sir. At that stage the administration had the courage and the confidence to bring these men by invitation before this House.

MR. MURPHY: I would love it.

MR. ROBERTS: It would be very interesting to see if hon. gentlemen will do that now. The gentleman from Grand Bank (Mr. Hickman), that paragon of virtue, paragon of rectitude as he is, I hope will ask that these men will be invited before this House.

MR. MURPHY: The television.

MR. ROBERTS: Of course the television should be here. Maybe we could even get Mr. George McLean to produce it, just like he produced that great advertisement that came in The Toronto Globe and Mail the other day where he produced all the Tory television stuff.

MR. MURPHY: Who produced the original?

MR. ROBERTS: The original one?

MR. MURPHY: The original one, yes.

MR. ROBERTS: The original one was produced by the people of Newfoundland right here and I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from St. John's Centre when he speaks in Cabinet, if he does, and I assume he does, would stand up and say, "Boys, that is a good idea. Let us bring them in and let the truth out."

MR. NOLAN: They will never do it.

MR. ROBERTS: I fear that my friend from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) is right, they never will do it. But it is significant. It shows the belief and the courage of their cause that they will not

MR. ROBERTS: put it to the test. These men from the Shaheen interests, from the Ataka Company, from the ECGD or for perhaps better still from Klienwort's, the lead bankers in the syndicate, from Procon, who are accused of having built the Refinery that is so badly and shodily built that has caused the damages of \$180 million. I believe all of these should be asked. We cannot make them. We are not going to send the police to bring them here, although this House of Assembly once brought a Supreme Court Judge, as I am told, before the House, committed him for contempt until the Governor dissolved the House.

Why should not these men be brought before the House to state what they know in response to questions? They would be treated honourably and with decency and courtesy, at least by people on this side.

MR. NOLAN: Better than they were before.

CAPT. WINSOR: Better than they were the last time.

MR. ROBERTS: Better than they were the last time said my friends from Fogo (Capt. Winsor) and from Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) and I agree. But Mr. Speaker, and it should be on the television. Let the people of this Province see. I could put forth as one specific reason, there are some very severe and serious conflicts in statements have been made about the Come By Chance thing. There have been statements made by Mr. Shaheen, or his spokesman, that the British Government through the ECGD would have agreed to share their rights under the first mortgage. The ECGD people have been quoted as denying those statements and saying that that was not a correct statement.

Well, Sir, one or the other is correct. I might have a belief as to which is correct, but I have no knowledge. I would like to know whether the Ataka

MR. ROBERTS:

Company, said they were willing to take a third mortgage and if so under what conditions. I would like to hear how they managed to advance several hundred millions, however many it was, as unsecured creditors. I would like to know the truth of the situation about the local creditors. Ah! It is only \$3 millions or \$4 millions compared to \$300 or \$400 millions. But I understand there are a number of local firms that will be in serious financial difficulties if they are given a prorated share of one or two per cent.

MR. WELLS: The hon. gentleman should go down and see in the court.

MR. ROBERTS: I may sit in court or I - Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) may very well be in court himself. I may be down as a spectator in the court. But, Sir, I have no right to appear in that court to ask a question but I have a right to appear in this House to ask a question. That is what concerns me. My concern, Sir, is not the private interest of the Atala Company. That is what will be decided in that court, and the private interests of the, legitimate of all of them, of the creditors secured and unsecured - they have their own lawyers and they can take their rights under law. I am concerned with Newfoundland and Labrador in the public interest and this is the place to present it, not in the Supreme Court. The petition under the Bankruptcy Act, Mr. Speaker, a petition under the Bankruptcy Act is not the place for this kind of discussion. I do not propose to enter into it in detail at this time.

MR. WELLS: If the hon. gentleman is raising this - if I may be permitted, Mr. Speaker, - is the hon. gentleman suggesting that in this business which has now occurred and which is before the courts and which the hon. gentleman is talking about, that there has been some improper dealing or behaviour on the part of this government? Is that the suggestion?

MR. ROBERTS: No, Mr. Speaker, I - Mr. Speaker, I -

MR. WELLS: Let us be clear. Is that the suggestion?

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman obviously feels insinuations there.

MR. WELLS: No, no.

MR. ROBERTS: I am not suggesting it nor I am insinuating it nor do I believe it.

MR. WELLS: Well, thank you.

MR. ROBERTS: Nor also do I believe the hon. gentleman has been guilty of any improper or immoral offences. I could go on denying things that do not exist. But if the hon. gentleman has that thought in his mind, I will tell him that I did not put it there. He may have got it from something which I said.

MR. WELLS: What are the questions that you were asking?

MR. ROBERTS: I have outlined some of the arguments. I have said simply Mr. Speaker - I have cited three areas where there are statements that have been made openly and publicly, not by me, but by representatives of Mr. Shaheen on one side, or his corporate interests, and on the other side other parties which are in diametrically conflicting attitudes. Only one can be correct.

MR. WELLS: That is right.

MR. ROBERTS: Let me say the three again. One is Shaheen interests maintain that the local creditors would have been paid in full as part of any settlement under a third mortgage.

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order. Proceed.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, everybody is just as concerned as the hon. Leader of the Opposition is with respect to the matter. But the hon. Leader of the Opposition would appear to me, and this is a very important principle, Mr. Speaker, is talking about a matter that is now before the courts where the rights are going to be adjudicated. The matter is going to be heard as early as Monday and Tuesday of next week and I think it is a - well, it is a principle in Beauchesne and it is a very important principle to be observed despite the concern that all of us may have with respect to it. I refer Your Honour to Beauchesne, page 147, where it relates to oral questions there that you may not ask a question which might prejudice a pending trial in a court of law. I am quite sure the rules of debate also prevent references to matters that are before the court. I do not think that the hon. gentleman wishes to do it. But I think it is a very important

MR. MARSHALL:

principle to be maintained. I do think that he is traversing over a matter which is very shortly to come before the Supreme Court.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, if I might, Mr. Speaker. I agree with the hon. gentleman on the principle that he stated. Indeed, it is not just for questions. There are references in Beauchesne to the fact that matters sub-judice should not be discussed in the House. I do not propose to enter into it. If I have strayed over the line I ask Your Honour to so tell me and I shall attempt to rephrase. But I am making what I consider to be a valid point, not connected to the rights of any parties in any bankruptcy petition or anything arising out of a bankruptcy petition. I am attempting to make a valid point of what I believe to be a very important matter and that is the fate of this entire venture in the context of the development of this Province. But if I have trespassed on what I agree is not only a principle, but a validly and vitally important one, not for us to fight out court cases here, then I would ask Your Honour so to direct me and I shall attempt to rephrase my remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If I may on that point of order, that same point of order. Am I correct in thinking that the only thing that is coming before our Supreme Court in this matter of Come By Chance is the petition that they shall be declared insolvent, nothing else?

MR. ROBERTS: By Ataka.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: That is the only -

MR. SMALLWOOD: That Ataka are petitioning to have them declared insolvent. That is all that is going to come before the court. All these other matters that are being raised by the Leader of the Opposition have nothing to do with that. It would be highly improper for this House to deal with matters that are to come for adjudication in the Supreme Court. But the matters that are being discussed are not to come before the Court. At least there is no indication that they are.

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of

MR. SPEAKER:

order which has been raised, does any other hon. gentleman wish to make a submission?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, we cannot presume what is coming before the Supreme Court. I heard the hon. gentleman refer to Ataka, refer to various creditors' rights. There is going to be more than just Ataka involved in this. There are going to be other creditors' rights. The government, I think, has already indicated that this matter is going to be discussed after the time, and I just think it is trespassing. It would appear that some of the remarks appear to be approaching towards trespassing into a very sensitive area which is very imminent to us right now, and it is going to come up on Monday. I know the Leader of the Opposition does not intend to do it, but I think it is a matter that has to be of concern to the House, and I do not think that one should be involved, you know, going into that area in matter of great importance such as this at this present time, particularly when we all know we are going to get the opportunity to debate it fully.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Full debate?

MR. MARSHALL: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, if I may respond to the points just raised by the gentleman from St. John's East: It is true that the government have said that they are going to bring on a debate, and I do not doubt that in fact they will cause such a debate to be brought on. I am not anticipating a debate. If I were, I would go on for an hour or so on the Come By Chance thing. But nothing that I have said, I would venture, would affect the realm of debate but would be relevant to the points I would wish to make in the debate, because I would take an entirely - not a different tack - but an entirely different approach to the same situation given a motion under debate. I do not think I have trespassed on the sub-judice principle. The hon. gentleman from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) has had infinitely more experience before the courts of

Mr. Roberts.

the Province than have I, because I have never practised law, and he has for twenty years, I suppose, close on twenty years, with a modicum of success in other than petitions of the Elections Act. His record there has been mixed. As I say if Your Honour feels I have trespassed on a sub-judice principle, I will gladly attempt to rephrase my remarks. I have no desire to trespass on that, because I think it is a very, very important and vital principle.

MR. SPEAKER On the basic principle raised by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) there is no doubt, and indeed there has been no difference of opinion stated by any hon. member, as to the principle that anything which is sub-judice should not and may not be debated in this Chamber. That is agreed to by everybody and that is quite clear. I am not prepared to rule that the Leader of the Opposition has been to this point out of order in commenting specifically upon a matter which is sub-judice. As I understand it, certainly if one were to define the matters which are sub-judice would be whether or not an actual state of bankruptcy or insolvency exists, and perhaps also the activity of the Receiver appointed to this date and matters directly related to those. Any discussion on those matters or matters directly related to those would certainly be improper, and I think the best way of handling it at this moment would be to caution all hon. gentleman that there are certain matters with respect to Come By Chance which are sub-judice. There are others which clearly are not. And I would ask hon. members to, if necessary, give the benefit of the doubt in avoiding certain statements, in giving a slightly wide berth rather than a narrow berth where there is a question of possibility.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I shall endeavour to follow your ruling. It is now 5:55 p.m., Sir, and the government undertook earlier to deal with the motion in respect of which I asked unanimous consent. Let us call it the Greenpeace motion. I am not going to be able

Mr. Roberts.

to conclude my remarks this day obviously. Perhaps I could just take a minute to sum up and then I will adjourn the debate, if it is order, and the Government House Leader or the Premier or whoever is to speak can deal with this other matter whatever is to be done.

Let me say simply,

MR. ROBERTS:

Mr. Speaker, that I have moved an amendment which I believe to be a very important and worthwhile one because I believe that what we need now in this Province is a reaffirmation of our belief that we have a future which is a great one and a glorious one. I ask the government to bring in a statement of the future which they see and the goals they want us to try to achieve and how they propose to help this Province and its people to achieve those goals.

I have also said that I do not think that the Rhur Valley syndrome, a phrase whose authorship is apparently in some dispute, or the big industry thought is the answer to our problems. I have said that I believe and my colleagues believe that we must have an intelligent and a planned, rational approach to our economic development, an approach which we have not seen as yet from the present government, an approach which I hope we will see in the next few months, but an approach which must be adopted because I believe it is the only approach that will ensure that we can and do, in fact, develop this Province.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, with the consent of gentlemen opposite I shall adjourn the debate and I will return to my remarks whenever the Throne Speech debate is called again. I move the adjournment of the debate, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, earlier in the afternoon's proceedings the hon. the Leader of the Opposition asked the unanimous consent of the House to introduce a motion which was read at that time. I have not had an opportunity to speak to him privately about the motion but we have examined it. Certainly in so far as the Greenpeace thing is concerned and so far as the seal fishery is concerned, obviously this government and I suppose every member in the House believes that the seal fishery should be prosecuted in its normal fashion without interference or hindrance.

The only objection that we would take - and it is perhaps a

MR. WELLS:

technical one more than anything else - is the final paragraph in which the Leader of the Opposition urges the strongest possible terms that the Minister of Justice for the Province take the necessary and proper steps to ensure that the rights of those lawfully engaged in the seal hunt are fully protected. This is essentially a federal matter and what they propose to do will take place in an area of federal jurisdiction. We would certainly be able to support this unanimously and without debate, Mr. Speaker, if that last paragraph were to be amended to read, "this House urges the appropriate authorities"- and these of course may be federal or provincial as the case may be -"to take the necessary and proper steps to ensure that the rights of those lawfully engaged in the seal hunt are fully protected."

If that is agreeable, certainly our position on the right of those engaged in the seal fishery is to do it without hindrance. There is just no question about that, and I am sure every Newfoundlander and every member of this House would take that position. So that if that is agreeable, and that in matters of jurisdiction it can fall where it happens to fall whatever incident arises, I think that is the way it should be. If that is agreeable, then we would ask that the resolution be joint and unanimous on the part of every member of the House without debate which is unnecessary in a thing like this and let it go forth in that fashion, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. gentleman. I will consent to the amendment in the interests of having the matter adopted. I do want to say though, Mr. Speaker, that first of all, the third paragraph deals with the Government of Canada who would be the other authority in the place, and I would say as well that the reason why I asked that the Minister of Justice undertake his authority you could say the steps within his jurisdiction, because these people

MR. ROBERTS:

will be on land. They plan to stay in the largest community in my district at St. Anthony, and I am led to believe there are some actions which might very well be within the responsibility of the Minister of Justice in his responsibility as responsible for the administration of the criminal code of Canada and, you know, the various statutes of the Province.

If I were talking to the gentleman privately I would pursue the point but in the interests of having the motion adopted, and in view of the fact that this is a very minor, you know, it is a minor part of the sense of the motion, I will consent to the amendment. I read, "and further this House urges in the strongest possible terms that the appropriate authorities take the necessary steps."

MR. WELLS: "Urges the appropriate authorities to take the necessary and proper steps to ensure that the rights of those lawfully engaged in the seal hunt are fully protected," the way I have it.

MR. SPEAKER: I must now ask whether the hon. gentleman has the unanimous consent of the House for this motion. Agreed. Is the House ready for the question.

Those in favour "Aye". Contrary, "Nay". Motion carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn until Monday at three o'clock.

On motion that the House at its rising adjourned until Monday, March 8 at three of the clock.

I N D E X

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

tabled

MARCH 5, 1976

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 269 How many pigs were farrowed in the Province in each of the financial years 1970-75; how many were brought into the Province, and from where?

Answer

<u>Fiscal year</u>	<u>No. of sows</u>	<u>Total born</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Total weaned</u>	<u>Average</u>
1970-71	1109	11,040	10.0	9,400	8.5
1971-72	1531	16,061	10.5	13,962	9.1
1972-73	1648	17,671	10.7	14,794	9.0
1973-74	1820	19,057	10.5	15,947	8.8
1974-75	1960	20,141	10.3	17,277	8.8
Total	8068	83,970	10.4	71,380	8.8

Note: These figures do not include farrowing at the Central Swine Breeding Station which for the same period were:

	<u>4844</u>	<u>46,754</u>	<u>9.7</u>	<u>38,548</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Total pigs	12912	130,724	10.1	109,828	8.5

MAR 5 8 1976

Importation of Swine into Newfoundland

<u>Year</u>	<u>Port of Entry</u>		<u>Total Pigs</u>	<u>Origin</u>
	<u>St. John's</u>	<u>Port aux Basques</u>		
1970	3022	2000 Estimate	5022	N.S. & P.E.
1971	3405	2199	5604	N.S. & P.E.
1972	1405	953	2358	N.S. & P.E.
1973	2146	822	2968	P.E.I.
1974	2964	945	3909	P.E.I.
1975	1114	1513	2627	P.E.I.

1975 figures cover period July 1 - December 8.

Period 1970-72 - majority of pigs originated in Prince Edward Island, perhaps a small number from Nova Scotia, but no breakdown available.

The figure of 2000 pigs for 1970 is a questimate as no figures are available.

Figures shown for the period 1973-75 represent the number of pigs for which import permits were issued by the Animal Health Division.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 288 The numbers of forest fires, areas burned, estimated cords of wood destroyed, dollar value of same, in each of the financial years 1970-75.

Answer	Year	Number of Fires	Area Burned (Acres)	Wood Destroyed (Cords)	\$ Value
	1970-71	194	22,561	16,000	24,000
	1971-72	142	6,103	7,500	10,300
	1972-73	247	106,949	70,000	115,000
	1973-74	102	21,695	500	1,000
	1974-75	246	131,084	1,200	3,600
	1975-76	253	431,000	153,000	459,000

Sawmilling employs approximately seven hundred people on a full time basis. In addition, hundreds more are provided part time employment with the industry, since most of the mills in the Province are part time operations.

It is difficult to place a capital value on our sawmills. Investment ranges from \$1,000.00 for some push-bench types to well over a million for the one or more modern designs recently constructed.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 289 The numbers of sawmills, the volume and value of the lumber produced, number of persons employed, capital value of the mills, in each of the financial years 1960-75.

Answer

<u>Year</u>	<u>Production (Board Feet)</u>	<u>No. of Mills</u>	<u>Value of Production</u>	<u>Capital Value of Mills</u>
1960	36,195,929	1353	\$5,067,430	
1961	38,521,077	1352		
1962	32,715,989	1301		
1963	39,761,057	1324		
1964	32,040,247	1217		
1965	26,240,357	1128		
1966	26,293,114	1090		
1967	28,716,658	1041		
1968	25,122,350	1027		
1969	27,509,125	1130		
1970	34,693,623	1010		
1971	31,214,936	1006		
1972	30,615,000	1085		
1973	49,143,626	1310	9,337,288	
1974	43,111,761	1387	8,191,234	\$10,390,000 (approx.)

.../2

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 295 How many purebred boars were distributed by the Government, what was their cost, what price was charged the recipients, in each financial year 1970-75?

Answer

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Purebred boars</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
1970-71	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
1971-72	1	\$85.00	\$85.00
Total 1970-75	2		\$170.00

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Cross Bred Boars</u> <u>Line 3 Boars</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
1970-71	8	\$ 680.00
1971-72	18	1,530.00
1972-73	32	2,720.00
1973-74	38	4,150.00
1974-75	34	4,250.00
Total	130	\$13,330.00

Note - Purebred boars are not used in production herds, and are kept solely at the Central Swine Breeding Station for the production of crossbred gilts (York x Landrace) which are sold to swine producers under the S.P.F. program. Line 3 boars are sold to producers for mating to crossbred gilts. This Line 3 boar is made up of Landrace, Lacombe, Hampshire, etc. and has been developed specifically for this program.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood
directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question #292 What is the number of pigs farrowed and weaned
 at the Government breeding station near
 Windsor Lake in each of the financial years
 1960-75?

Answer

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>No. of farrowings</u>	<u>No. born</u>	<u>No. weaned</u>
1970-71	1212	11,802	9,278
1971-72	960	9,383	7,797
1972-73	781	7,389	6,106
1973-74	1040	9,858	8,313
1974-75	851	8,322	7,054
Total for period 1970-75	4844	46,754	33,548

Average per litter born 1970-75 - 9.7 pigs

Average per litter weaned 1970-75 - 8.0 pigs

Note - The year 1972-73 had lower farrowings than other years
because of heavy culling to improve the nucleus of the herd.
1974-75 farrowings were affected by the loss by fire of a sow
building which forced a reduction in herd size from approximately
500 producing sows to 375 producing sows.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question #297 How many brood sows or gilts and at what total price were sold from the Government's hog-breeding farm in the financial years 1970-75?

Answer

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Brood Sows</u>	<u>Gilts</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
1970-71	135	7	\$12,990.00
1971-72	89	123	16,910.00
1972-73	22	372	26,510.00
1973-74	--	465	41,080.00
1974-75	7	472	48,390.00
Totals	253 sows	1439 gilts	\$145,880.00

Note - Beginning in 1971-72 the program had expanded to a point where it was impossible for the facilities at the Swine Breeding Station to service swine producers with bred sows and a change was made to provide gilts at 6 months of age instead. This included the replacement of sows in existing herds plus new starts. The replacement rate of breeding females should be approximately 30% per year.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood
directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question #296 How many weanlings, and at what total price, were
sold from the Government's hog-breeding farm
in each of the financial years 1970-75.

Answer

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Number of Weanlings sold</u>	<u>Total Price</u>
1970-71	7401	\$126,252.00
1971-72	7369	124,636.00
1972-73	4027	68,459.00
1973-74	5379	125,225.00
1974-75	5263	132,440.00
	<hr/> 29,439 weanlings	<hr/> \$577,012.00

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to
the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 303 What is the present status of the bronze
borer infestation.

Answer The Bronze Birch Borer has never been recorded
as an important forest pest in Newfoundland
and as far as is known it has caused no significant
amount of damage.

1976

Answer to question asked by Honourable Mr. Smallwood directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 294 Please give an account of the quality standards reached in the pork producing industry in recent years.

Answer The selection program at the Central Swine Breeding Station since its inception in 1962, is designed to provide a continual improvement in the genetic material provided producers under the program.

The most desirable traits are considered and developed to include:

- (1) Average daily gain
- (2) Feed efficiency
- (3) Average backfat thickness

The genetic base is broadened and improved continually by means of:

- (a) Caesarean operations
- (b) Artificial Insemination

Due to the fact that we must maintain the health status of Minimal Disease stock both at the Central Swine Breeding Station and producers in the field, no other methods of improvement can be considered.

Under the circumstances therefore, a continual improvement of quality standards must be forthcoming.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 315 To table a copy of the letter of the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent as Prime Minister of Canada to the Premier of Newfoundland ceding the right to Newfoundland to cut pulpwood in Terra Nova National Park for a new papermill.

Answer I am unable to accede to this request since despite a diligent search of the Government files my officials are unable to find any letter from the Right Honourable Louis St. Laurent as Prime Minister of Canada to the Premier of Newfoundland ceding the right to Newfoundland to cut pulpwood in Terra Nova National Park for a new paper mill.

MAR 5 1976

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 313 What is the nature of permits given for the export of Christmas trees; have the Government a policy of helping persons wishing to engage in this trade.

Answer

Permits to export Christmas trees are granted under authority of Section 84(1) of the Crown Lands Act, Chapter 71 of the RSN 1970. This year two such permits have been issued:

- 1) Vinland Export Company Limited. A permit to export 20,000 trees was granted, but 8,000 trees were exported.
- 2) Cameron - Harvey Associates. A permit for 2,000 trees, but no export was carried out.

The Department of Forestry and Agriculture believes there is a potential "small industry" for the Province based upon "cultivated wild trees" and is prepared to assist companies to get established in this business.

While no clear policy has been established by Government, we did assist Vinland Export Company Limited by cutting Christmas trees in an area designated for thinning and selling them to the Company for the estimated cost of production.

Answer to question asked by J.R. Smallwood, directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

Question No. 318 What is the present status of the Woolly Aphid infestation.

Answer In 1970 it was estimated by the Canadian Forestry Service of Environment Canada that the total area of distribution of the Balsam Woolly Aphid in Newfoundland was about 6,000 square miles. Since that time there have been no major changes in the size of the outbreak. However, because of the weakening effect this insect had on trees in many areas, the present infestation of spruce budworm is expected to cause significant tree mortality in such areas. For this reason, the Newfoundland Forest Service has initiated a salvage program to reduce volume losses as much as possible.

*not in 5/7/6
1971*

Answer to question asked by Mr. Neary directed to the Honourable the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture.

- Question No. 695
- (1) When was the position of General Manager and/or Secretary to the Board of Newfoundland Farm Products filled:
 - (2) Are these positions established Civil Service posts?
 - (3) Did the Department advertise either inside the Public Service or outside before these positions were filled? If so, would the Minister table copies of any ads or notices in connection with the filling of either one of these posts.

Answer

- (1) General Manager appointed on contractual basis under Cabinet Directive C 91-'63.
- (2) No
- (3) No

5/76
[Signature]

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Mr. Simmons	2412
Mr. Woodrow	2414
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Mr. Nolan	2416
Mr. Neary	2417
Capt. Winsor presented a petition asking for construction of a new elementary school at Gander Bay.	2418
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Mr. Murphy tabled regulations pertaining to the insurers of automobiles.	2430
Mr. Rousseau tabled regulations in respect to the Newfoundland Egg Marketing Amendment Scheme, the Natural Products Marketing Designation Of Inspectors Amendment Order, 1975; and the Natural Products Marketing Newfoundland Miscellaneous Provisions Amendment Regulations, 1975.	2431

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Mr. Hickman also gave notice that he would ask leave to introduce a bill, "An Act To Amend The Newfoundland And Labrador Amateur Sports Federation Act, 1972." (Bill No. 23), and a Bill, "An Act Further To Amend The Quieting Of Titles Act." (Bill No. 20).	2432
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Mr. Brett gave notice that he would introduce Bill No. 17, "An Act Further To Amend The Child Welfare Act, 1972."	2434
Mr. Collins gave notice that he would introduce Bill No. 18, "An Act To Amend The Medical Act," and Bill No. 22, "An Act To Amend The Pharmaceutical Act."	2434
Mr. Rousseau gave notice that he would introduce Bill No. 21, "An Act To Amend The Crown Lands Act," and Bill No. 19, "An Act To Amend The Development Areas (Lands) Act."	2434
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