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VERBATIM REPORT

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SPEAKER, THE HONOURABLE GERALD RYAN OTTENHEIMER

The House met at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members that we have in the gallery this afternoon a number of students from the Adult Education Programme of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, attending classes in St. John's along with three of their teaching staff, Mrs. Suvak, Mrs. Laurie and Miss Hickey. And I know all hon. members join with me in welcoming these students and their teachers to the House of Assembly in expressing the hope that their visit will be an interesting and informative one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, I have been getting a number of calls recently on this year's anticipated forest fire season. So I had a briefing with the officials in the department. I thought it might be an idea at this point in time to bring the House and I hope the people up-to-date on just what we are doing and what our intentions are in respect to forest fire fighting this Summer. I might mention this morning, Mr. Speaker - and I have some of the facts by the way in case the press would like to report it which we would appreciate, any free publicity we can get - this morning May 13 I have the report of six fires on my desk that are, of course, out. One at 12:40 at Bay Bulls today which is out and one at the three mile bridge in Markland Road reported at 12:56, a small fire, and it is out now, one at Placentia Junction at 3:00 P.M. a small fire and that is out now. There was one reported at 3:00 P.M. yesterday in Victoria Carbonear. There was no report on the size of the fire. It was out yesterday afternoon. One is reported three miles west of Island Pond Ridge on the Trans Canada at 4:20, and it was reported out at 7:45. There was one reported at English Harbour East at 5:35 and it was

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reported out at 11:00 P.M. last night. We had water bombers down there. It burned seven and one-quarter acres of grass and shrub. Before I give the details of what we are doing - I gave it in the House before - I would just like to point out to hon. members and to the people of the Province some of the figures that we have had for the last five years, and that is in the report I have. In 1971 we had 142 fires. In 1972 we had 216. In 1973 we had 102. In 1974 we had 282 fires that burned 131,000 acres of forest resources of the Province, and last year, which was probably the worst year by everybody's admission since 1961, we had 253 fires and it burned 431,000 acres of timber land in the Province, And a total cost for fire protection of some \$3.5 million.

I have stated in some of the interviews that I have had in the press and publicly or any other opportunity I have had, that this Province cannot keep this level of fire infestation in the Province and retain the very valuable resource of timber that it has. If this goes on year after year, after year, it will not be too long before we will not have to worry about the allocation of timber resources because we will have very little of it. I know there are problems, and all we can do is ask people to take extreme caution.

I would like to say now, Mr. Speaker, that the following forest fire protection facilities of the forestry branch are now operational or in some Northern areas in the process of being made operational. This year in the Eastern region each unit consists of three men. At Paddy's Pond we will have two units. At Whitbourne we will have two units, one unit at Salmonier and Cape Broyle, two at Clarendville, one in Southern Bay, Terra Nova and Winterland. In the central region, in Gambo we will have one unit, At Gander we will have two units. At Lewisporte we will have one, Botwood one, Badger two, Sprindale two and Bay d'Espoir one. In Western we will have one at Sop's Arm,

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one at Roddickton, one at Port Saunders, one at Bonne Bay, two at Pynas Brook, which is becoming our centre over on the West Coast and two at St. George's. So for the total for the Island we have twenty-nine units with eighty-seven men operational in continuous forest fire protection procedures. Each unit consists of one ton tank truck with two high pressure fire pumps, 5,000 feet of forestry hose and sufficient hand tools to equip up to twenty-five men. Large stocks of fire suppression equipment are kept in readiness at Gander and are available at short notice to be moved anywhere in the Province.

In the Labrador region, Mr. Speaker, we will have fourteen men at Goose Bay, three at Cartwright and three in Labrador City. Sufficient equipment is available at Cartwright or Labrador City for a routine operation. Large stocks are kept in readiness at Goose Bay to be moved whenever required. We have five water bombers and they will be available for forest fire suppression. The allocation will be one at St. John's, two at Gander this year. Instead of two at St. John's and one at Gander as we had last year we now have two at Gander and one at St. John's, because Gander, of course, serves a much larger area in the central part of the Province, one at Deer Lake and one at Goose Bay. The bombers are currently operational at St. John's and Gander, and will be based at Deer Lake in Goose Bay when required. We have one presently on loan to the Nova Scotia government which we do each and which is recallable at a moment's notice. And as soon as the advice is there that we should call it back, and this may happen at any time now, we will certainly call that water bomber back. With the loan to Nova Scotia, we do that with Quebec. It is back the middle of June anyway. But we can call it back at a moment's notice. It is no cost to this government by the way, Mr. Speaker, because all the operational costs and lodgings and transportation is paid by the government. We do have

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a system of co-operatinn with the other governments across the country in the event of forest fires. We have seven helicopters available through air services in the Department of Transportation and Communications. Top priority, of course, for these helicopters will be given to forest fire control operations. And the helicopters will be based as follows: St. John's one, Gander two, one at Deer Lake, one at St. Alban's, two at Goose Bay. And a float equipped otter aircraft will be based at Goose Bay for use in the forest fire detection and suppression as well. --

As well this morning or effective yesterday we might have had one small operation still in progress this morning, but we have cancelled the blueberry control burning because of the fires of today. We will resume, of course, in the Fall when the forest fire hazard diminishes. In respect to the forest fire hazard index we have not introduced that yet. We hope to introduce it sometime next week, but I am told by officials that we need a very heavy rainfall, because we have to see what the trees are like at that point in time, and we will establish the index henceforth from that point.

Mr. Rousseau:

The index will be established hopefully **sometime next week**, but right after a heavy rainfall. We understand there is some rain on the West Coast today and it is headed towards Central Newfoundland, if we get it out here and it is a heavy enough rainfall maybe we will be able to establish a forest fire index later this week or earlier next week.

Each region, Mr. Speaker, the East, Central, West and Labrador **regions in an autonomous region in respect to the forest fire operations.**

It has its own dispatcher and its own radio network within the region, and there is always somebody on standby there twenty-four hours a day. The headquarters for the liaison building is Building 810 here in Pleasantville. We have two men on from nine to nine each day, seven days a week and also people on standby and for the press, for other people we will be sometime next week giving out a number of phone numbers with the rotation so that somebody will always be able to get a hold to somebody to find out just what the situation is in respect to a forest fire or to report a forest fire, so those numbers will be made public. We have a liaison man primarily who **handles calls from the press or people who call in on a forest fire information situation.**

MR. SMALLWOOD: There are no calls now are there?

MR. ROUSSEAU: No, no.

But we also have - we are starting this year, and we are going to be able to establish in Eastern and Central Newfoundland a brand new communications network that will be very helpful. **Next year it will go into Western Newfoundland and in Labrador**, and we will be able to contract each other throughout the whole Province in respect to forest fire fighting. We also have established, as we have in the past, a senior management committee for advice to the minister as an Emergency Fire Committee.

Mr. Speaker, although I nor people in the department are experts we expect a normal season **of forest fires at this point in time.** Of course rain will always help, **But if we have a very dry May and June or July, of course, that hope that we have may not come true, but**

Mr. Rousseau:

we do at this point in time expect a normal season. And I can only reiterate to the people of the Province as I have reiterated in this House on a number of occasions that our timber resources are very important to the Province, and certainly one would not want to see the same thing happen to them as happened to our fishery. One of the biggest dangers to our timber resources, of course, is forest fire. And I can only ask that all people who travel in the woods this Summer display extreme caution with this very valuable resource and we will be talking about that later. So that is the situation in respect our outlook this year and what we are going to be doing in respect to the forest fire protection for the Province.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

HON. J. C. CROSEIE: I would like to present for tabling in the House the Annual Report of Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro for the year ended December 31, 1975. It also contains the financial statements for the year and other information that might be of interest to the hon. gentlemen, such as my picture. Autographed copies can be provided upon request.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile followed by the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. S. A. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if the new agreement between the government and Fishery Products Limited signed in March is an indication of the government's intention to nationalize all fish plants that owe substantial amounts of money to the government in the way of loans or guarantees?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

HON. W. C. DOODY: The answer is, no, Your Honour. There is no such intention of government to nationalize fish plants in the Province.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary question, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary?

MR. NEARY: Would the minister indicate to the House if the 300,000 preferred shares that were to be created and issued in the name of the Newfoundland Government, has that part of the agreement been lived up to yet?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: To my knowledge all of the covenants of the agreement are being satisfied, Your Honour. If there is anything to the contrary I will certainly find out for the hon. gentleman.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Perhaps for the benefit of the members who are not familiar with this agreement, would the minister give the House some details as to what led up to the government having to take such drastic steps with Fishery Products, in almost taking control of the company? What led up to this, would the minister tell the House?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Your Honour, I do not know if that question is in order or not, I guess it is. In any event, Sir, I am not going to quarrel with that. If there is some particular aspect of any particular agreement or set of circumstances that the hon. member wishes some information on I will be only too happy to arrange to get it for him. I have no intention of getting into a lengthy dissertation on the agreement with Fishery Products and the government at the present time.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister tell the House the names of the government representatives on the Management Committee of Fishery Products Limited under the new agreement negotiated with that company? Who are the representatives of the government?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: As I understand it, if my memory serves me correctly, the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Deputy Minister of Fisheries.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow one more further supplementary, and then I will have to ask to give the floor to some other hon. gentleman.

MR. NEARY: Can the minister assure the House that Fishery Products Limited is living up to the part of the agreement concerning insurance of property and the crews of trawlers, that they will be covered under I think it is called the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act on account of loss of life or injury, has that part of the agreement been lived up to, could the minister tell the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I have no information to the contrary, Your Honour. I will certainly look into it if the hon. member wishes me to. Obviously he must have some cause for concern in that area, and I will certainly check it out.

MR. NEARY: No, when he first knew about the agreement

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. LUSH: I have a question for the Minister of Education with respect to the department's policy respecting the free textbook policy for students Grade IV to VIII, particularly as it relates to the payment for wilfully destroyed books. Teachers and principals are wondering what constitutes a wilfully destroyed book. They are wondering what happens if a book is lost or if a book is stolen. They do not know who is supposed to collect the money, they do not know to whom they are supposed to send the money when it is collected, whether it is the school board or whether indeed the school gets it. The whole thing seems to be vague to principals and teachers. So the question to the minister is what does the minister intend to do to improve upon this rather vague and confusing policy with respect to the free textbook policy?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

HON. W. HOUSE: This is a very detailed question and obviously I do not have the answer, I will take it as notice and try and get the information for the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. I. STRACHAN: I have a question for the Minister of Industrial Development. There was great concern in Labrador South concerning the formation of the Labrador Coastal Development Corporation, and there has been quite a number of rumours about its possible impending formation later this year. I wonder if the minister would like to bring us up to date with the possibility of the formation of this corporation soon?

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

HON. J. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure I can bring him up to date on the precise answer to his question, but there will be some announcement relative to that particular thing in the next week.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I have a question, Sir, for the Minister without Portfolio, the Government House Leader. In view of the fact that the minister has now had representation from The Knight's of Columbus, The Star of the Sea, several groups associated with the National Historic Association in connection with the new flag, would the minister now indicate if the minister has consulted with his colleagues as he promised the House he would do a couple of days ago to have the debate postponed or will the Minister of Tourism's statements supercede the minister's that the debate was going ahead immaterial of the representation of these groups?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

HON. R. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, the representations that have been received have been replied to. The debate, of course, on the flag has not been called yet, and there is time yet for proper representations to be made by all of these groups. I replied to their letter pointing out that the government intended to bring the flag issue and the Act on for debate this year, but that is not immediate, and I asked them to make whatever representations they had to the Minister of Tourism either in writing or by coming to see him, and I have spoken to the Minister of Tourism and he is ready to receive any representations made.

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

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Sir, is the minister aware of the fact that there are people in the Province who live in an incorporated community and who work in another incorporated community but who pay taxes in yet a third incorporated community and not necessarily in the incorporated community in which they work or in which they live? And is this possible under the Local Government Act?

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

HON. A. B. PECKFORD: I would like for the hon. member to repeat the question if he would.

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, when I learned of it I was quite amazed - is the minister aware of the fact that a person who lives in an incorporated community (a); works in an incorporated community (b) -

Mr. F. Rowe:

can elect to pay taxes in an incorporated area (c) where he neither works nor lives.

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

MR. PECKFORD: The question is very difficult to answer, if he has property in that community (c) I think he is liable for some taxation from the municipality, but then the question is also what is he paying in (a) and (b). I cannot give you a direct answer to it.

MR. ROWE: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, if I could just have the floor for a second. To answer the question - the answer to the question is "No".

MR. ROWE: What is , no? A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. member for Bay de Verde.

MR. ROWE: The minister is not aware of the fact, is that what the minister is saying no to?

MR. PECKFORD: Yes. To my knowledge, rather.

MR. ROWE: Would the minister undertake to check this matter out, Mr. Speaker, and find out if a person is paying taxes in say that third community (c) whether he is liable to pay a tax in either the community which he resides or the one in which he works under the Act?

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to get the information in twenty-four hours and have it for the hon. member tomorrow afternoon.

MR. ROWE: I thank the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. W. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. What progress is being made or has been made with regards to changing the Act whereby a person who works in an incorporated area but lives in a non-incorporated area where there is garbage collection? Right now such a person is not covered, he is forced to pay in the incorporated area. Is there anything being done to change that Act?

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

MR. PICTFORD: That has been under review for a couple of years, and we will be discussing it later as legislation comes before this House in this session. There are pros and cons on both sides of that issue. And I will be proposing the position of the department and government later on in this session.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile followed by the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Provincial Affairs and the Environment, Sir, enlighten the House and the public, the people of the Goulds area, the rights of the new proposed dump for the Goulds areas on the Shoal Bay Road, I believe it is to be located. What is right? Has it been approved? Has the minister's department approved it? Is it to be a city dump or just a dump for the local residents in that area? Who has purchased the land? Is it the government or the Town Council in the Goulds? Can the minister give us some information on this matter?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and the Environment.

HON. A. J. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, the first intimation I had where there was any objection to it was on the news at dinner hour, and I think the hon. member this morning informed me about it. But as far as I am aware it is a regional waste disposal site. We do not have dumps any more. And it replaces one that presently exists at Bay Bulls - which to my knowledge is being phased out at the end of July - and will serve the area of Petty Harbour, Goulds, Bay Bulls and Witless Bay, and it is on a road I think called the Shoal Bay Road some mile and-a-half or two miles in. And as far as I am concerned, who owns the property I really do not know, but I presume any government department would not authorize a waste disposal site on private land or anything like that. But I can get that matter cleared up if the hon. member wishes. Who owns the land, I do not have the faintest idea really.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, no wonder it came as a surprise because obviously the matter had been kept secret up to now. Is the minister aware of that, that the people -

MR. MURPHY: That is not a fact.

MR. NEARY: Well would the minister -

MR. MURPHY: It might be secret from the member for LaPoile. Perhaps his other otherwise informed agency was not aware of what was happening.

MR. NEARY: My usual reliable source of information from the Goulds area, Sir, tells me that the people in that area did not know one single thing about that dump until within the last few days.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Would the minister tell the House where the application originated from? And is it going to be on Crown land or will the land be purchased from private individuals in the area for this regional dump?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and the Environment.

MR. MURPHY: I will take notice, Sir. Really I do not know, of the seven hundred and eighty odd applications, where this one originated from, but I can certainly check with my officials and find out.

MR. NEARY: The minister will find out before the night is over.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. MURPHY: Is that a threat or a promise?

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of Education. The minister no doubt is aware of the fact that the Teachers' Pensions Act is presently discriminatory with respect to married women.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Before I interrupt the hon. gentleman I would request hon. members, and this is similar to a request I made a few days ago, and that is there are, to the best of my knowledge, two ways in which points of order made either by intervention of the Chair or a member rising on a point of order and stating specifically what it is. I would ask hon. members if they believe that order has been broken, that there is a point of order, if they would rise and state it because this would certainly be of assistance to the Chair and to other hon. members.

There was one hon. member whom I interrupted. I believe it was the hon. member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush).

MR. LUSH: Is the minister aware that the Teachers' Pension Act, as it relates to married women is discriminatory and what action is being taken?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HOUSE: That question came up earlier in the year from another person and my answer then to the fact was that it does appear to be discriminatory. There is a committee set up by the NTA and the Department of Finance looking at the whole matter of pensions. The discriminatory part of it I think is the fact that the female married teacher is put on the three per cent which does not cover the family. But I believe there is a provision there that if the female married teacher is the breadwinner in the family she can elect on application to go to the four per cent.

But as you saw in the Auditor General's Report, of course, there is some contention about the intent of the teachers pension

MR. HOUSE: scheme, the way it is being paid and that whole matter is under review and will have to go before the House in some new legislation. So it is still under review and I have not had any change since the last time I answered the question about five months ago.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has a supplementary.

MR. LUSH: Just what is the nature of the review. Is there a committee set up to look specifically into this matter or just what?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. LUSH: Well the intent from the NTA is to try and have no discrimination between the female married teacher and the male married teacher. That is the intent. I do not know what the legislation will be.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. Would the minister confirm for the House, or tell the House, whether or not his Deputy Minister has resigned? If he has given reasons for his resignation and if a new Deputy Minister has been appointed?

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

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I will be making an announcement on that very shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile followed by the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. NEARY: A question for the Minister of Finance, Sir. Would the Minister of Finance tell the House if it is correct that Deputy Ministers and other high ranking government officials have been given substantial increases in the last few weeks and in the case of the Deputy Minister of Finance as much as \$2,400 of an increase?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, there has been a management pay plan provision. There have been certain increases awarded to the various management people. What the exact amounts were I do not have in front of me right now. There have been management pay plan increases given to the senior civil servants in recent months.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister indicate if these salary increases have been submitted to the Federal Anti-Price and Wage Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Under our agreement with the Government of Canada and indeed under the agreement which all the provinces have entered into with the Government of Canada, it is essential, we have to by law report all pay increases in the Public Service to the Anti-Inflation Board.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, would the minister indicate to the House whether or not the minister will table a list of all those who received increases in top management and would the minister also indicate, while the minister is on his feet, if this will set a precedent for negotiations for bargaining with the various groups for increases along the lines that have been received by the top management people.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of tabling such a list in the first place. In the second place there is not a matter of establishing a precedent in dealing with the various public service unions because of the fact that the various public service unions have received very substantial increases in recent years.

MR. NEARY: Will they get the same generous increase?

MR. DOODY: Will the hon. member permit me to answer? Are you finished?

MR. NEARY: I am just asking a further question.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You will have to stand up if you want to ask a further question.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary. Will the various unions that are negotiating with the government now get the same generous offer that the top management people got, the same consideration?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is going to be resolved in the collective bargaining process, which is now ongoing. I understand the union and the Treasury Board staff are trying to work out an arrangement. It would be most improper for me to suggest what the answer will be.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Hear, hear! A reasonable and rational deed.

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

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, this question is for the Minister of Finance or the hon. House Leader under whose jurisdiction it might fall. Is the Public Relations Firm of Mr. George McLean presently under the employ, doing any work under contract or any other arrangements for the Newfoundland Government in the Public Relations field?

MR. DOODY: Not for the government.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has a supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: Can the minister inform the House if there is any intention of having the Public Relations Firm of Mr. George McLean do work in this fiscal year? Has funds been provided in the estimate that we were not allowed to debate for the retention of Mr. George Maclean in this fiscal year?

MR. DOODY: Excuse me, Mr. Speaker, I am not quite certain whether the member is addressing the question to me or to the House Leader.

MR. FLIGHT: The Minister of Finance, if he is prepared to answer.

MR. DOODY: To the best of my knowledge, you know, certainly not

Mr. Doody:

in the Department of Finance is there any vote for work for a Public Relations Firm, What is in the other department , perhaps it might be best to direct it to that one. I think the proper thing for a question like that is on the Order Paper so it can be looked into and researched in time. I do not have the answer, except for the Department of Finance.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman has a further supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: The question was not whether or not there would be public relations work done. The question was is there any consideration being given to having the Firm of George McLean do any public relations work?

MR. NEARY: It is only hypothetical.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: That is a difficult question to answer. I imagine there has been consideration given to a great number of things over the past year, and I hope there will be consideration given to a great number of things in the coming year. Whether that will be one of the things that will be considered or has been considered is something really that is not in my setup to answer. So, you know, why that particular gentleman is being named as one who is worthy of consideration escapes me at the present time, but I guess there must be some deep significance to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. I. STRACHAN: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In view of the fact that the estimates for the water and sewer system in the community of Cartwright has been given as over \$3 million, a figure which the Council in Cartwright and myself and I believe the minister himself feels it is totally unrealistic, does the minister have any plans to have other companies look at the project to come up with a more realistic figure?

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

MR. PECKFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we do, and we have indicated that we

Mr. Peckford:

want a different kind of survey done to try to reduce the cost and yet provide services. So we have changed the terms of reference of the firm that is studying the system and studying the distribution system and the source and so on. So we have changed the terms of reference to include some experimental kind of system which might reduce the overall capital cost.

MR. STRACHAN: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. STRACHAN: Could the minister tell us whether the company looking at the project was paid from the department for the survey that they carried out?

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

MR. PECKFORD: Well, Mr. Speaker, the survey was stopped because we asked for preliminary estimates so we would not get into any high cost on the design until we had some idea of the capital cost. The actual payment of money to them for the preliminary work, I can only hazard a guess at that, because I do not have it before me, and I could not give you definitively an answer to it. I can only hazard a guess by saying for preliminary work I imagine they were paid. But the terms of reference were changed half way through when we got the preliminary estimate, and that is the only kind of answer I can give right now.

MR. STRACHAN: A further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A further supplementary.

MR. STRACHAN: Could the minister find out for the House how much the company was paid for that survey.

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

MR. STRACHAN: Yes I will, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile followed by the hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the hon. Premier, Sir, in connection with the rental of office space now for the government. Could the Premier outline for the House whether or not the agreement with Trizec is off? And if the government

Mr. Neary:

have been approached by Mr. Morgan or Mr. Andrew Crosbie to try and persuade the government to rent space in Atlantic Place? And is the government going to rent space in Atlantic Place? And thirdly, what is happening to the Dobbin deal, is that still on or is it off? What is the situation now regarding renting of office space for the government offices?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: First of all in answer to

PREMIER MOORES: the first question, Mr. Speaker, there never was any agreement as such to my knowledge with Trizec. Secondly, regarding where the government is going to rent space is under consideration right now and when we have made up our minds we will gladly pass that information along.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Before recognizing the hon. gentleman for a supplementary I would like to point out for all hon. members that in order to get reasonable and equitable and fair proportionality when a number of members wish to speak that I would ask hon. members to, I mean there is a process of supplementaries, but to keep to one question at a time. Because if one asks several then one is being recognized once but in a sense one is being recognized perhaps four or five times or for four or five questions. And this is, I think, in general, I am not making this with reference to any one particular member. In general there is that temptation, I think, to group questions together whereas it would be preferable to do it as supplementaries.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the hon. the Premier. In connection with the rental of office space whether it be from Atlantic Place, Mr. Dobbin or Trizec, would the Premier indicate if public tenders would be called for the rental of office space or just what procedure will be used in -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: For rental a tender call?

MR. NEARY: Calling of tenders, yes, for rental.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, it can be done on a proposal basis. It can be on tendering if it is for a particular building, but it is impossible to tender space which may have different criteria. Some space may have different, well not just cost but different amenities and all the things that make up what space means,

PREMIER MOORES: what partitions are there, what services are there and so on. Ottawa, and none of the other provinces tender to my knowledge for that sort of proposal. What they do is call a proposal and accept what seems to be the most beneficial to the government.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary then, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Could the Premier tell the House if the government have invited proposals in recent weeks in connection with the rental of office space and if so what firms have they asked for quotes?

PREMIER MOORES: Not in recent weeks, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: In recent months.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: My question is for the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In the case of municipalities which border on the Trans-Canada, for example Whitbourne, Chapel Arm, Come By Chance, Sunnyside, how close to the Trans-Canada Highway does the municipal boundary run?

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I do not know. I could not answer that. The hon. member should either put that on the Order Paper or pay a visit to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, Sir, I believe the minister is within hearing - yes, there is the minister coming. I want to ask the minister what action if any the minister has taken or the government have taken on the matter of leased agricultural land, a new policy that the farmers seem to be very disgruntled about and expressed very great concern to the minister recently during a meeting in Gander? Has the government now abandoned that idea? Has the minister put the proposal

MR. NEARY: before his colleagues as he promised the farmers he would do? Just what is the situation now on this new policy of leased agricultural land?

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

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, it comes as an absolute shock to me that there are disgruntled farmers because I have been meeting with them and I do not know that they are disgruntled but maybe they are saying something to me and saying something different to the member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) but I am absolutely shocked that they are disgruntled. I have explained everything to them and I have had the farmers in and I have also had the people from Kilbride, I believe it was, the Goulds area who presented the petition. They came in to see me and gave their views. It is presently under consideration by government and when we have a reply it will be given. But I am not aware at all that the farmers are disgruntled. The situation has been explained to them. The people who sent the petition into the House of Assembly through the hon. the House Leader, they came in to see me personally as well as present the petition. I talked to them as well. They know the situation. As soon as a decision is arrived at it will be communicated.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, obviously the minister does not read the morning newspaper.

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the -

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has been raised. I must ask the hon. member to take his seat.

MR. PECKFORD: The hon. member for LaPoile has just got up and made a number of observations. This is question period and as far as I understand it there is in the Standing Orders (31 B) - "Oral questions must not be prefaced by the reading of letters,

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MR. PECKFORD: telegrams, newspaper extracts or preambles of any kind."

I submit that in the recent business or phraseology used by the hon. member for LaPoile he was preambing a question.

MR. SPEAKER: On that point of order,

MR. SPEAKER: I would draw hon. members attention to "c", while obviously being aware that "b" is there, "In putting any oral questions, no argument or opinion is to be offered nor any facts stated except insofar as may be necessary to explain the same;" and I think the phrase or sentence the hon. minister took exception to was indeed the statement of an opinion which certainly was not necessary for the understanding of the question that was with relation to his doubt that the hon. minister had read the papers or some such thing and certainly a statement of that kind of opinion is strictly speaking out of order.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. WEARY: I realized it when I said it, Your Honour, it was out of order. But I got the message across to the hon. minister I hope, Sir. Would the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture -

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. NEARY: - tell the House, Mr. Speaker. -

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. PECKFORD: "I got the message across to the hon. minister," is again totally unnecessary and contravenes the number of the subsections of Standing Order 31 that you just referred to, Your Honour.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Mr. Speaker, if I may speak to that point of order too. You know -

MR. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. minister will make it brief.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Very brief, Mr. Speaker, but I think it is a matter of principle here, I am going to bring it up today, sometimes to what extent a minister is responsible for what is in a newspaper. You know, the newspaper may not reflect exactly what the minister said, and I think that when questions come out of the newspaper it should be given in that context. It is possible that the newspaper

MR. ROUSSEAU: has not accurately reported what the minister or any member might have said.

MR. SPEAKER: I have to dispose of this point of order and actually Standing Order 31 (c) and (d) I think are the operative parts, one about prefacing with extracts from newspapers, telegrams, letters, etc., and (c) that there should be nothing offered by way of argument or opinion except as is necessary to explain the question. So the point of order is a well made one but we will have to wait until tomorrow to hear the hon. gentleman's question because the time has now transpired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

On motion that the House resolve itself into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Speaker left the Chair.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. CROSBIE: Say it like it is, now.

MR. SIMMONS: Right. Yes. Just like the member for St. John's West wrote it for me.

Mr. Speaker, it has now been eight weeks since the Budget was brought down. Eight weeks tomorrow as a matter of fact I believe and it is difficult -

MR. PECKFORD: It is almost time for the anniversary.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister from Green Bay is correct. It is almost time to have a Budget anniversary, let alone a Budget Speech. But it is eight weeks and he helps to reinforce the point. It is eight full weeks now since we had this budget brought down, eight weeks tomorrow and it does make it somewhat difficult to know how to approach the subject because it is no longer a very current subject in the sense that it has been long since in the public mind for eight weeks. At the same time the hardships that this budget inflicts on the people of this Province are very current.

MR. SIMMONS: I would have preferred to have been able to respond to the Budget within a few days after its having been brought down but the government has elected, I would say rather deliberately, Mr. Speaker, to have things happen otherwise in this House. Here we are eight weeks after the event given the first opportunity. The record will show that I am now the first member of the House who has been able to address myself to the Budget Speech debate. This is the first time the debate has been called by the Government House Leader.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The hon. member can say that they have had seventy-five hours of debate.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) helped me to get to my point a little more quickly. He is right. We have had seventy-five hours of budget debate and I have been one of the persons who has participated in that seventy-five hour period and I will tell you why, Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Simmons:

because we were the victims of a very deliberate strategy by government not to call the Budget debate beforehand as they should have done. Indeed in Ottawa as members of the House will know the rules prevent, and the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) will know this, the government calling the estimates or the Committee of Supply to debate on the estimates of the various departments, prevent calling those estimates until they have had a period to debate the budget. And I say to the member for Grand Falls -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Speech from the Throne.

MR. SIMMONS: I am sorry, that is right. The member corrects me, and I thank the member from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). The rule actually relates not to the Budget Speech Debate but to the Speech from the Throne, the Address in Reply.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Which we heard over five months ago.

MR. SIMMONS: That is right. And as the member for Twillingate reminds me that we are not talking two months now as in the case of the budget here, but we are talking about five months, we are talking since sometime last Fall when we heard the Throne Speech. And as I remember one or two people in the House did get to speak in that debate and it has not been called since.

Now, Mr. Speaker, whatever the rules are in Ottawa I believe my point is made insofar as the sequence of events is concerned. The Throne Speech is the government's general statement of intention in terms of programmes for the year, in terms of legislation and so on. It is followed by something else that is general but somewhat more specific than a Throne Speech, that is a budget statement which outlines in physical terms what the government plans are. It tells how the government intends to finance its programme of activity for the year ahead. And then we get even more specific. We are given the estimates, the estimates of revenue and expenditure for the several departments. We go from the very general the statement of programmes, the Throne Speech to the Budget, how that programme is going to be carried out financially to the estimates of the various departments, the details of how that money is to be spent and how it is to be collected as revenue. And it seems to

Mr. Simmons:

me that common sense alone would dictate that the debates in this House ought to proceed in the same order. We ought to be enabled, allowed by the government House Leader and the government to debate at some length, not ad nauseam, not forever, but for a period the Address in Reply, the so-called Throne Speech Debate. And then after that we ought to be allowed to debate in the Budget Debate, and then the estimates. That is not the way it happened and as a result we have been obliged, I know I have been obliged as one member of this House to say many of the things in Committee, in the Committee of Supply, the debate on the estimates, to say many of the things in Committee that were general enough in tone and in substance to have been said really in either an Address In Reply debate or in a Budget debate.

I made fairly general comments, for example, relating to some programmes and proposed programmes for the Department of Education. I believe the appropriate place to have made many of these comments would have been either in the Address in Reply or in the Budget debate. But in responding to the comments of the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) some minutes ago in saying that we had a seventy-five hour Budget debate he is right, but if I were him I would not say it too often because he is to blame, and his colleagues in Cabinet are to blame for that circumstance where we have been forced to use the seventy-five hours that should have been used in a fairly informal exchange getting answers to various queries, about various matters within the estimates. We were obliged as a result of the government's strategy to use up our estimate time in fairly general Budget debate. Because we had no guarantee until this moment when or ten minutes ago if you like when this order was called, The Committee of Ways and Means, we had no guarantee we would ever get an opportunity to get on to the Budget debate. In the absence of such a guarantee, Mr. Speaker -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: We had a guarantee some days ago.

MR. SIMMONS: The member, Mr. Speaker, ought to speak from his place, number one. Number two, he says we had a guarantee some days ago. That may be so, I did not hear of it. I was told variously on given days that one order or another would be called. I was told at one point that we were going to hear from the Department of Municipal Affairs during estimates, we never did get to that, and that got switched around. And at one point early in the estimates we were to hear about Industrial Development which I would like to have discussed, we did not get to that either.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I believe though the overall point is made that I hope and I now call on the Government House Leader, he obviously has an interest in this matter, I call on him to see to it that in future the Budget Debate is called before the estimates. It would serve the purposes of this House a whole lot better if we could address ourselves generally to the items in the budget in a general budget debate and follow that up then with a perusal of the estimates of the various departments.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Now the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells), he can get as semantic as he wants to, he can get caught up on the niceties of the argument about when he told what to whom. The fact of the matter is that I have been in this House all Fall and all Winter and Spring and this is my first opportunity to discuss a budget that was brought down two months ago. My first opportunity to get involved in a general debate, the kind of debate I should have been afforded by having the Throne Speech or the Address in Reply called some months ago, indeed as much as four or five months ago and I do call on the Premier and the Government House Leader to see to it that this abuse of their majority in the House does not become a practice. It almost has become a practice. In the three years I have been here this is the way things have gone. The Budget debate has either not been called at all or has been called just in the interest of tokenism so they could say they had called the Budget debate and then they have proceeded rather quickly with the calling of the estimates of the various departments, calling the Committee of Supply. And I ask them that they not in future allow this to become an imbedded practice whereby we are forced to discuss in rather general terms the Budget under the guise of Committee of Supply as we have been doing for the past several weeks.

MR. CROSBIE: It was your choice.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) talking about choice. Mr. Speaker, he disappoints me today. I cannot see too far, Mr. Speaker, and I was delighted to have been given a colour photo of the minister because it is much nearer than he is. I can take it home with me, put it under my pillow, a beautiful coloured picture of the Minister of Mines and Energy. I wondered what was so special about him that warranted that kind of expense, Mr. Speaker, by Hydro at a time when they are really having a difficult period finding the money for the Lower Churchill. I wonder why a black and white picture could not have done. It would certainly have been more characteristic, more representative of the moods that the minister portrays in this House. Indeed they could have used mostly black. But no they went to beautiful colour, Mr. Speaker, beautiful colour. It is not hardly large enough I think the Premier will agree, but it nevertheless was fairly costly.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, I had someone since I saw this a few minutes ago, call a printer about a number of matters and one of the things I asked him to ask was what would be the cost of getting what is known in the printing trade as the colour separation plates for this particular picture, not to print the picture but just to get the plates, the plates that would be required so they could run a coloured picture in the Province. They do not have this lithographing process here and so they have to run four separate colours to get a coloured picture as most of us will know. And for that they need four plates which overlap exactly at the right points so they get this beautiful shot of the minister as we have here. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, just to get the plates for that picture it cost somebody, I daresay me and the rest of us as taxpayers, or the shareholders of Hydro, and we are majority shareholders, so therefore it cost us about \$150 just to get the plates for that.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) says no.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I am a publisher and I have had hundreds of them.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes well I have just, not directly but I say to the member for Twillingate, I have just had someone talk to a printer, I knew the cost was over \$100. He might have had hundreds done and perhaps that is the secret to have quantity but applying the basic square inch formula there, the printer tells me through a third party that about \$150, this comes from one of the two or three major printers in town in the last fifteen minutes, a full page colour there would cost you something in excess of \$300 or \$350.

Now the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood).

MR. CROSBIE: How much would it cost for the office scene?

MR. SIMMONS: It is by square inches to the minister, three by four -

MR. CROSBIE: What would that cost?

MR. SIMMONS: Oh that would cost about \$500 for both pages.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. member would yield for a moment -

MR. SIMMONS: Sure.

MR. SMALLWOOD: - I could tell him that in the last publication that I edited, I have 125 full pages in colour, the four colours.

MR. SIMMONS: Where was it printed.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It was printed in England.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah ha!

MR. SMALLWOOD: And the photographs were made in Newfoundland, the colour separations were made in England and the plates were made in England and the printing was done in England and I can assure him that this very handsome colour photograph of the very handsome minister -

MR. SIMMONS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SMALLWOOD: - did not cost that much money, or if it did they went to the wrong place to get it done.

MR. SIMMONS: I thank the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) because he and I are in agreement once again on the handsomeness of the minister and the need for the photograph, the fact it is

MR. SIMMONS: too small, but we disagree on the price. He has obviously got a better source than the printers in Newfoundland have and I should tell the printers that he has discovered a fairly economic source in England because the source that the people in Newfoundland -

MR. SMALLWOOD: England, Spain, Italy, Amsterdam, there are all kinds of places where most of the colour printing of North America is, in fact, done.

MR. SIMMONS: Well it is not central to my theme as the member will realize.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No.

MR. SIMMONS: But just for his information on one point in case he is not aware, the colour separations for most of the Newfoundland printing trade are done in Halifax, Atlantic Photo Engravers or something such as that, and the price that I have just received on this picture is fairly adequate. I have not had as much experience as a publisher as he but I did have two or three little publishing ventures in my day and we did get into colour separations and I remember we were paying out fairly hefty prices. But as I say to him, the cost is not central to my theme, I just wanted the House to know that it is costing us money to have this beautiful picture of the minister so close at hand. I am grateful for it but it does make me wonder, particularly when I look through the report and see some extravagance, but that is obviously done to impress other people perhaps in the money market so perhaps it can be justified. It is not central to what I wanted to say. I just did, having had the distraction from the minister a few moments ago, want to point out what he is costing us just to look at him.

Mr. Speaker, before leaving the matter I raised earlier about the sequence of events in terms of the debates in this House.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a point of order. I do not think, Your Honour, there is a quorum in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Quorum call.

Order, please! I will ask the Clerk of the House to count the House.

I have to inform hon. members that a quorum is present. The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I made a plea a moment ago to the government to see to it that in the future the Throne Speech and the Budget debate are called, by the Throne Speech I mean the Address in Reply, and the Budget debate is called before the estimates are called. That gives us an opportunity to make these general comments that we have been making in Committee. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, just let me put a suggestion which I believe the government might well take under advisement to speed up the process in the Committee. I have been as fed up as I believe most members have been during Committee stage on the supply bills, the estimates, I have been very

Mr. Simmons:

fed up with the way things have gone in terms of the long winded speeches. I have been one of the persons making them for that matter. But it seems to destroy the whole intended process of the Committee where you could have some informal exchange back and forth, some questions from this side, some answers hopefully from government. It destroys the whole process.

Now I say part of it, the onus is on me, and I am not here condemning everybody else, I share in the blame because in the absence of having the opportunity to debate generally in the Budget debate I seized, and I am sure I speak for others, I seized on the estimate debate, the Committee of Supply debate to say some of the things I would much have preferred to say in the House as such, the House rather than in Committee. So I make two suggestions, one I have made already that the sequence be in line with what must certainly be the spirit of the rules of the House. I believe the spirit of the rules of the House is clearly that we have the debate on the Budget before we have the debate on the estimates, that would seem to be a sensible order of events. That is my first suggestion. It is not a new one. It is just a plea to government to do what I believe is within the spirit of the rules, which is clearly the spirit of the rules right now. The second suggestion I make, but I only make it, and I hesitate, because I only make it if the first one is accepted. If that one is accepted that we go back to having the Budget debate before the estimates, then I would make a strong plea to government to consider changing the rules as they affect the Committee of Supply. And I would repeat, I would only agree to it if we can have a Budget debate first. But if I were allowed as a member of this House to participate in the Budget debate as I am doing now, but earlier in the game before I have to talk about estimates, if I were allowed to do that, then I would as one member, I do not speak for our caucus, but as individuals we have some comments among ourselves about it, that we are a bit fed up with the way things have gone, and I would be in favour of shorter speeches, I would be in favour of rules in the Committee of Supply which limit the speech,

Mr. Simmons:

for example, to fifteen or twenty or twenty-five minutes, you know, with the understanding that I would have my opportunity beforehand to make my remarks on the Budget debate. There would not be the need then to get up and wax eloquent or otherwise for forty-five minutes on every subject that comes up or there would not be this competition to get the floor so you can hold sway for forty-five minutes.

Instead if I had a point I wanted to make to the Minister of Education and to his department about the handicapped children, the item I got involved in sometime ago, or a point I wanted to make to the Minister of Rural Development about my feelings on small communities, for example, why should I have to first of all take forty-five minutes to do it? And secondly, why should I have to wait in line until three or four other members have each spoken forty-five about very, very different topics than are of concern to me at that particular moment?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe the points are made. There are two, one that we go back to the sequence which is clearly within the spirit of the rules of the House, and the House of Commons in Ottawa and in Britain. The spirit of the rule as far as I am concerned being that we have our general debate on the Budget before we have the estimates. And secondly, if that is the case I would be strongly in favour of delimiting the length of the speeches in Committee of Supply. I have deliberately said Committee of Supply, Mr. Speaker. I do not think my comments should be interpreted to apply to all Committee procedures. The Committee of Ways and Means, of course, in which we are now in a sense or we are not, but we have a motion to that effect, well it would not apply there any way because we are really in the House as a whole, but I was thinking also of the procedure for dealing with bills at Committee stage. I am not sure it would be desirable to apply my comments to the Committee consideration of bills. One may well have some points to make that could well take more than twenty minutes.

Mr. Simmons:

If we reflect on the activities of the House over the past two or three years since I have been here, I do not think the abuse has come in the Committee stage on bills. But I think it is clearly common we have had recent examples in the Committee stage on supply, and my comments are related to the Committee of Supply only. I certainly in passing would invite other members to comment upon that suggestion. Because I think we have got bogged down more than we should have been this time around on estimates. We only spent the same amount of time, its agreed. But, you know, we are not youngsters punching time so we can get out at the end when the bell goes. We are people here I hope to do a job. And I find something wrong with the mentality that it is very easy to get sucked into, the mentality of sitting here counting hours and longing for it to be all over type thing. And I believe I was sent here for different reasons than that, and I believe my time could be much more profitably served if the rules were amended along the lines that I have suggested.

Mr. Speaker, I have always been fascinated by pictures, perhaps it is because I have basically a very simple mind. And I believe at one point, Mr. Speaker, I did draw the House's attention to the signifiacnce of all the pictures on the cover, just by way of reviewing before we continue, let us look back over the last few Budgets and see what we are dealing with here.

MR. CROSBIE: You are going after my cover again.

MR. SIMMONS: I am going after the minister's cover is right. The cover I would love to see here, Mr. Speaker, is not the one we see at all. I understand that some senior advisers to him gave him counsel on what kind of a cover he should put here.

MR. CROSBIE: Wow!

MR. SIMMONS: He did not take their advice, and we are all somewhat the poorer for it.

MR. CROSBIE: You can say that again boy.

MR. SIMMONS: But, Mr. Chairman, we go back, and if you remember what I had to say a moment ago about the picture of the Minister of Mines and Energy

Mr. Simmons:

I grabbed this Budget just now, the 1974 Budget when he was the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board, and I fully expected to find at least a black and white picture. But no back in 1974 he did not even rate a picture. He has come a long way in two years. I hope his standing is as good in government as it is with hydro. That is another subject and we will talk about it at the right time.

Indeed the Budget itself did not even warrant a picture. There was some ominous suggestion in the colour down here, and I could not tell whether it was the Liberal colour or the Liberal Reform colour, the Tory blue wishing itself another colour or was just referring to the financial state of the Province in that we were truly in the red then. And then you will remember I referred to this one the 1975, which I cannot make up my mind on, Is it just a pretty picture Budget or is it at sea Budget? They are telling us things, Mr. Speaker. And in this one also at sea or really at sea perhaps? But, Mr. Speaker, this certainly took the cake this last one, They must have searched high and low, they must have sent all kinds of public relations experts and photographers all over the Province in all of the helicopters they could muster to get that particular photograph.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Which one is that?

MR. SIMMONS: This particular one on the last Budget.

MR. CROSBIE: Let me see that one? That is the last one, is it?

MR. SIMMONS: This is the one showing the stormed tossed sea, the rocks, for all of you who are nearsighted like myself. The on the rocks Budget. I think they were really trying to tell us something when they chose that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, yes the member from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) would like to think. But the word is out about this particular Budget, Mr. Speaker. The on the rocks Budget. And, of course, on the rocks has got all kinds of connotations. We connect it with the financial situation at times, the financial state of a jurisdiction, we think about a place being financially on the rocks,

MR. DOODY: Scotch on the rocks.

MR. SIMMONS: But sometimes - and the Minister of Finance reminds me, I am told that fellows like he and others who attend cocktail parties hosted by the press, for which all of us are grateful I am sure -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Speak low but speak for as when giving thanks.

MR. SIMMONS: On behalf of the member for Grand Falls who looked as though he was particularly enjoying the reception yesterday evening -

MR. NEARY: He was celebrating the new school tax.

MR. SIMMONS: - and he appears to be still enjoying it, Mr. Speaker. Indeed I have heard of after glow, but have I rarely seen it so dramatically demonstrated.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is not fair.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the minister reminds me of course that this term on the rocks often makes reference to certain alcoholic beverages with ice, I believe. And I suppose in this sense there is a parallel between the beverage and the Budget too in that the beverage at first appears to be cool and refreshing and inviting, like the Budget with its

MR. SIMMONS: pretty picture but if you tend to rely on it too much, if you tend to rely on it to sustain you, you will be under in no time at all. And I believe, Mr. Speaker that perhaps better than any other expression I could use or parallel I could use, sums up what this Budget is all about. It is a Budget which bespeaks gloom and doom. I hesitate on that as well because I do not share the philosophy spelled out in the Budget. I do not think we are on the rocks. I differ with the government in its forecast in this particular budget. I also differ with the government in terms of its lack of candidness in levelling with the people of this Province. I was disturbed in seeing the Budget and I have become more disgusted since having looked at it because one it does not represent, Mr. Speaker, a very accurate picture of where we are, but at the same time, Mr. Speaker, it does not represent a very adequate financial weapon to take us where we want to go and that is the main indictment that I would make of this Budget, that it does not contain the measures necessary to restore the growth, the employment, those ingredients so necessary to a prosperous economy.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! If the hon. member will permit me, I would like to bring to the attention of hon. members three visitors in the visitors' gallery, three members of the Community Council of Jacques Fontaine in the person of Chairman, Samuel Harris, secretary, Wallace Parry and member Angus Brushett. I am sure hon. members will wish to welcome them.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, various spokesmen for the government, particularly just after the Budget was brought down on the 26th. of March I believe, eight weeks ago tomorrow, various spokesmen including the Premier and the Minister of Finance and others speaking for the government at that time and since, paraded the document as an instrument of restraint, one which would introduce in fiscal terms the necessary restraints required to come to grips

MR. SIMMONS: with the galloping inflation we were told about and that kind of thing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am all for an instrument of restraint. I do not particularly believe that that was the motivation behind this document nor do I feel that it is in any particular sense an instrument of restraint. I am all for restraint and I am all for the need to live realistically within our means.

MR. CROSBIE: In theory. In theory but not in practice.

MR. SIMMONS: Well the Minister of Mines and Energy says in theory. We will see. If he would listen for a while he may learn something. I will try. I will talk about the theory first for him and then the practice for those who believe in it.

To hear those spokesmen for government, Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago talking about restraint on TV and in the papers you would think somehow they had a monopoly on peddling pious concern. You would think somehow they had a franchise on the whole subject of talking about the need for restraint. And what made you really sit up and wonder was that the preachers of this pious concern had latched on to a relatively new subject for them, a subject that was foreign to their lips last Fall. And we have to, Mr. Chairman, retrace the past just a little bit to put this thing in context.

MR. CROSBIE: Do not be tiresome.

MR. SIMMONS: We may have to be tiresome for the Minister of Mines and Energy. It may take several repetitions to get the point across to him which is already across to most of this Province, Mr. Speaker, that they are wondering out loud why they were led down the garden path last September, why restraint, galloping inflation and all that kind of thing became a subject that the Premier only understood on September 17th., but not on September 15th.

MR. CROSBIE: Ask Mr. Trudeau.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Trudeau got the minister off the hook nicely.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: I will tell you what the Premier did, Mr. Speaker. As soon as Mr. Trudeau was on the TV on Monday night the Premier barely left himself time to get physically back into the Province. Indeed in doing so, Mr. Speaker, the Premier set a record in September 1975. He became the first Newfoundland Premier in history to visit the Province ten times in the same year. He actually came home to make a speech, Mr. Speaker. He came home from Greece or wherever it was - Norway, I forget where he was at that particular time, but he actually came home long enough to make a television address, Mr. Speaker.

He came home, dashed back from Ottawa - the Prime Minister was on TV, Thanksgiving night, a Monday night I remember, and then on Wednesday, the Premier could not have had time to consult with his colleagues, Mr. Speaker, he barely had time to physically get back into the Province for one of his visits - dashed back, somebody wrote a script for him and bango he is on television. Now this is the same crowd, Mr. Speaker, that talks about the need for planning and thinking and scratching one's head. Little scratching one's head then. They had latched onto something, Mr. Speaker, they had latched onto a scapegoat.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You are trying to be a wit and you are only halfway there.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah ha, ah ha! Which is about twice as far as the member for Grand Falls.

MR. ROWE: He is not a half-wit.
Better a half-wit than a nitwit.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The people would be deeply impressed by that exchange.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would get annoyed with the interruptions if I were under the time constraint. But I remind the members on the other side of the House that as the person leading off I have unlimited time. I have certain things I want to say. I should either say them in forty-five minutes or six hours. So that is why

MR. SIMMONS: I have not been at all perturbed by the somewhat amateur interjections by the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan). It gives him a chance to practice his version of wit and we like to watch and see fellows grow even if the growth is so slow you can hardly see it. So he can enjoy himself. I will entertain him. I need the breaks once in a while. It is hard talking for a long period so if he wants to interrupt me he can go ahead. But I appeal to him in the interest, and I speak on behalf of the people in the galleries and the other people in the House, I appeal to him to brush up his copy a little bit.

MR. H. COLLINS: Speak up a little.

MR. SIMMONS: Brush up his copy to at least say something that will ingratiate him particularly with the people from his area who would like to hear something of substance from the member.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: He is a bit of a lip.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay here we go, here we go. Here we are. Now then, now that is what I was looking for all afternoon, Mr. Speaker, my cheerleader, the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) to give me the cue to begin. I have only been actually fiddling around with it this last few minutes. So now that he is ready to listen, the one student I suppose in the House that I still have a hope of reaching, Mr. Speaker, the one person, Mr. Speaker.

Well my first suggestion to the minister and to his colleagues in Cabinet is stop hoodwinking the people of this Province. We have gone through this period, Mr. Chairman, and I take you down along the sequence once again just to refresh memories before I make a few comments based on the sequence that I want to refer to.

Last Fall we had an election. Just before the election we had the Premier in Clarendville and oh the things

MR. SIMMONS: he was telling us about Come By Chance, not one, two, three, you name it. That was the Friday or Thursday before the election. Now, Mr. Speaker, the plea we get from him since on television is that he only knew about Come By Chance in October. That may be so. Perhaps he was not around. Perhaps nobody told him.

MR. BRETT: He said nothing about Clarenville.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah ha! Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister from the area says he said nothing about Clarenville. Let me say that the press report came from Clarenville in which the Premier commented on some statements made by Mr. Shaheen on the Wednesday prior to the election. I do not know where

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the Premier-he might have made it in Georges Brook or over in Queen's Cove, I do not know where he made it, he might have been on Random Island-but the press report is datelined Clarenville. I have a copy of it. And the minister knows what I am talking about, that about three or four or five days before the election the Premier was in the Clarenville area and he made some comments in which he expressed delight at the good news that Come By Chance was going to have a petrochemical plant. Now he has since told us, Mr. Speaker, that he did not know anything about the troubles that Come By Chance was in until some time about the 21st. or the 22nd. of October. But I do not misbelieve him. That may be true. But what he did not know, Mr. Speaker, we have it on the word of one of his colleagues, the Minister of Mines and Energy that he knew since last July. He said so publicly. The Minister of Mines and Energy in the last couple of months during the height of the public debate on Come By Chance said publicly that he knew since last July that Come By Chance was in trouble. Mr. Chairman, do not that growd ever get together? Do they not ever compare notes on anything? What is wrong with the Minister of Mines and Energy he keeps secrets like that from the Premier? Are they not on talking terms? Or are the rumours we are hearing all true?

So my first suggestion if the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) is still writing, is that he advise his colleagues not to continue this charade of taking the people of Newfoundland down the garden path.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, Oh!.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is not even good English.

MR. SIMMONS: That is good. That is good.

After the election -

MR. CROSBIE: What one?

MR. SIMMONS: Oh this is still number one, I am explaining it for the member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young).

MR. LUNDRIGAN: He suggested that.

MR. SIMMONS: It should only take a day or so.

Mr. Simmons:

Mr. Speaker, after the election, of course, we heard a very different story. We had the business of the television appearance by the Premier on the Wednesday following Thanksgiving and then we have had a Throne Speech, a real doom and gloom Throne Speech, and then a Budget back on March 26. And without belabouring the point, Mr. Speaker, I think you will agree the sequence of events since September 16 have been so dramatically altered, so dramatically different - when I say events, I mean the sequence of pronouncements from the government have been so dramatically altered since September 16 - it makes you wonder if you are listening to the same crowd.

MR. ROWE: That is the same crowd.

MR. SIMMONS: The answer is, yes and no. It is the same crowd physically. They have the same bodies, or the same fellows with the same names and that kind of thing, but they are changed in a very dramatic way, Mr. Chairman. They are different in that they are not looking for votes any more.

Before September 16 the announcements about water supplies, and roads, was just coming out of your ears.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Fish plants in Burgeo.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, fish plants in Burgeo.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A landing strip in Burgeo.

MR. SIMMONS: Going to have a landing strip in Burgeo.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I do not know.

MR. SIMMONS: I was wondering if the minister was making an announcement.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A landing strip would be a good service for Burgeo.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, yes, but now the minister should hold it right there. He should talk in categories. He should not cite the realities or the almost realities with the pipe dreams. The almost reality is the fish plant, it is begun. I was in there yesterday in Burgeo and I was delighted to see that the wharf is actually underway.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I did not hear you say that on any open line programme.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister has not heard me on any open line programmes since he has become a member of government. That is why he has not

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heard me. He did not only hear me not say anything about Burgeo, he heard me say nothing about anything on open line, so I am not surprised.

MR. NEARY: There is no open line out in Grand Falls now.

MR. SIMMONS: There is no open line on in Grand Falls, there is a neither one on in Grand Bank, so it is not the same opportunity.

MR. F. WHITE: No good hosts any more.

MR. SIMMONS: I will retract that, I was on open line once in Grand Falls.

MR. DOODY: That is what put it out of business.

MR. SIMMONS: That is right. That was essentially the end of the show. That is right. I was on open line once in Grand Falls since the election, so I was not completely truthful a moment ago.

But, Mr. Speaker, the minister talks about the fish plant, it is begun and I am delighted.

MR. DOODY: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: The road contract is in the papers these days and it is going to close in another few days, and so that is another one of the almost realities I talk about. But then he throws in the airstrip and I sat back or leaned back because I was waiting for the announcement. I thought perhaps the minister had something to tell me about an airstrip for Burgeo which they badly need. Has he got something? I would yield if he had an announcement to make on the subject.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: If you get one in your district I will want one in mine.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister, Mr. Speaker, tries so hard, There must be somehow, there ought to be some kind of a merit system, some kind of a prize system in this House for people who try, they get nowhere but they try. He tries so hard night and day, he does not seem to get anywhere.

Well I hope the minister will have something soon on that airstrip or - I am not sure, he is not the Minister of Transportation, and he better check it with his colleague who is the Minister of Transportation because he does get very touchy when fellows talk about

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things affecting his department. The minister knows that better than anybody else.

Mr. Speaker, I was saying a few minutes ago before we got off on these tangents, I was talking about the subject of restraint and how this Budget has been paraded as a restraint instrument, as a way of curbing inflation and that kind of thing. Well we over here, and I speak for myself, we are pretty concerned about the need to do the right things financially, to do the right things in terms of government leadership to see that the economy gets back on track, to see that we have prosperity, to see that we have more employment opportunities than we have at the present. And we would welcome any instrument, any Budget document which honestly took a crack at doing something about these subjects, about inflation, about unemployment, and so on.

Mr. Speaker, one cannot help but ask again and again the question how come these people so suddenly saw the light on this subject of inflation? That is what puzzles me, and nobody has answered the question yet. And I deliberately raise it now at the beginning of this debate because I hope the Minister of Finance or the Premier or somebody will respond to that. What was the magic in the dates? Was there something about September 16? Was there some reason that suddenly they discovered the truth of the matter? That suddenly they hit upon the bitter truth that we were in inflationary time? Did they not know it when they were making all these commitments that they obviously had no hope of keeping to the people of Newfoundland? That I suppose, Mr. Speaker, is what concerns me more than anything else about this whole Budget, that it demonstrates to me as a taxpayer, that we have in office a government who is not that concerned about levelling with the people of the Province.

I mention the magic in the date of September 16. What do we expect that somehow the economic order, the marketplace, the law of supply and demand responds miraculously to election announcements? That somehow as soon as the Premier announces there is going to be an

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election on September 16 the economic order, the laws of supply and demand somehow adopt a springboard stand and launch automatically into a period of prosperity? Is that what happens? And then the day the election is over are we being told that - the day the election is over these same laws of supply and demand, the same economic order, the same marketplace just as mysteriously adopts a new approach to things and goes into a period of economic restraint? Who, Mr. Speaker, who, who, who are they trying to fool? Of course, we need restraint. Of course we need it. But that restraint was needed as much on September 15, and this is not just hindsight, Mr. Speaker, - it is hindsight for me obviously because I was not in possession of the facts on the subject for me it is hindsight, yes - but for the Premier of the Province it is not hindsight. He knew. He knew on September 15 as much as he did on September 17 or as much as he did in the first or second week of October when he made his announcement to the people of the Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my question to him and to the government is why did the Premier not exercise honesty at that particular time instead of making a mad grab for a few votes? I referred to Come By Chance. I think the government's stewardship to the people of the Province has been shameful on Come By Chance. I do not blame them for the mess. I am not saying that. Our spokesman for our party

MR. SIMMONS: has said otherwise. I am not saying that. But I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that government spokesmen did manipulate the facts when it comes to Come By Chance, and that the facts which were available to government were not made known to the people at the earliest opportunity. That concerns me because it raises the larger question, if they are unscrupulous enough to manipulate the facts on this particular subject, where does it stop? And if you do not have, Mr. Speaker, if you do not have basic honesty in government, if you do not have basic integrity then the whole thing falls apart because you do not know what to believe. That, Mr. Speaker, is the indictment of the Throne Speech, that is the indictment of the Budget. You do not know what to believe anymore.

I will help the government, Mr. Speaker, I will help the government in a restraint programme but I will not, I will not help the government in a deception programme. I will not be a party, I will not be an accomplice to this barefaced, no-holes-barred, brazen, scandalous, insulting, demeaning campaign to hoodwink the people of this Province in the name of restraint. The member for Pleasantville (Mr. Dinn) is about to make his maiden speech. He was saying -

MR. DINN: I thought you were going to resign.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh the member wants to know if I am going to resign. Not today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: He probably had a button on his lip over there for a while, he was so silent.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Placentia (Mr. Wm. Patterson) has given him some council and he is all primed and ready now so we should hear from him any day at all. He is sitting in a rather envious position in the House with one of the most experienced campaigners on his left and not far to his right one of the most notorious effigy burners in the whole of Labrador. The only man, Mr. Speaker, in recent

MR. SIMMONS: history who has had a televised effigy burning is the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie).

MR. WHITE: He gets away with it.

MR. SIMMONS: They are singing a new song for him now. I used to love - I am not much of a country and western person but I used to love this one for some reason, perhaps because of its quaintness, this one about, "They do not burn their draft cards down in Muskogee."

MR. DOODY: Is that what your band is playing now?

MR. SIMMONS: The Minister of Finance and I, we were working together last night on a new musical piece. We are going to be co-composers, I guess you will call it. He was the consulting musician on the piece and we are adapting this Muskogee song. This one about no burning their draft cards down in Muskogee and the member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie), which fortunately is very much like the term 'Skogee' the member for Naskaupi is going to have as a campaign song something to the effect next time, they do not burn their members down in 'Skaupi' and that does not mean they do not burn their ministers down in 'Skaupi.' As a matter of fact some of the ministers were, at least one of the ministers, was red hot down there a couple of weeks ago and I cannot make up my mind whether the member was shaking hands, striking matches, waving good-bye. And a lot of people are asking questions I believe, including the Minister of Mines and Energy, the scorched minister would like to have the answer before it is too late.

MR. MURPHY: A hot time in the old town tonight.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! Would the hon. member permit? On behalf of hon. members I would like to call to their attention the presence in the gallery of students from grade eleven in Random Island Integrated School, twenty of them, with their teacher Mr. Pardy. Hon. members will give them welcome, I am sure.

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

MR. MURPHY: Fifty-five minutes by the man from Hermitage.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for St. John's Centre and I, I thought had become friends but lately he has been after me.

CAPT. WINSOR: The honeymoon is over.

MR. SIMMONS: The honeymoon is over. There is no question about that.

Mr. Speaker, sure we on this side will help in any programme of restraint but not in a programme of deception. I have a feeling, I have a clear feeling, I have a gut feeling, Mr. Speaker, that we too as members are being led down the garden path. Well not really, we are not being led because we are not going, but there is an attempt to take us down the garden path on this one and in those pious pronouncements we are told about the need for restraint.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they say it is an ill wind that blow no one any good and in a way while I have made some criticisms of the lapse of time since the Budget came down, until now, the two months, I suppose in one way on reflection there has been an advantage. We have had a couple of months to see how the government plans to practice what it is preaching and I ask you, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this House to reflect and see if you can call to mind any particular example in the public eye which would lead you to believe for one fraction of a second that this Budget and this government are on a programme of controlling inflation, are on a programme of promoting employment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the matter of inflation is a hard one to measure. At what point have you controlled inflation? That is a hard one to measure so we will not get involved in that one. That would require some people with a lot more financial expertise than I have. Let us talk about employment. Let us talk about employment opportunities. Let us look around us. And let us not take my figures, I am a partisan individual associated with one of the two major political parties in the Province. Let us not take mine. Let us go to some less partial source, let us go to something like Statistics Canada and ask them what they are

MR. SIMMONS: finding. Ask them about the dramatic upturn in employment in this Province since this Budget came down or since the Throne Speech of last Fall. Ask them what has happened. Ask them if it is not true that we now have full employment in this Province. Ask Statistics Canada what this government has done since it went on this crusade last Fall to put her back on the tracks. Ask Statistics Canada if we have full employment or ask them if it is true that we have even the lowest unemployment rate in Canada, four, five or six per cent, or three per cent as in Alberta. Or ask them if we have an unemployment rate equal only to the national average of seven or eight per cent or whatever. Ask them if that is true. Or ask Statistics Canada if it is possible, if it is at all possible that in May 1976, six or seven months after this great onslaught by the Premier of this Province, this great crusade announced on provincewide television, reaffirmed in the Speech from the Throne in November, reaffirmed again in the Budget Speech in March, ask the Statistics Canada if as a result of all these measures, these initiatives by government, if it is possible that we still have not only the highest unemployment rate in Canada but also the highest in our history. And Statistics Canada, perhaps with no particular glee, will tell you what I just inferred, that we do have the highest unemployment rate in our history, we do have the highest unemployment rate in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am one of those person who cannot get too caught up with comparisons with either the past or with other jurisdictions and frankly, for what it is worth, I do not care whether our unemployment rate is the highest or lowest it has ever been. I am not concerned with how we stand in relation to 1932 or how we stand in relation to 1949 or 1956. I am concerned with how we stand now. I am not concerned whether our employment rate is higher or lower than Alberta or Quebec or Nova Scotia. I am concerned with whether

MR. SIMMONS: the unemployment rate represents the best we can do in this Province. If we have to have the highest unemployment rate in Canada sobeit, But, Mr. Speaker, let us not accept it as a fact of life. To hear the Premier of this Province you would think somehow it was something to brag about. And Mr. Speaker, a very different Premier than the man who was talking to us in 1972 or 1971 when he promised us full employment. A foolhardy promise in the first place to suggest for one second that you could have full employment in any Province in Canada

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for a number of reasons, that I will not go into, but even Alberta, oil rich Alberta with billions of dollars it does not even know what to do with I am told, even they have an unemployment rate of 3 per cent. Even that Province has three people out of every one hundred who do not have jobs. So let us not talk about full employment.

Now the Premier before he became the Premier in the Fall of 1971 did promise that, and I wondered even then who his advisers were to write into his speech that kind of a foolhardy statement. But I, like a number of other people around this Province, looked over it. And we knew what he meant, we knew that what he was saying was that he was going to try and improve the employment situation. Well he has four or five years trying I suppose, Mr. Speaker, he certainly had four or five years in office. What do we have in 1976? We have Statistics Canada in the last few days telling us once again, she is worse than even employment wise. So, Mr. Speaker, in retrospect it is a blessing in disguise that we are here two months after the fact looking back at the Budget and its effect. Because we have had that two month period, if you like, we have had the five or six month period since the government announced, but we have had really a full six months because the Premier announced that about the second week in October, so we have had October, November, December, January, February, March, April, we are going into our eighth month really, seven months, well seven months yesterday I believe since he made his announcement about the programme to curb inflation to improve the employment situation.

Also, Mr. Speaker, this is the 13th. of May. We are headed into another Summer, at least in terms of the calendar, and the weather seems to auger well. We are at that time of the year when traditionally the construction industry, the seasonal constructional industry, the road building programmes, the house construction, the building of commercial properties, the various other industries that depend somewhat

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on half decent weather, the temperatures, we are into that period of the year now when we could expect a seasonal upturn in the employment figures. We could expect men and women to be going back to the occupations which, as I say, depend somewhat on weather conditions. So instead of seeing the frightful figures that we are seeing from Statistics Canada we should be witnessing lower figures, at least.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am reminded that when someone from government gets up to rebutt this particular comment, as someone will I am sure, they will point out that the figures across Canada are high too, and I believe stayed high for this month, or even went up a bit. And that is true. Mr. Speaker, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. You cannot have it both ways. This is the government here in this Province that points long and often to the seasonal nature of our employment situation. So all last Winter they were saying, "Well now look we are not like the rest of Canada, because ptoportionately speaking, relatively speaking, speaking in percentages we in Newfoundland have a higher seasonal employment factor than anywhere else in Canada. We have proportionately speaking more people employed during the Summer months and unemployed during the Winter than any other part of Canada. That is the argument I have heard the government use many, many times. All right, I will buy that one. I do not know the absolute truth of it but I would recognize, I would accept that relatively speaking we have a fairly significant seasonal employment factor to contend with much more so than they would in the city of Toronto, for example, or the more urban parts. Accepting that, as I say, they cannot have their cake and eat it too. They cannot use that argument in January and now in May when our people should be going back to work, seasonally, they cannot be pointing to the rest of Canada. The set of factors, if you follow me, have to be different. And we should now if we were in an unemployment slump because of the season last January, we should now be forging upward, as it were, surging upward in terms of employment figures. And we would be, Mr. Speaker, if this document right here was what it is being paraded as being, if it was a document to control

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inflation, to exercise restraints and to provide employment. If it were all of these things, and one thing I have not mentioned, if it was also a document which would address itself to the resource based industries of this Province I would not be able to stand here and truthfully today talk about the continuing high rate of unemployment. Or if I could I would be talking in more positive terms because I would be pointing out that the unemployment rate, thanks to the budgetary measures proposed here, thanks to that, the unemployment rate has taken a turn for the better.

Mr. Speaker, we are all for restraint, but we cannot get excited about deception. We cannot get excited about a document such as the one we have had the opportunity to peruse for the past couple of months. The Budget, Mr. Speaker, while it does not do much along the lines that it says it would to control inflation and so on, does raise a lot of questions, this Budget. I have had the opportunity in the last couple of months to look through it several times, and I find myself asking where is it in this Budget? Where is it? Where is the government's plan to come to grips with employment? And I say to myself well there are several areas where the government could launch an onslaught on the unemployment situation. Perhaps it is in the area of mining. There is an industry, there is an area of concern that provides a lot of labour-intensive activity. So I find myself going to the figures of the Department of Mines and Energy to see what the picture is there.

Let us see what it is, Mr. Speaker, if we can find it here. Mines and Energy: I believe the figures are accurate, I would certainly table them, and the Minister of Forestry could check them for me, he is a gentleman with a lot more of a success record in the field of math than I have I tell you. He has got a lot of records these days, Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact. He is the only gentleman in the House, the only one, Mr. Speaker, the only man who is on everybody's Cabinet list. He is the only gentleman in the House who is on everybody's Cabinet list.

MR. SIMMONS:

He is on the Cabinet list of the Premier, the Minister of Mines and Energy, the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), the member for the Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), he will be on mine if ever I decide to draw up one, on the Leader of the Opposition's Cabinet list, on everybody's Cabinet list, Mr. Speaker, everybody's.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Do not worry about it I am not paid that well.

MR. SIMMONS: I have not yet, Mr. Speaker, I must say, I guess it is my style. It is either different or just a little stingier or something.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I may tell the hon. gentleman that he will not be on mine much longer if he does not get this thing fixed for me.

MR. SIMMONS: What is that at all?

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is a thing to keep this from sliding down.

MR. CALLAN: Do we all get them?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well I do not know how many have asked the minister, I know of one who asked.

MR. PECKFORD: All ex-Premiers. All former Premiers.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, all former Premiers.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, we could pursue that line but the member from Labrador West, from Menihek (Mr. Rousseau) being such a good friend of mine I will resist. I was just going to say, and I got somewhat distracted by the gentleman who admits that he is on his Cabinet list, and we have it now in the public record for the first time that the member for Twillingate has admitted openly that the member is on his Cabinet list. I was going to say to him perhaps it is my stingy style or something. I have overlooked taking the minister to dinner, and I must smarten up. In case I have a Cabinet list one of those days I better start taking fellows like himself and the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson), I should be taking these fellows to dinner. God knows I might need them one of those days. And if I ever invite the Minister of Education to dinner I am sending him a reminder.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is all very nice

MR. SIMMONS: to have those little private jokes, which only a few of us are aware of the significance of, but let me get back to the subject at hand. I was kind of interrupted by the Minister of Forestry so I wanted once again, in the public record, to tell him of my continuing admiration for his ability and to say also that these figures tell me that in 1975-76 the government budgeted - oh ho! Boy oh boy oh boy! The government budgeted in Mines and Energy - \$ 4.3 million and in this coming year is budgeting \$5.1 million, so it is budgeting an extra \$800,000. I do not know how many jobs that would represent. Perhaps the Minister of Mines and Energy would tell us. But there is a slight increase. Inflation is around twelve or thirteen percent so allowing for inflation you would need \$500,000 on the figure of this year just to allow for inflation alone. So allowing for inflation the government is putting out perhaps \$250,000, \$300,000, new dollars for Mines and Energy in this particular year.

In Forestry and Agriculture another department which should be one of the job departments, if you like, it is one of the resource departments, the government budgeted \$2.5 million in last Fall's budget and \$2.8 million now, an additional \$300,000. Again I would suggest it takes care of the inflation factor at most, the \$300,000. I am talking by the way for the minister's benefit. I am talking about net capital expenditures in these figures, the net capital expenditures here.

In Tourism, again a department that should be capable of providing jobs, the government budgeted last Fall \$4,973,000, this year \$4,989,000, \$16,000 more this year than last year. Hardly many jobs there I would say. Hardly many jobs there - \$16,000.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I am doing here is just making the departments, the so called resource oriented departments - Mines and Energy, Forestry and Agriculture, Tourism, I will come

MR. SIMMONS: in a moment to Fisheries, to Industrial Development. I am taking the resource oriented departments just to see where this great programme to provide employment is and I cannot find it. I cannot find it in Mines and Energy. I cannot find it in Forestry and Agriculture. I cannot find it in Tourism. How about Fisheries? Well, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the figures you will not get much encouragement.

Last year the government spent or budgeted \$6,170,000, just over \$6 million on the fishery. This is capital expenditure. This year what do you think they are budgeting? \$6 million last year, it should be certainly \$7 million, \$8 million, \$9 million, \$10 million this year anyway, it was \$6 million last year. This year it is \$5 million. Here is this government, the government which talks about how we have got to use fisheries, let me get the story please, you will never believe it unless I show it to you. This is a press clipping in The Evening Telegram, Saturday, February 14th. The Premier had just come back from one of his jaunts over to Europe where he visited several countries and the headline, "Moore's Optimistic About Trip To New York - Fishery Key To Rural Revitalization." Fishery the key, so he cannot claim he does not know it. He cannot claim he does not know it. He cannot say that there is no more money in the Fisheries Budget because he did not know the difference. He obviously knew. He has been saying it for a long time. But, Mr. Speaker, he has not put his money where his mouth is on this one.

Capital I mentioned to you, \$6 million last year down to \$5 million this year. Let us look at the overall expenditure in the fishery, Mr. Speaker, the overall expenditure. Here we are. The gross expenditure in fisheries last year, Mr. Speaker, would you believe the gross expenditure was \$22,689,000 last year, \$22,600,000. This year, now this is the year when we are going to have more jobs, when fisheries is going to be the key to rural revitalization, this year we have \$16 million. \$6 million less on fisheries expenditure this year than last year.

MR. SIMMONS: I ask you, is that any way, Mr. Speaker, is that any way to revitalize the fishery? Is that any way to give new life and new spark to rural Newfoundland by cutting off the bit of money you have been giving them, by cutting her back by \$6 million?

Mr. Speaker, I was saying I went through the Budget, department by department and said, okay, where are the jobs being created? Perhaps the Statistics Canada figures are wrong? Perhaps they are being done by a bunch of fellows up-a-long who do not understand the Newfoundland situation. Perhaps they have got poor mathematicians up there. Perhaps their computers are giving them a run around. So I will check the Budget. Well I checked, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot find the jobs or the money for the jobs in Mines and Energy. I cannot find the jobs or the money for the jobs in Forestry and Agriculture. I cannot find the jobs in Tourism. I cannot find the jobs in Fisheries.

So, Mr. Speaker, it only leaves me with a couple of other departments to compare. Industrial Development is a department that should generate some job opportunities. And in Industrial Development, as my chart shows here and I just wanted to check it, there is an increase in expenditure in Industrial Development from \$3 million to \$7 million, a doubling of the expenditure in Industrial Development, which means, Mr. Speaker, we should have a look to see what they are spending the money on. It is not enough to say, of course, that Industrial Development is spending the money but how it is spending it. And I am delighted to point out, Mr. Speaker, as I suspected that the big expenditure there the big reason why the money is gone up by \$3 million or \$4 million is the one we talked about just now, Burgeo Fish Industries. Burgeo is getting a fish plant and the government is putting in a couple of million and-a-half dollars towards that venture in this

MR. SIMMONS: particular Budget. There is more to come of course in subsequent fiscal years.

So, Mr. Speaker, if you take away that particular project and without over simplifying, if you take away that particular project, a project which really was in last year's Budget and then got carried forward and so on, not last year's the year before I believe, if you take out the Burgeo plant you have essentially a stand pat situation even in Industrial Development.

Mr. Speaker, the figures, and these are figures which I have taken from the Budget, the figures, Mr. Speaker, do not show many encouraging signs at all when it comes to job creation. I believe just checking here, yes I believe we have covered essentially what is in that.

I was saying a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, the Budget, while it does not solve a lot of problems raises a lot of questions and one of the questions is what does the Budget do for the employment situation? I cannot find it. I invite ministers in speaking to this to show me where it is if I have overlooked it. But I contend, Mr. Speaker, that jobs just are not there and the record of the past few months is demonstrating that. Why? Why is there nothing in the entire Budget that would create additional jobs?

And, Mr. Speaker, what about the government's much talked about resource development programme? Remember all the talk in the Fall of 1971-72 and even lately since the famous trip to Europe. They have been

MR. SIMMONS: back now since, let me see, they have been back three months now from Europe and the Minister of Industrial Development, the Minister of Fisheries, the Premier, they have all told us that one of those days they are going to have a statement about how things went in Europe. That was three months now. When do we get the statement? The Minister of Forestry was in Europe on this trip too. Perhaps he would indicate to the House now when we are going to hear what the government's programme is.

MR. ROUSSEAU: You will hear within the next few months. There is no hurry.

MR. SIMMONS: A few months, the next few months, Mr. Speaker, there are people out there without jobs, 40,000, 42,000 people out there.

MR. ROUSSEAU: Take those copies.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, that is unworthy of that particular Cabinet designate, unworthy of him.

MR. ROUSSEAU: It takes time to study the thing before you make comments.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker, sure it takes time. Of course it takes time. It has taken a lot of time in this case, Mr. Speaker. I would hope at least, Mr. Speaker, that if the Premier could rush back and in forty-eight hours get a speech on television, not only a speech, Mr. Speaker, but a whole programme, a whole approach to a problem within forty-eight hours after Mr. Trudeau put it to him in Ottawa. He was back and he had not only the programme decided on, the Cabinet consulted but he was on television announcing it to the whole Province as a fait accompli, as a thing done ready to move and now they have been back from Europe for three months and now the minister tells us it is going to be a few more months.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I said over the next few months.

MR. SIMMONS: That is when we hear about the plan. But when is the plan go into action?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: We do not know exactly. It is a big plan.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I hope it is a fairly big plan. I do not mean it has got to be a grand, dramatic, dressed up plan

MR. SIMMONS: but I hope it is an effective plan. I hope it is an effective plan. I never can find out how much money we spent on the trip. It depends on whether you accept the Premier's version that the jet trip to Montreal was free or whether you take the word of the FTA official who said that it was a normal charter, a normal \$6,000 charter. So the trip cost us, either way it cost us a fair amount of money.

By the way I had, I suppose it is probably the time to do it, I had an opportunity to talk to some people who knew who went on that flight and I asked some questions in this House about that flight from Gander to Montreal when the Premier went to Europe. One, I was not satisfied with the answer, but more important I was rather disturbed that some of the answers may well have contradicted the facts, the known facts. Because, Mr. Speaker, if we just look at, without getting into personalities, I shall not name names here, but I will say it for the record so that the Premier will know exactly what I am talking about; there were people on that flight with his permission other than the ones he admitted to in this House, and let me say it more directly, there were people on that flight with his blessing who he denied in this House were there at his invitation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it raises the whole question, of course, of whether the Premier or any member of the House is entitled to give that kind of information to the House, false information. I assume he did it knowingly.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, this is a statement which has got to be dealt with at this time because, the hon. member can correct me if I am wrong, but what I interpret his words to mean was that the Premier has misled the House deliberately or lied to the House, same thing.

MR. SIMMONS: Misled anyway.

MR. WELLS: Deliberately?

MR. SIMMONS: No, I did not say that.

MR. WELLS: Well I think we ought to be very clear on this, a

MR. WELLS: serious allegation and I think the hon. member is out of order. If the hon. member is going to make such an allegation he has to pursue it all the way, Mr. Speaker. So I would call upon the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, to clarify what he is saying so we will know precisely.

MR. ROWE: A point of order. Mr. Speaker, I think this is simply the way the hon. House member is interpreting the remarks of my colleague during his speech. The Standing Orders and Beauchesne specifically say that it is unparliamentary to say that a person has lied or deliberately misled or misled the House. Now my colleague did not say either of these things. It is simply an interpretation placed upon the comments made by my colleague and I do not think the hon. House Leader has a point of order whatsoever. It was an interpretation.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): A point of order please.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: If my memory serves me correctly, Sir, the Premier said there were other people on that flight but not invited by the hon. the Premier. Well I believe everybody in the House knows who was on the flight. There was the Premier and his two ministers and Mr. Craig Dobbin and his wife and Mr. Miller and Mr. Harris. They were all on the flight but not necessarily invited by the Premier. I think that is what the Premier said. They could have been invited by Mr. Miller, the man who arranged the flight. I believe that is what the Premier said so I cannot see how he was misleading the House. He was invited to go but -

MR. WELLS: To that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): The hon. House Leader.

MR. WELLS: I think the Premier mentioned in the House who

MR. WELLS: was on the flight, other people who were on the flight. As I recall what the Premier said were not his concern. That is the -

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! To clarify the issue I would like to sincerely request of the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) to expand on his remarks. There is no doubt in hon. members minds as to his meaning in this matter.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, what I said a few moments ago before the interruption was that I felt the Premier had given false information. I did not say he had done it deliberately. I said he had done it knowingly. I think the Premier knows -

MR. COLLINS: What does he know?

MR. SIMMONS: Well if the minister wants me to elaborate give me a moment. I think the false information was that people there were not at his invitation. I have information to the contrary. All right. Now we both cannot be right. Mr. Speaker, the Premier, you see, contradicts himself. Since we are on this particular - he contradicts himself because at once he says the reason the plane was made available. Let us assume the Premier's version of the story, the plane was made available to a government. It was done and he said Mr. So and So at EPA, Mr. Miller, I believe, said he would do the same for any government. Well now that the member has put the names into the record I ask you -

MR. NEARY: They were in the record. They were in the newspaper.

MR. SIMMONS: All right. Yes. Okay. Now that he has entered them into the record again today I ask you is Mr. Dobbin the government? The Premier's whole case is based on the fact that he was availing of a gift by the fact he was one of the Premiers of the Atlantic Provinces. And I would submit, Mr. Speaker, but I can

MR. SIMMONS: do more than submit because I have some information on the point, I would submit that the Premier not only knew full well who was going on the flight but also everybody who went on the flight went at his invitation. And I say the Premier in making statements he did in the House gave false information on this point. Of course he did. It is obvious.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. WELLS: This goes to the gist you see. The hon. member whether he intends to or not is saying most clearly that the Premier has deliberately misled this House.

MR. SIMMONS: I said the Premier gave false information.

MR. WELLS: Well gave false information. Well that is an attempt to mislead. Call it what - false information, lie, whatever, and I am not quibbling over words, but the point as I understand what the Premier said, and I think the hon. member should wait until the Premier is in his seat to make these allegations, but as I understand what the Premier said, and we all heard him in the House, was that this was made available to him as the Premier of the Atlantic Provinces of Newfoundland, Labrador, etc., and he availed of it. But as he said himself he occupied only one seat and the government members, the ministers who were with him and officials occupied three or four more seats whatever it was, now surely it would be within the right of EPA to invite anybody else along if they wanted to, it was their plane. So I think where the hon. member is stepping over the line is in alleging that EPA had to get the permission of the Premier to invite somebody else to make that trip as a convenience on their plane which is not so at all. EPA had every right to allow anybody to make that run to Montreal on that plane and I think the hon. member should retract because what he is saying is that the Premier has misled the House as though he Premier had to give permission for somebody else to get on that plane that day, which is not so at all, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROWE: To that point of order.

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

MR. ROWE: Sir, to that particular point of order I can only offer the same argumentation that I offered previously because in essence it is the same point of order.

The hon. the House Leader is interpreting the remarks made and the words uttered by my colleague and the hon. House Leader is suggesting that my colleague said that the Premier deliberately misled the House. Now these words were not uttered -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: They were. He said so.

MR. ROWE: They were not uttered. If they were said they would be unparliamentary but these were not uttered by my colleague and we are getting in to rather a semantical argument here over words anyway and I submit that my colleague was not out of order whatsoever, that there is nothing that I can see here in Beauchesne, looking through it quickly, no words that he has uttered that were unparliamentary. Now if we are going to start interpreting words

Mr. Rowe:

we are going to get into a rather serious situation on future rulings by the Chair. So I would submit it is a difference of opinion between two hon. members and certainly a matter of interpretation on the part of the House Leader and my colleague was in no way whatsoever out of order on this matter.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! I might quote from Beauchesne, Section 154, Subsection (5) which states "It is not unparliamentary to say his statement is untrue, but it is unparliamentary to say that it was untrue to the knowledge of the member addressing the House." So I think the issue of this point of order is whether the hon. Premier made a statement which (a) was untrue, and (b) that he knew it was untrue. I can recall, I think, accurately that the hon. member did say that the hon. Premier had made the false statement to the House, which was not of itself be unparliamentary, but I believe he did follow it up by saying or intimating that the hon. Premier knew it was untrue which is unparliamentary, I therefore will call upon the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) to withdraw that remark without reservation.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your ruling. And I will certainly, if I did, and I believe I did say the Premier knowingly did it, I certainly withdraw that without any qualification. I cannot say what the Premier knows, and I withdraw that without qualification or comment. The brunt of what I was saying was that I feel that the information was false, and I do, and that is what I was saying, and probably saying it a bit awkwardly for which I apologize to the Chair.

Mr. Speaker, the issue involving the airplane was somewhat of a depression on my part. It was related to the trip to Europe and I was raising the question about the overall cost to the Treasury. And I was about to make the point that if we are going to incur these costs, even if some alleged gifts are thrown in for good measure, if we are going to incur these kinds of costs we better be able to demonstrate some return to the Province, some return to the taxpayers. The trip to

Mr. Simmons:

Europe was a fairly extensive undertaking, as I believe most members will realize, the people I believe went to Norway and Finland and Sweden, Denmark and Germany and Spain and Portugal, to Iceland and to the United Kingdom, a fairly extensive tour of duty, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: And Portugal.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, I might have missed Portugal. I had it in my notes.

MR. NEARY: Spain.

MR. SIMMONS: I mentioned Spain.

MR. NEARY: Germany.

MR. SIMMONS: Germany. I meant to mention the full list, Mr. Speaker, once again so we do not miss any; Finland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Iceland, and the United Kingdom. And the member for - where is he the member for these days? Harbour Main-Bell Island (Mr. Doody).

MR. NEARY: Lance Cove.

MR. SIMMONS: He is still ~~more~~ he could not go.

MR. NEARY: Middleton Avenue, it is paved now.

MR. SIMMONS: But, Mr. Speaker, those who went must have had during that period of time an opportunity to look at the resource based industries in those various countries, I can only assume they did. But, Mr. Speaker, I am left assuming. I forget the fact I am a member, as a taxpayer, three or a three and-a-half months after the fact I am still left assuming. We asked a question in the House, we recognize the boys had to come back and get some sleep and recover from the jet lag and all of that, but it has been three months, and unless they had a lot of jet lag and some other things that create lag, then I would suggest they should be recovered by now. And I do not want some grand scheme such as the trawler scheme the boys pulled over us a few years ago, Mr. Speaker. I do not want that. I do not want another parade of deception. That is not what I am asking. I am asking for some indication as a result of this prolonged trip to Europe with Cabinet ministers going off on sub trips and going off to at least altogether seven, eight or nine countries whatever they are altogether,

Mr. Simmons:

I am asking as a result of that, three and a half months later, should we not know something? Should we not have some inkling of what lurks in the minds of these men? Should we not have some idea?

MR. DOODY: The Shadow knows.

MR. SIMMONS: The Shadow knows. Should we not have some idea of what is the result of that trip other than the fact that the boys had either a good restful time or as the Minister of Fisheries has so often told us, a very busy time. I tend to buy his version, that it was a very busy time. I want to know what they were busy about? I want to know what kept them so busy? And I want to know what is going to be the return to me as a taxpayer or to the Province as a whole? And I believe after three and-a-half months we should at least have in general format some inkling, some indication of what the result of that trip was. I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, as a taxpayer, as a member that is too much for me to ask.

So I hope that before this Budget debate is over we will get a little enlightenment on that, because it bears, Mr. Speaker, it bears on the whole subject of this Budget. This Budget we are told I will not quote the words, but I believe you will remember that it is in the document, this Budget zeroes in on the need to get on with the subject of resource development posthaste. Without any further delay they are going to do something about it. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, a day or so after the Budget was brought down there were some criticism of the amounts of money in there for Fisheries, and I was one of the people who criticized. And I believe I with some other people, I do not have the press clipping here now, but I believe a bunch of us were called preachers of doom and gloom by the Minister of Fisheries. Perhaps I do have a clipping at hand here. It would be helpful if I could find it. Yes here we are. Yes, the Minister of Fisheries a day or so after the Budget on the 30th. of March indeed responded to certain politicians, he says, and editorial writers and certain newspapers and so on who are unfairly and incorrectly criticizing

Mr. Simmons:

his department's Budgets and plans. And he went on to say that before the year's end there will be substantial increases in the amounts of money to be spent on fisheries, I would presume. He referred to plans for revitalizing the inshore fishery. Since then of course, Mr. Speaker, we have heard from him a couple of announcements about new programmes for obtaining longliners and so on. Perhaps that is the kind of thing he was referring to. I would say to him that that alone is not going to revitalize and I hope he has more plans in mind.

But what I am looking for here now, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot seem to find is a charge that some of us who were saying these things about his Budget - here we are - "Throughout the press conference Mr. Carter kept referring to preachers of doom and gloom in the fishery, gloom and doom." Well, Mr. Speaker, I representing a fishing district did publicly lament the scarce amounts of money in the Budget for the fishery, as I did indeed in the last half hour or so. But I assure the minister and I assure the public of this Province and, in particular, the fishermen that I was by no means preaching doom and gloom. Indeed I do not see how the minister could so misinterpret my statements and the statements of others to whom he referred. My plea was not to give up on the fishery, my concern was that he apparently had given up. And my plea was that the government take some new initiatives to encourage, to help the fishery.

I believe the best reply to the minister's statement on that subject, Mr. Speaker, came from an editorial in The Evening Telegram the day after his press conference. This press conference you will remember was to amplify what was in the Budget, to point out that there was going to be money. And I would hope that the minister in calling the press conference had intended to allay some fears, to set the record straight publicly and so on. So the day after his press conference The Evening Telegram had an editorial which set out to set the minister straight. Indeed the editorial was called "Setting Mr. Carter Straight". And in part, Mr. Speaker, the editorial says

Mr. Simmons:

"The point that Mr. Carter, the minister - the point that the minister misses completely is that the criticism was aimed at the lack of new effort or direction in his department. What

MR. SIMMONS: is shown in the Budget apart from the one shot efforts is pretty well the same as it was for the past two years with slight increases to offset inflation and escalation. What the minister misses is that the criticism was aimed at the lack of direction in his department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Budget, the trip to Europe, the Minister of Fisheries' public statements, all these, Mr. Speaker, would tend to tell us that the government is concerned about resource development but I keep asking where is this concern demonstrated? Where is it demonstrated? Why is there less money as I pointed out a moment ago or a half hour ago, whatever? Why is there less money being budgeted for the resource developments this year than last year? Less for Forestry and Agriculture, Tourism, I went through the whole works of them just now? Why less than last year, less than the year before that, less than the year before that? This is the least money for resource development we have had in the past four budgetary years.

Mr. Speaker, why in particular, while we are talking about the fishery, why in particular, why, why, why has the government obviously decided to give the shaft once and for all to the fisheries? Why this shameful cutback in expenditures? Why this shaft to the fisheries?

While we are on the Budget directly, Mr. Speaker, to get away from resource development for a moment let me raise another area of concern, the whole matter of consumer affairs. What does the government plan to do about consumer affairs? What does it plan to do to provide some real protection for the consumer? There, Mr. Speaker, is a whole area that we might get into subsequently. I do not particularly intend to pursue it now but it is a question, Mr. Speaker, that comes to mind when you look at the Budget in this particular year where the whole concern has to do with keeping down costs, the whole concern has to do with providing protection for the

MR. SIMMONS: home buyer, providing protection for the purchaser or the consumer in general terms.

Mr. Speaker, on those lines I have raised a number of questions which I hope can be answered. The best answer we could have, the best answer would be for the government to do what it did last year, but for different reasons, bring in a Budget that realistically addressed itself to the problems we face in the Province. This Budget does not. I know what I suggest is something that will not be carried out. The only time we have had a second budget in the one fiscal year was last year, the only time since Confederation. And why? Well my reason is that the election was why.

MR. DOODY: Which programme will answer that? Do you want to raise taxes or do you want to borrow more money?

MR. SIMMONS: I am coming to all that. I am coming to all that. Only one year since Confederation have we had two Budgets, last year, one before the election, one after it. So I will not be surprised if the government does not bring in another budget this year.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They will.

MR. SIMMONS: Unless - Well the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) says they will. I hope by "they" he means "they". I hope he means the same "they" I do.

The Minister of Forestry and Agriculture is smiling, Mr. Speaker, and he may know, Mr. Speaker. Does he have the new draft budget? Was the new draft budget discussed over dinner? Is that what the minister -

MR. ROUSSEAU: If you go on for many more hours, we will not bring in a new budget.

MR. SIMMONS: I see. I see. I see. All right. Okay. Mr. Speaker, the Budget you will recall did provide an increase in grants to I believe fifteen or sixteen larger municipalities. And for these

MR. SIMMONS: I would hope it was a welcome event. I do not know because I have none of these municipalities in my jurisdiction, my district. What about the small communities, Mr. Speaker? What about the MacCallums, and the Burgeos and the Milltowns of this Province? I was pleased to hear the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I think yesterday or in the last few hours, make an announcement relating to incorporation of some communities. Am I interpreting incorporation as - is that the proper term?

MR. PECKFORD: Yes.

MR. SIMMONS: Incorporation would be involved in some cases.

MR. PECKFORD: Yes well, in some cases.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Right. Yes. Yes. Okay. I say to him I was delighted to hear his comments about this reassessment because there are a number of communities that are in a bind because they do not have the mechanism, the municipal mechanism or whatever to provide certain services.

The minister was out of the House, this is some weeks ago now or some days ago, when I talked about the plight of Grey River insofar as fire protection is concerned. And I am not suggesting we should have municipalities or municipal structures just because a community wants fire protection. But I am suggesting that in the reassessment thought be given to the particular plight. If for some reason, by virtue of the findings of the Whelan Commission or whatever or the minister's knowledge within the department, and the knowledge of his people, if for some reason during the reassessment there cannot be an open policy on the smallest communities - I am thinking of the Grey River type - but they nevertheless address themselves to this side question, but related question of how does a community like Grey River, how does it provide itself with for example fire protection? The minister is familiar with the mechanism for

MR. SIMMONS: providing water services, you set up a committee. For roads you have a local roads board. But fire protection there is no mechanism. And as I pointed out in committee a few days ago, without a mechanism, a committee, a board whatever, a municipality, without a mechanism the community cannot qualify for these fire protection grants, so that there is a particular need in those communities. I just skied over it quickly because the minister obviously by his nodding is quite aware of what I am talking about, and without elaborating I would ask him to look into this particular problem.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget then at the moment does not address itself to the smaller communities and I hope the minister's reassessment will do something to undo the injustice to the small community which I allege is in the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, I was talking a moment ago about consumer affairs and my notes remind me I have something else I want to say about that for the record. Since it is two months since we had this Budget, this Budget does provide for a couple of cents on gasoline you will remember. It does provide for a sales tax, we call it SSA, Social Security Assessment, sales tax of ten per cent.

MR. NOLAN: Shame.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, my friend from Conception Bay South says, "Shame". Indeed. Here we are in 1976, almost sounds old hat, Mr. Speaker, to have to say it again, but the truth of the matter is that this is not the way you curb inflation. This is not the way you help the consumer in this Province. You do not do it by socking it to him.

There used to be a case made—and I guess it is being made again now with the excellent service we are getting from the present Speaker—there used to be a case made for the permanent Speaker. I had a new one last night after my chat to

MR. SIMMONS: the Minister of Finance. I believe a case can be made for a permanent President of Treasury Board.

MR. DOODY: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: You know I have never seen, Mr. Speaker, I have seen the former minister, now the Minister of Mines and Energy, I have seen the former minister, Mr. Earle who is no longer in the House, I have seen these people do their jobs as Minister of Finance and I guess they did it because they had to do it, they had to make some difficult decisions, but, Mr. Speaker, for the first time we are looking at a minister, a president who actually enjoys the job, the Scrooge like job of Treasury Board. Now, Mr. Speaker, I refer to Scrooge. Scrooge's sin was that he was Scrooge on Christmas Day. How much greater is the sin of this member who insists on being a Scrooge every day of the year and enjoys the role, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOODY: The only thing that I enjoy more is listening to you.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah ha! Just like you wrote it for me. Just like you wrote it for me. Mr. Speaker, I would, if it were in order, I would nominate him as a permanent President of the Treasury Board.

MR. DOODY: My family would welcome it.

MR. SIMMONS: The only man who enjoys the job and needs the money at the same time.

Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Simmons:

the President of Treasury Board may make light of a two cent increase in gasoline tax.

MR. DOODY: I am not making light of it. I did not like it in the first place.

MR. SIMMONS: He may make light of the S.S.A. going up to 10 per cent.

MR. DOODY: I take nothing lightly.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people whom I represent that do not think it is funny at all, particularly when it is coupled with the knowledge that the Minister of Mines, the Premier and everybody else involved are out there supporting the increase in gasoline. I do not understand the whole gasoline problem. I do have a feeling that a couple of years ago all of us were badly led down the garden path by the oil companies. We were told what bad shape we were in and that kind of thing, in terms of oil supply. I think we are all realizing now that it was very much a contrived set of events. And as I say I do not purport to be any kind of an expert on the subject, so I cannot give any really intelligent advice as to what we ought to be doing in this here. But I know one thing that we ought not to be doing is the kind of thing we have been doing with respect to the national dialogue on energy cost. I would much prefer to see us at least listening to the proposal put forward by the Premier of Ontario, Mr. Davis.

MR. ROBERTS: Bill Davis.

MR. SIMMONS: I do not know what the details of his proposal are, but I have always had a fair amount of respect for him, for his leadership and I would hope that the proposal he is putting forward will have some merit. All I have heard from the Premier and the Minister of Energy in this Province is a condemnation of that particular proposal. Well, Mr. Speaker, they are all Tories, they are all good Conservatives perhaps they could get together and share their ideas with each other. Perhaps the Prime Minister or the Premier in Ontario does have a kernel of wisdom there that we could latch on to. I do not know, but I do know, Mr. Speaker, that we should not be rushing

Mr. Simmons:

off to the mainland and making statements in the public press about how the energy cost should be even higher than what they are. They may have to be in time I do not know. I am sure they will be. It looks like they will be, I should say. I do not know, but it looks like they will have to be higher. But I do not think that we should be making the escalation in prices all the easier. And I find it difficult, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: Your own spokesman did that on television here one day, the Opposition House Leader.

MR. ROWE: What did I do now?

MR. NEARY: Approved of the increase in the gasoline and fuel heating.

MR. ROWE: Oh no, no.

MR. NEARY: Oh yes.

MR. ROWE: No, no.

MR. SIMMONS: Well I did not see him.

MR. NEARY: I saw him.

MR. SIMMONS: And I will leave that to the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde to explain, but I did not see him.

MR. NEARY: Well I saw him.

MR. SIMMONS: I will say though, Mr. Speaker, that from my talks to our energy spokesman, the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde, what I hear from the member for LaPoile does not at all reflect his thinking on the subject, because the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde shares the comments I have just made that he cannot get excited about the increase in prices.

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe the member's thinking was twisted by his caucus then.

MR. SIMMONS: Ha, ha. The member for LaPoile would know all about that, Mr. Speaker. The member would know all about straight jackets.

MR. NEARY: We had no problems in the caucus until we got you elected in a by-election in Hermitage and then our trouble started.

MR. SIMMONS: Haw, haw! Haw, haw! The truth is out, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: The trouble started with you coming in.

MR. SIMMONS: He had his own way, Mr. Speaker. The member had his own way until then.

MR. FLIGHT: No matter what you say you helped elect the man.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh yes.

MR. NEARY: It is one of the sorriest things I ever did in my life to help shove the member in.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Then from that on the Liberal Party started to get smaller.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, when I remember those speeches that that member made in Milltown and Harbour Breton and Hermitage and St. Alban's about what a great fellow I was, Mr. Speaker, you should hear him, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: I felt like throwing up every time I made them.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, then, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. NEARY: So did my colleagues.

MR. SIMMONS: Now he admits, Mr. Speaker. He did not even believe it then. I am glad he did not, Mr. Speaker, because I did not believe it. I did not believe what he was saying, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Neither did the Leader.

MR. SIMMONS: And the people did not believe it, Mr. Speaker. And they elected me despite him, Mr. Speaker, despite the speech he made, they elected me.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Is it true that you were almost overcome trying to elect him?

MR. NEARY: At one stage the hon. member tried to silence me.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, yes.

MR. NEARY: At one stage, yes.

MR. SIMMONS: That was some job.

MR. NEARY: Down at the head of Bay d'Espoir.

MR. NEARY: I was quite willing to come home because I could not stomach it any longer anyway.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: But anyway that is it.

MR. ROWE: Oh what a happy family!

MR. SIMMONS: Now I am enjoying the entertainment, Mr. Speaker, a clown makes any show. A clown makes any show.

MR. NEARY: That is when the trouble started in the Liberal Party.

MR. DOODY: The hon. member's speech will we take it as said?

MR. SIMMONS: So I am very deflated, Mr. Speaker, today that the member for LaPoile is sorry, sorry at the tremendous job he did down in Hermitage to get me elected. I was wondering, Mr. Speaker, after I was finished with the Monument Committee for another member to which Committee I am pledged to work, I was wondering how I could approach the business of a monument for this particular member. And now I realize that it may not be at all necessary that the obligations I was feeling for his tremendous service to me in Hermitage may not be at all that necessary. So I am grateful, very grateful. I am a little surprised.

MR. NEARY: The hon. member should be, he would never had made it on his own.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, ha! Mr. Speaker, to two people I have to be extremely grateful, to three people I have to be extremely grateful.

MR. NEARY: Bill Rowe,

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, ha! The three people -

MR. NEARY: Your Leader and myself.

MR. SIMMONS: To three people, Mr. Speaker - to three people I am eternally grateful -

MR. WOODROW: I should think there would be a lot of people -

MR. SIMMONS: No, no, there are three people, Mr. Speaker, but actually I think there were altogether 2623, 2620 voters, myself, the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) and the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Hickman), these are the people, Mr. Speaker.

MR. J. WINSOR: The member for Grand Bank?

MR. SIMMONS: The member for Grand Bank. That gentleman -

MR. J. WINSOR: I am not sure - Oh! of course.

MR. SIMMONS: I was not sure of the Seal Cove vote, but the member went to Seal Cove and after his visit the Seal Cove vote was assured me. It was tremendous.

MR. FLIGHT: What about the member for -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: That is Seal Cove.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Well we are going back a long way now, Mr. Speaker, I was going to say I would much prefer to talk about the Budget, that would be a lie.

MR. S. NEARY: Sandy Hynes will never forgive us.

MR. DOODY: Who is Sandy Hynes?

MR. S. NEARY: A taxi driver down in Harbour Breton.

MR. YOUNG: Did he get paid?

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. YOUNG: Did he get paid yet?

MR. NEARY: I do not know if he got paid or not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SMALLWOOD: This should be televised.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, again the member for Twillingate and I agree, I would like to see it televised. I think the sequence of events this afternoon would be far different than we have had. We would not have the insane interjections from the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) babbling away all of the time.

MR. MURPHY: I am just breathing.

MR. SIMMONS: You are just breathing over there, are you? If you are just breathing you are doing it very loudly.

MR. MURPHY: A few more hours of the hon. gentleman and I will tell you they will be coming to take me away.

MR. SIMMONS: Any day. It would be quite different, Mr. Speaker, and I would have long since been able to sit down without

Mr. Simmons:

all of these irrelevant interjections. As I said before there are a few things I want to say and it might take a little longer to say them. We have these depressions.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we talked or I talked about the employment situation there some time ago. And at that time just a half hour or so ago I pointed out that the employment figures were not demonstrating any new jobs. I pointed out that in the various resource departments there was not much new money to give rise for any hope of new jobs. The situation, Mr. Speaker, is worse than that even, because it seems now that not only are we not to have any new jobs but we are apparently in for a period of even higher unemployment. The people in the construction industry tell us that construction is going to be down considerably this year. Just after the Budget was brought down there was a statement in the paper by the construction industry indicating they were anticipating a 50 per cent drop in construction. I hope they are wrong. I hope they are wrong but they may be more right than wrong on this one, Mr. Speaker. The indications are all around us where the construction industry, which we have traditionally relied on as a source of employment, I do not think it is particularly the kind of comment we should brag about, but is a fact of life, I think there is something wrong with an economy when we are looking to construction, seasonal activity as the core, as essentially the core of our employment opportunities.

MR. SIMMONS: So that is where we find ourselves, essentially, where we have had increasing numbers of people relying on seasonal employment jobs, particularly in the construction industry. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, while as I say it is not a very good commentary on the kind of economy or the base of the economy, the economic base we have here, it nevertheless is a fact of life that we depend on these seasonal jobs. Here we are in this year facing even higher unemployment if we are to believe the indicators around us and believe the spokesmen in the construction industry, more important believe what we see in blunt reality on every turn. What we see, what we have demonstrated, what we have evidenced every time we get a telephone call from a constituent who is looking for a job and in his own way, in her own way, he or she eventually says, "Well it is harder to get a job than it was last year." They are finding that. Or they say, "Last year this time I had a job." Or, "Last year this time the project was started." They are finding the pinch in a very real way.

We cannot lay all the blame, Mr. Speaker, with this government. We cannot say that they are the fount of all the faults. We can, Mr. Speaker, in very real terms point the finger for a lack of leadership by government, a lack of fiscal leadership. I was going to say, Mr. Speaker, a lack of confidence. I do not know if that is proper or not. It is proper but I do not know if it is the thing to say because competence is like a volcano sometimes, it could be quite dormant, it could be there but not very active. I have a feeling that in the present government there is no lack of competence. I think the people there have the capability, but it is not very active. They are not doing much about it, and that is what disappoints me, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, just after the Budget was brought down, I think within three or four days, the Premier was on television in an interview on the CBC "Here And Now" television programme with Rex Murphy, the host or the interviewer, and he made rather startling comments, startling insofar as I was concerned. He said, and I believe this quotes him pretty correctly, he said that Newfoundlanders in his view, Newfoundlanders are not as enterprising, not as enterprising as they could be. I have hoped since that he would undertake to explain that comment because I find it unacceptable from two standpoints. First of all I do not think it is true and secondly I do not think the Premier of this Province should be saying it even if he thought it was true. The Premier who is supposed to be providing economic leadership, fiscal leadership to the people of the Province to be out publicly saying that we are not an enterprising people. If the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. Speaker, is looking for the prophets of gloom and doom he should not look over here. He should not look at the people who appeals to him to do something more in fisheries. He should look at his own Premier. He should look at the Minister of Mines and Energy. These are the people who have been preaching gloom and doom and perhaps together with the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) who has some views on the subject.

I happen to believe, Mr. Speaker, that we are an enterprising people, with the bit of initiative we have being drained out of us by the lack of leadership by government. The time for talk is gone, Mr. Speaker. The time for pontifications about resource development, about our rural development and that kind of thing is gone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Somehow, Mr. Speaker, there is a way to reach them. Somehow there is a way to reach them.

MR. W. CARTER: You can go ahead and talk. Go ahead now.

MR. SIMMONS: I do not expect, Mr. Speaker, I do not expect the Minister of Fisheries to agree with anything I say. He did not agree with my assessment of his Budget. A lot of people in Newfoundland agreed with me. The papers agreed with me. The fishermen agreed with me. He did not agree but that is probably to my credit on this subject. I will get worried when he starts applauding me, Mr. Speaker. That is when I will get worried. I will tell him I will applaud him as soon as he begins doing something about the fisheries programme.

MR. W. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries on a point of order.

MR. W. CARTER: A minute or two ago he was criticizing the government and the Minister of Fisheries and others for prancing around Europe as I believe he called it, looking for new industries, trying to -

MR. SIMMONS: What is the point of order?

MR. PATTERSON: Wait.

MR. W. CARTER: - improve our chances of improving the fisheries and then a few minutes later he talked about the need for jobs and the fact that there are so much unemployment. Now he cannot have it both ways. Either he agrees with the government who chose the initiative to go out and search out new industries, new ideas, new concepts or he agrees with unemployment and to use -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. W. CARTER: Are you calling me to order, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I am about to rule on the submission.

MR. W. CARTER: The point of order is, Sir, that the press release to which he has been referring this afternoon I criticized him and his colleagues for distorting the facts as they were revealed in the Budget, for deliberately, maybe, outside of this House trying to mislead the fishermen of our Province by preaching doom and gloom and by giving figures that were totally inaccurate as to the amount being spent on fisheries this year.

MR. ROWE: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. W. CARTER: At best, Sir, that is a point of explanation. Nothing more need be said except this, that when the minister rose on his point of order he referred to a point that had been made by my colleague some few minutes ago, as he stated himself, and if an hon. minister or member wishes to raise to a point of order or a matter of privilege he should do so immediately, not several minutes afterwards. So the minister has struck out on both counts on this point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: On the point of order, in my opinion the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) is not out of order.

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Fisheries was not in his place when I talked about the trip to Europe. I did not use the word "prancing", I did say a very extensive tour of duty. I chose my words carefully. I was not at all negative. Indeed if I did not admit I certainly implied that I felt this kind of thing was in the public interest if we could see some return and that was my question for the minister who was among the group. What has been the result? I am not criticizing the trip. I am asking whether it was worth-while. I cannot decide whether it was, Mr. Speaker. If it was just a holiday for the boys it was not worthwhile. But if it was a fact finding tour, as I believe it to have been, then I am looking for some initiatives. So if the minister would be smart enough to discuss that issue at all, the trip to Europe, in terms of it being a contradiction on my part, it is only a contradiction in the sense that while they went so long ago they said nothing since. That is the contradiction, Mr. Speaker, that we do not know what happened as a result of the visit.

MR. SIMMONS: Now as to his second point about my quoting wrong figures, Mr. Speaker, I will give him the figures. I will give him the figures. He can have them. The figures I quoted, I quoted them today and I quoted them before, they were not done by me they were done by somebody who is fairly competent in the area of research and it is entitled, "A Summary Of Financial Data By Item And Total," for the years 1970, 1971, 1974, 1975 and so on up to the present without reading all the years and all the details. And I can only believe, Mr. Speaker, unless the research person who did this for me is deliberately rigging the figures, I can only assume that he lifted them from the Budget for the various heads and I ask the minister to, if it is wrong what I said just now that last year we spent \$22 million on Fisheries in total and this year we are budgeting \$16 million, I mean if that is wrong I mean let him say so. That is what I said just now.

MR. W. CARTER: You did not say that.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes indeed I did.

MR. W. CARTER: No you never.

MR. SIMMONS: Indeed I did. I pointed out to the minister and to the public -

MR. W. CARTER: You did not have the press release.

MR. SIMMONS: Well has the minister got one there?

The minister, Mr. Speaker - the only comment that I made after the Budget I read in part today because I do have the press release here as a matter of fact that he refers to.

MR. SIMMONS: and the comment I made about the fisheries was why is less money being budgeted for developing our resources and I mentioned the fishery as well as forestry and so on and then also I said why has the government decided to shaft the fishery as is obvious from the Budget? That is what I said, Mr. Speaker. There is the press release right there.

I did also say in responding to the minister's press conference that I felt that what he was saying in that press conference was what the Premier had been saying for four years. We are hearing the same speech all over again, all they were going to do. One of those days we are going to do something for the fishery. I keep asking and the fishermen keep asking, when? The Premier has been saying it for four years and now the minister has got a copy of the speech and he is saying the same thing. Well we have heard it enough, when are they going to do something?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Give us seriously some idea of what the hon. member suggests should be done. He has not referred to Ottawa.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have not referred to Ottawa because I expect the hon. gentleman opposite and his colleagues to talk in full measure about Ottawa and how all their problems are Ottawa based problems. I recognize that a number of the problems are problems that -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A number of problems are in the jurisdictions.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes a number of the problems are problems that are related to the jurisdictions.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I was going to ask a question about the attitude - I am really interested in this, I have not heard much comment on it. Now my colleague, the Minister of Fisheries, made a good bit of reference last month to the problem of the quotas imposed on redfish in the Gulf.

MR. SIMMONS: I made some comment.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Yes, quotas imposed on redfish in the Gulf.

And he has made statements, and I am not a party to the discussions he has with Ottawa and his officials, made very serious statements about the impact of the quotas on the fish plants on the South Coast. And of course that has particular concern right now because here we are investing \$9 million, \$10 million, \$11 million, \$12 million in a major facility in Burgeo.

MR. W. CARTER: That is nothing.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Now has the member received any serious representation from his people in Burgeo regarding the quotas and I would like to know what his position is on it, particularly his position as it relates to Ottawa?

MR. NEARY: Well is this not going to be a multi-purpose fish plant now?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Well when it is opened, which will be more than two years down the road -

MR. DOODY: They are closer to redfish.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Red fish has always been in that plant the major species going through. But we are making provision. That is why the plant is costing so much, one of the reasons that it will be able to have a good deal of adaptability.

MR. NEARY: Do not get boxed in like that.

MR. SIMMONS: I am glad the minister asked that question. I would like to deal with some of it a little later on because I had some comments to make particularly about the fishery but just to respond to him very quickly, I hope that I can answer the question a little more completely than the answers I was getting on the subject. I have, I do not know if the Minister of Fisheries, has noticed, but I just gave up asking the Minister of Fisheries questions because you do not get any answers from him and I have -

MR. W. CARTER: You do not have any questions.

MR. SIMMONS: The last time I asked the minister a question I was

MR. SIMMONS: told that I did not ask it the proper way or something. I have a lot of questions. I represent a fishing district but I cannot get any answers from the minister and I get conflicting answers from other people on this subject.

MR. NEARY: The minister is the best one over there if you want to get an answer.

MR. SIMMONS: I am not talking about the quality of the minister. I am saying I cannot get answers from the minister and I gave up asking.

MR. W. CARTER: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. W. CARTER: The hon. member, Mr. Speaker, has made a false statement I think, whether deliberately or otherwise Your Honour must decide. I have not refused to answer questions in this House. I recall one day when he prefaced his question with insulting remarks -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Which he always does.

MR. W. CARTER: - which he usually does and I elected to refuse to answer the question -

MR. SIMMONS: A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. W. CARTER: - until he saw fit to ask the question properly, in a gentlemanly way.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! A point of privilege has come up which I have to listen to first.

MR. SIMMONS: On a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker, affecting my privileges in this House, I do not intend, Mr. Speaker, as a member of this House to stand here and have another member badly misrepresent what I have done on a particular occasion. The occasion the minister refers to, to refresh our memories is a day when I assumed, and this part is an assumption,

MR. SIMMONS: that he had just answered a question which he had asked a member to ask him. Now whether that is so or not is not important to what I am saying here. That is another issue. But I was of the opinion, based on some information I was given by a third party, that he had just planted a question with somebody on this side and that person at his request had put the question to him. And then, Mr. Speaker, I in almost a jocular aside, a joking aside when I got up said, and if you call this insulting, Mr. Speaker, I was insulting, my words almost exactly were this, "I have a question for the Minister of Fisheries which he did not ask me to ask him." That was my insulting remark.

MR. W. CARTER: No it was not.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, it is very uncalled for for a member to stand in this House, give the impression to the other members and the public gallery that I was insulting in asking questions. That was the exact extent of what I asked, of what I said.

MR. W. CARTER: You said more than that.

MR. SIMMONS: I said something to the effect, "I will ask the minister a question that he did not ask me to ask him." I said it in joking fashion, the minister could not take the joke and I am sorry for that. My point of privilege, if you want a motion, Mr. Speaker, I think it should be accompanied by a motion, I would move that the member be asked to retract the false statements he made in reference to my earlier participation in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I believe we have a point of privilege now and then a point of order and I believe that we can dispose with both and then continue with the motion before the House. I do not see that there is any prima facie breach of privilege. There seems to be a difference of opinion on whether language or what some hon. member said with respect to another hon. member's question or answer whether it was insulting or not but I do not

MR. SPEAKER: consider that to be a matter of privilege. There seems to be a difference of opinion as to who asked the question and whether he was asked to ask it or not or whether it was a different question, etc. There certainly does not seem to be any privilege involved and with respect to the point of order -

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, is Your Honour accepting more argument on the point of order?

MR. SPEAKER: Well the point of privilege is disposed of, if the hon. gentleman feels he has a serious one then I will certainly hear it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I know that the minister does not need me to come to the minister's defence, Sir, but I have to say this in all fairness, from this side of the House that I am most active during the oral question period, as members know, and I would say that the minister has quite a good track record in my opinion, Sir, in answering questions. I think it is very unkind and uncouth and unfair and unparliamentary for the hon. member to accuse the Minister of Fisheries of not answering questions. He has a good track record. If all the other ministers on the government benches answered their questions as good as the Minister of Fisheries, Sir, I would say that we would get more information in this hon. House. And personally speaking I have to commend the minister. I think he is doing a fantastic job. Any question that I ever put to the minister, Sir, I got a straight answer, straight from the shoulder and concise, simple, so that everybody could understand it. Maybe that is half my hon. friend's trouble he does not understand the answers when he asks the questions. But the minister does have a good track record for answering questions, Sir, and I just want to put that on the record of this House.

MR. SIMMONS: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I will hear the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) and I think after that we will have had probably sufficient in order to make a ruling because I do not regard it as an extremely difficult ruling but there may be some abstruse points of which I am not yet aware.

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

MR. SIMMONS: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I may be able to dispose of it for you. I do not know what everybody is getting worked up about. I simply said, not that the minister does not give answers, what I said is that I cannot, I cannot, I can speak for me, I cannot get answers from the minister. I have tried on several occasions, I cannot get answers, Mr. Speaker.

MR. W. CARTER: False.

MR. SIMMONS: I am speaking to the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I cannot get answers.

MR. W. CARTER: A point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I have heard the hon. minister on the point of order when he raised it and I have heard the -

MR. W. CARTER: I rose on a point of privilege because what the hon. member is saying is just not true.

MR. SPEAKER: Right.

MR. W. CARTER: I recall on one occasion when I refused to answer a question for the reasons I have given and I think for the hon. member, or indeed any member in this House to suggest that another member, in this case our friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), would allow a minister to prime him with a question or to feed a question to him. That to me is insulting.

MR. SPEAKER: Right. Order, please! Order, please! I do not see that there is a prima facie point of privilege made. With respect to the point of order in which I do not feel the need for any further submissions, the question of whether an hon. minister answers all questions or some questions or whether they are

MR. SPEAKER: satisfactory or not satisfactory is, in my opinion, completely a matter of opinion. Some hon. members might think that an hon. minister answers all of the questions, or most of them, or some of them and he answers them well or unsatisfactorily and I would regard that there was no point of order to decide there but a serious difference of opinion.

Before recognizing the hon. gentleman from

Mr. Speaker:

from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir it being 5:00 o'clock I wish to inform hon. members of the three matters which will be up for debate at 5:30. I have received notice of four, three of them from hon. members in the Official Opposition, and one from the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). As hon. members know the relevant Standing Order with respect to the selection when there are more than three, opens up various possibilities. The basic principle is at the discretion of the Speaker who may then make his decision with respect to how early they were received on their importance, or after consultation. With respect to the three received from the Official Opposition I have decided that two would be on and consulted with the three hon. gentlemen. The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde whose question was on the appointment of Standing Committees withdrew his and wished me to inform hon. members that he had discussed the matter with the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

So the three which will be heard and in this order are, the first arising from a question of the hon. Minister of Tourism, notice given by the hon. member for Eagle River (Mr. Strachan) concerns the enforcement of the Wild Life Act in various parts of the Province, and its effect upon traditional methods of hunting. The second arises from a question asked by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) to the hon. Minister without Portfolio and on the subject of lack of jobs in both the private and public sectors in the Province, and the question of a job creation programme. And the third one arises from a question asked by the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) to the hon. Minister of Forestry and Agriculture with reference to the thousands of cords of wood which are being permitted to float in the Red Indian Lake.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Before the points of order I was addressing myself to a question put to me by the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and it related to the redfish quotas in

Mr. Simmons:

the Gulf in particular. I made an aside involving the Minister of Fisheries because one of the sets of question that I would very much like to be asking in the House relate to Fisheries, relate to areas of concern in my district and that includes fisheries obviously, and the Minister responsible is the Minister of Fisheries. My track record has not been good with him, in my opinion, and for that reason a lot of the questions have to go unanswered.

I will have to check the Hansards -

MR. CARTER: Try me again sometime, if that is the case.

MR. SIMMONS: I have tried, Mr. Speaker, to the minister I tried but I have other sources, Mr. Speaker, of getting information.

MR. SIMMONS: I have other sources of getting information. And I am getting some conflicting information first of all on the government's involvement in this redfish quota. The day the quota was either announced, I do not know if it was announced as such or just talked about, it was espoused I believe on the 1st. of 2nd. day of March, and on the day it was beginning to be espoused along in the - it is not fair to say it was just espoused that day, they were aware of it before in the fishing industry, but it got to be fairly public knowledge. I believe the Minister, Mr. LeBlanc announced it on a Monday or the weekend, but there was a fair amount of talk about it two or three days before. Indeed I was at a function where Ministers of the Crown were at the same time, and the subject of the quotas came up. One of the speakers at the function before the minister, not the Minister of Fisheries, made some reference to the possible limitation of redfish quotas in the Gulf. And the minister in responding or in following the initial speaker who is not a government member said something to the effect that the Provincial Government had not been consulted on the matter. On the same day I ran into a government official, who I shall not name because he was and is a senior civil servant, who said to me even almost as the minister talked,

Mr. Simmons:

"That is not true. It just is not true." And I was then told about meetings that had gone on where the Provincial Fisheries Department had been consulted by the Federal Department on the subject of redfish quotas. So I just enter that into the record because there has been some conflicting information, and I only regret I have not been able to get some information from the minister on the subject. But as he invites me, one of those days I shall try again, and perhaps I will score the next time around.

But back to the question which the member for Grand Falls was asking me. I have had representation from the union in Burgeo, from various fishermen in Burgeo who were pretty concerned about the redfish quotas, and I am pretty concerned about them. I have resisted the temptation to run to the press and make the obvious statement, The obvious statement is how shocking it is, and that is also my gut feeling. It is certainly shocking in the short-term. I am not a fisheries expert and I do not know what the options are. And as I talk to a number of people on it, the options appear to be very few, it seems to me. And I have made no public statement on it, I have kept in pretty regular touch with the people at Burgeo on the subject. I am very unhappy. I am very unhappy with the quotas in the Gulf because it is going to effect job opportunities in my own district. Beyond that I must say to the minister I do not know if I have any position on it other than the concern as to how it is going to effect the employment opportunities. I do not understand the implications. I did not have the benefit of the consultations that the minister and his people would have had. I do not know what the options are. I am hoping and I am believing, I am believing that the minister and his people are in continuing contact, the Minister of Fisheries, are in continuing contact with the people from Ottawa, and that they are having an input into the programmes that are being devised to at once conserve the fishery stocks and at the same time to maximize job opportunities in the short-term.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A brief question on the same thing, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask him if the member has drafted any kind of a reasonable representation to the Federal Government, to the Minister of Fisheries, and to Ottawa officials indicating his position?— he indicated now that he has a gut negative feeling towards it and that his concern is about the impact on jobs and this sort of thing — and if he has I wonder would he just be prepared to sort of give us an indication of what his representation was and what response he has gotten back officially? I like that because that is a very important question for the people in Burgeo to know for sure.

MR. SIMMONS: And the people in Burgeo know the answer to that of course. The people in Burgeo know and the minister will now know that I had made representation both to the Minister of Fisheries, federally, and the Minister of Environment I should be saying, federally, no, Fisheries, and also the minister responsible for Fisheries federally, and also to the Newfoundland representative in the Federal Cabinet. I have conveyed my concern in terms of job opportunities. I have pleaded justifiably, pleaded ignorance on the subject of the overall question of conservation, and I have nothing but standard acknowledgments. That is the —

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Standard acknowledgments.

MR. SIMMONS: You know the acknowledgments you get.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You got nothing else?

MR. DOODY: You just got their "We regret."

MR. SIMMONS: Exactly! Exactly!

MR. CARTER: That is all you have had back?

MR. SIMMONS: That is all I have had yes.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You should have gone on T.V., gotten mad, and go the air with every question three times a day.

MR. SIMMONS: I say to the minister there is a time to get mad. It depends on who you are dealing with. When I am dealing with him I have to get very mad to get my point across. I have in my constituency a pretty reasonable and intelligent group of people and I can usually get my point across without waving arms or getting

Mr. Simmons:

at all mad. We are in consultation on the point.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: May I ask the member just a brief question?

MR. SIMMONS: By all means.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Thank you. Now I ask the question about whether the member has taken sort of a strong public position here for the simple reason we have here to my left the Minister of Fisheries. Now I was a few years sitting in the House of Commons and I got involved in a lot of heavy debate on a lot of issues. But when we did we pointed fingers in a lot of directions, lots of times the hon. gentleman from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) bore the brunt of some of the observations we had to make at that time and our own party, frequently. As a matter of fact I remember one time we both voted against our party in the House, the only two members, because of our concern that the party was absolutely wrong on the position it took, it was on unemployment insurance. And the thing that concerned me and I raise the question is, in view of the fact that the Fisheries Minister gets attacked daily by the member who represents a totally fishing district, which is an unusual form of behaviour especially after only being here a few weeks, how come he does not elect to take the same type of toughness and strength -

MR. CARTER: Against the people who are at fault.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: _ against the people who are at fault, where we in fact cannot do it ourselves because we have to work with the Federal Government. The member reminds us of this from Trinity-Bay de Verde. How come the member has not tried to help us on this kind of an issue publicly? What would be the reason for it?

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of presumptions in the member's question which I will have to deal with first before I could answer the question or else it would appear that I agree with what he is saying in his presumptions. First of all, if he refers

MR. SIMMONS:

to me when he says the member is attacking the Minister of Fisheries every day, of course he is not right, because I have had very little to say about the Minister of Fisheries. Indeed the less that is said about him the better in some respects.

MR. LINDPICKAN: That is a perfect example.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker. When I say that I mean that I had my experience - and I would say it to the man's face rather than say it behind his back - is that I am disappointed - now he may be disappointed in me - but I am disappointed, very disappointed on two counts about him. I have nothing against the gentleman personally but I am disappointed about him on two counts. One is the highhanded way he chose to deal with our questions. Not only my questions, other questions. I have dealt with that.

Also, Mr. Speaker -

MR. W. CARTER: To quote the phony, an absolute phony.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister can use the old childish approach and call names because he does not like something that is being said but I am not going to indulge in name calling. He may think I am a phony. I do not think he is a phony. I do not agree with everything he does. I do not agree with the way he has been handling my questions and I have told him that and I will tell him to his face. Secondly -

MR. W. CARTER: How long have you been asking me that I have not answered?

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, how many times do I have to ask the minister a question before he decides to condescend to answer me? He told me point blank in the House he would not answer my questions. Now I realize he is sorry for that and I will give him a second chance one of those days.

MR. W. CARTER: If you put your question the same way again I will not answer you.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, is the minister going to write the questions for

MR. SIMMONS:

me as he did for another member?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: What does that mean?

MR. SIMMONS: Never mind that. Now, Mr. Speaker, the second matter -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: On a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman on a point of order.

MR. SIMMONS: Sir, this is shocking. This is a waste of time. It is shocking 'John', shocking.

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

MR. LUNDRIGAN: One of the reasons -

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has risen on a point of order and now we see that it takes precedence. I would ask the hon. gentleman and anyone else who feels inclined to speak to the point of order if they would confine their remarks strictly to the point of order.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, the point of order is that the member has made and continues to make - this is one of the reasons for the decorum in the House every time the member speaks - he makes remarks such as he has just made, an accusation, you might say a charge or an insult - you can use whatever terminology one would want to use - where he has accused the minister - he said the minister wrote questions for another member. Now there is nothing wrong with that if another member has not got the foresight or insight or ability to write a question. But when he says it and is challenged to indicate what he is talking about he should be forced or compelled to do this. You just cannot make comments back and forth across the House on a daily basis which is in the form of a charge unless the member is prepared to certainly clarify it to the point that we will know he is telling the facts.

So the point of order is that the member is making an accusation and I am suggesting that he is not allowed to make that accusation unless he is prepared to clarify it. He should withdraw it or clarify it.

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

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I will try to clear this one up pretty quickly. My colleague has mentioned several times in the House of Assembly this afternoon that the Minister of Fisheries had asked a member in Opposition to ask him a question.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: He said he wrote the question.

MR. ROWE: Okay. I think the hon. member might have said 'wrote' in his last comment. But it is obvious that he was using the word figuratively. But he has said on a number of occasions -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You do not speak figuratively.

MR. ROWE: - if I can be permitted to continue, Mr. Speaker - has said that the minister had requested a member opposite to ask him a question. Now I can testify to that. I was asked by the Minister of Fisheries - probably I am the member to whom my colleague is referring but did not want to mention it unnecessarily - but I was asked by the Minister of Fisheries to ask him a question concerning a particular problem in my district and I did so at one stage of the game and if the minister denies that, he is not telling the truth. So my colleague has been telling the truth all afternoon and I was the member who was requested by the minister to ask the question. But I do not want to pursue what the question was about because we are having a meeting about that problem in my district and I think all members know what the particular problem was and is.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

I have heard from both sides on this point of order and I believe the matter can be disposed of now. The essential submission by the hon. member who made the point of order was that it was unparliamentary or out of order to state that one hon. member wrote out a question for another hon. member. The hon. member went on to say that this could be clarified. Certainly if there were in the original hon. member's speech - you see it is unparliamentary to speak derisively of another hon. member, you know to suggest that anybody was too stupid or too this or too that to write out their own

MR. SPEAKER:

questions. I was not aware of any derision in the particular comment of the hon. member. Certainly without the element of derision - and that is referred specifically in Beauchesne, that one hon. member may not refer to another in a derisive fashion. But to state simply that one hon. member wrote out a question for another hon. member is not unparliamentary. Whether in fact the hon. member did or did not ask that a question be written out or whether an hon. member did or did not in fact write it out are differences of opinion. But I see that there is nothing unparliamentary to date.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: On a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of privilege has arisen.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, the reason perhaps for some of the debate today, or the points of order and personal privilege, which is certainly not in any way to delay the proceedings of the House because I think everybody would like to - go away 'John', go away 'Harry', go away 'Bill', I have got a question of privilege which I would like to state Your Honour which I have been wanting to do for some time. The fact of the matter is that, Sir, if a member of this hon. House continues on a daily basis to make observations and references and charges and suggestions and criticisms and provocative statements which has an effect on the order of the House, then the hon. member is violating the privileges of the House.

Now this is the question of privilege I have and I will state from Standing Order 128 which I have been wanting to use for some time. "The personal attack - and this is what we have seen here this afternoon - a personal attack which continues-not only on this hon. member, the Minister of Fisheries but other hon. members - a personal attack by one member upon another is an offense against the House in the person of one of its members, which, on account of respect due from every member to the character and dignity of the House, as well as the importance of preserving regularity in debate - and it goes on - is a breach of the privileges of the House." Now

MR. LUNDRICAN:

this is what we are getting and this is perhaps the most key Standing Order that we have. Or not Standing Order but a citation that we have which has affected the decorum and the dignity of this House on a continuous basis.

It is not a matter of the specific little charge that the hon. member wrote out questions which has obviously been clarified. He did not write out any questions. That is not the issue. The issue is the fact that there is the continuous reference of personalities, personal little insinuations, little kinds of cuts and thrusts which have no - they are not the good, tall, respectable kind of repartee that you get in the House. That is why I sit here and I find myself being dragged into this and I am ashamed of myself, on a lot of occasions when this kind of exchange takes place. I do not know if it is the length of the day, the sunshine outside or something peculiar to the physical aspects of the House or if it is to do with hon. members but this hon. gentleman - and I do not want to be unkind - seems to elicit a type of response from members on this side of the House which causes considerable problems. And I think that that Standing Order, Sir, should be very carefully looked at by Your Honour and by Your Honour's advisors in the future so that we can crack down on members who continue to make provocative statements to the extent that it affects the dignity of the House. Not because we are worried about the hon. Minister of Fisheries or any other hon. member being offended but because it does hurt the institution which is more important than the debate itself and perhaps even the extent of the debate which is the Budget Speech.

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

MR. POWE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister, with all of his parliamentary experience in Ottawa, got up and stood on a point of privilege and accused the hon. member for Hermitage-Bay D'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) of continuously using personal attacks or becoming

MR. POWE:

engaged in personal attacks upon the Minister of Fisheries day after day after day and using provocative statements. He used that generalization several times without one single example to establish any type of a prima facie case which is required in stating a point of privilege. So he failed utterly in trying to establish the prima facie case in his point of privilege. Sir, he did not cite one single example of a personal attack or provocative statements by my colleague.

Secondly, Sir, he did not follow his point of privilege with a substantive motion which is required when you are bringing a point of privilege before the House. So once again, Sir,

MR. ROWE: Sir, another hon. member has struck out on both cases and it is just simply not a point of privilege. The only thing the hon. member was correct in in his whole speech, so-called point of privilege, was he read Standing Order 128 (1) correctly. That is the only thing he did correctly, Sir. So I submit, Sir, that it was not a point of privilege on two counts, one - he did not establish a prime facie case, and secondly he did not move a substantive motion which is required.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might -

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

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I am not as interested in the prime facie case of privilege. I am not as interested in the motion which could be moved, which I could have moved, I am more interested in bringing to Your Honour's attention a general problem that we have, that even though it is late in the year and we might be here only for a number of weeks more, I think it is important for this institution that that kind of Standing Order be recognized, and that there be some recognition by hon. members of their responsibilities, including me as I speak to the motion. But I was not raising on that question of privilege to win any kind of little parliamentary battle or debate in terms of having it accepted as a prime facie case.

MR. ROWE: Only it is required in Standing Orders.

MR. SIMMONS: It is not required.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! With respect to the point of privilege, I have consulted section 128 of Beauchesne as referred to by the hon. minister and there can be no dispute that a personal attack by one member upon another is an offence which calls for prompt interference from the Chair and if that does not happen then for another hon. member to draw the attention of the Chair to it. And I am aware that the hon.

MR. SPEAKER: minister said he was not speaking of one instance but of an overall, what he regarded as an overall atmosphere or conduct in the House. But with reference to the specific instance I cannot regard that there has been a personal attack by one member upon another. I do not think that there has been a breach of privilege.

I would like to add, just read a few words from May, pages 418 and 419, "good temper and moderation are the characteristics of parliamentary language. Parliamentary language is never more desirable than when a member is canvassing the opinions and conduct of his opponents in debate."

Now the point that I wish to make is that the rules do not indicate to me that there has been any breach of privilege. All I can do is to rule on breach of order, or breach of privilege. The question of manners as such is outside of the jurisdiction of the Chair. There has to be a quite serious conduct typified for example by what Beauchesne calls a personal attack, or imputations of false motives, charges of uttering a deliberate falsehood, a derision, ridicule. These are the areas of privilege and I do not consider that they have been broken. With respect to the courtesies that hon. members extend to one another, there I think it is essentially a matter of self and collective discipline.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

I am very delighted to hear the ruling and I hope to be guided by it because it is not my desire to inject any bad temper into the debate. I was not wanting to be personal with the Minister of Fisheries or any other. I have not been in my view. I do not intend to be. If I disagree with him I shall say so as I have said. We talked about my view, as to how he handled the questions, I do not think that is being at all personal.

MR. W. CARTER: You could be truthful.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I was being truthful. Now the minister, talking about getting personal, the minister called me a couple of really childish names earlier this afternoon and now he implies I am not being truthful. Now if that is not getting personal. If the minister from Grand Falls is looking for examples of getting personal I suggest he look to his colleague the Minister of Fisheries who unfortunately is developing some expertise in the area of getting personal. It seems every time I get on my feet he is not content to sit there and at least listen to what I have to say or respect my right to say it, he has got to hurl personal asides all the time. Why does he do it?

Mr. Speaker, I will never, I will never if I am in this House for sixty years, I will never ever as long as I am here, ever make the kind of personal attack on any member of this House that I saw being made on the Leader of the Opposition two weeks ago by several members opposite. Now let us not get pious about personal attacks in this House. We know who has been making the personal attacks and you cannot cover it up by getting up and giving a pious speech like the member for Grand Falls has just given. We know who the experts are at personal attacks in this House and I will have it said that I am not one of them. I have no time for it, Mr. Speaker. But I saw the lowest kind of personal attacks being made on the Leader of the Opposition here in the last two weeks and members will recall what I am talking about. Now let us not talk about personal attacks. Let us get back to the issue here and the issue at the moment was the matter of fisheries. And I was saying and I say so quite candidly and I say so quite truthfully that my track record with the minister in getting answers has been less than satisfactory. Perhaps the fault is mine. I am willing to admit that. And I have told him already I will try again.

But, Mr. Speaker, this school teacherish condescension

MR. SIMMONS: look down from above attitude that I will answer your question if you cloak it in the right language, Mr. Speaker, I am at a loss to know what language would suit the minister under the circumstances.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I was starting to say right now I have nothing at all against the minister personally. I have two points I want to make and I had made the first and then I got interrupted. The first is related to his answering my question. The second relates to his handling of the department and I think I have made it pretty clear, Mr. Speaker, how I feel about that. I regret his obvious lack of influence in Cabinet as witnessed by the total amounts that have been voted for his department. I regret his negligence and the negligence of his predecessors, the two predecessors, the present member for Gander (Mr. Collins), and the present member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie). I regret their negligence, who as ministers responsible for the Fisheries portfolios since the inception of the special gear replacement programme have been negligent in their duty as ministers. I feel strongly about that, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps it is a good note to end on. I would like to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: It now being five thirty it is deemed that a motion to adjourn is before the Chair. The first topic for debate is the enforcement of the Wild Life Act.

The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. STRACHAN:

Mr. Speaker, I notice with great regret that the minister to whom I wish to direct this debate has not only absented himself from the House but has absented himself from the Province while I deliver the -

MR. WELLS: I would like to make an explanation to the hon. member if he wishes.

MR. STRACHAN: He probably does not even -

MR. WELLS: I had a telephone call from the minister who is trying to get back from Ottawa and expected to be here for the session this afternoon but the plane that he was on developed mechanical trouble and is being held in Halifax. So he may be here within the hour or so in the Province. But that is what has happened to him.

MR. STRACHAN: I accept this statement, fine. In a short preamble, what I am trying to state here is that for hundreds of years the settler people on the Labrador Coast and for thousands of years the Inuit and Naskaupi Indian people of the coast have hunted, fished and trapped as a means of living and a means of survival. The Inuit in the North and the Naskaupi Indian who are now settled in Davis Inlet wandered throughout the area living very much off the land and off the sea. The settlers came 200 years ago to the whole coast and they carved out their homes hunting in patterns some of which they had adopted from the Inuit and some they adopted themselves.

All people live very much according to season and weather, varying their patterns according to the animals around them. Certain guns were used for certain animals at certain times of the year because other firearms proved useless or destructive. Certain animals were taken at certain times of the year and only rarely taken at other times of the year because of the availability of other wildlife and meat. There was no need to take ducks, for instance, early in the Fall, when the season is now open, when fish were plentiful except for a welcome change of diet. There was no need to take geese when you had hares, rabbits, seals and other animals around you. But there was a need to take geese and ducks in the Spring of the year when the

MR. STPACHAN:

Ice was too thin to support a hunter who was after seals and there was not sufficient water to launch a boat and to go after fish.

For years and years that was how things were with unwritten rules, the hunting seasons and the type of animals taken governed by the time of year and the availability of meat. In the last twenty years much changes have taken place and people have come together from isolated parts of the coast, spread out in all the little bays to live in communities. So it is that the Voisey Bay people, the Anaktalik people, the Tikkerarguk people, the Kingurutik people, Outarde, Nutak and Hebron people have been moved into the community of Nain. And similarly Hopedale and similarly Cartwright or the Spotted Islands, Seal Islands, Frenchmans Island and Domino people all moved into these communities. But the situation remains much the same as far as meat is concerned.

Meat brought into the coast for sale in stores, both private and government owned, arrive on the last boats in November and December. This meat is sold throughout the Winter and often the supply runs out or the meat by March, April, May, June and July stored in cold stores without any humidity control often turns rancid, dried out and inedible. It certainly would not be sold and would be condemned in St. John's. The people therefore, regardless of supply of limited amount of provisions, have carried on hunting practices which not only mean food for the table but also means satisfaction of being a provider or the pride of carrying out a hunt and various aspects like this. So that it developed into that culture.

The Davis Inlet Indians, of course, they tell me that in the South you have hens, chickens, cows, milk, vegetables, eggs and yet at that time of the year the only thing they have is the land and the deep freeze which the land is. The land is their deep freeze. They go and pick off from the deep freeze whatever they want.

Now we come to the situation we are faced with nowadays. We realize that the patterns of life are changing. But what is occurring

MR. STRACHAN.

is that a Wild Life Act which had been put together in St. John's, primarily at a time when it was applied to the Island of Newfoundland, is now being applied with severe restrictions to Labrador, so that the people now are finding that they are being arrested for chasing caribou with a skidoo for which they have a six months jail sentence. They are arrested and confiscated for carrying a 22 rifle, unplugged shotguns, of which all people on the coast, myself included, none of us plug our shotguns, carrying loaded rifles on motorized vehicles. Crossing management zones, in which the only way to get to the open zone is to cross the management zone, and you are arrested, you are charged and your caribou, rifles, machines are confiscated from you.

So the people now feel that the Wild Life Act which does not apply to them should be revised, should be rewritten and the section of the Wild Life Act which they want the minister to look at is Section No. 4 in which he has the power to appoint an advisory board to assist in the rewriting of the Wild Life Act. This is the problem they face and it is of some urgency because they are now faced with a great deal of charges.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, as I explained earlier, when the hon. member began his remarks, the minister has been delayed in getting back and of course is unable to respond to the member's remarks. So I do not intend to attempt to deal with this because I have not the knowledge that is necessary. Except I would say this, that the government recognizes that the problems of the people living in Labrador, in the coastal areas, which I think we are concerned with is very different than that of the sports hunter who is the person who goes into the woods for the most part on the Island of Newfoundland. We recognize that that is very different. And in framing regulations the government is very conscious of this and the Minister of Tourism, under whose department this comes, is very conscious of it. Now he would be able to respond to this, but I can assure the hon. member that I will bring everything that he has said to the attention of the minister, and I want to assure him as a member and his constituents also, and the people in Labrador who are concerned with this, that we as a government regard it as a matter of importance and concern, and that every worthwhile representation that can be made we will take into consideration, and in particular the minister will take into consideration, and perhaps the minister when I have told him the gist of what has been said this afternoon may feel in a ministerial statement or perhaps in the question period or maybe in the general debates that he can respond and set out in detail the government's position.

MR. SPEAKER: The next subject for debate concerns the position with respect to jobs in the private and public sector. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, in reply to my question to the Minister without Portfolio, the day before yesterday I think it was, as to action contemplated by the government to offset the ridiculous and tragic unemployment figures for Newfoundland, the Government House Leader, Sir, inform the House that the government have and I quote, "Long range plans" that would deal with our perennial problem of

Mr. Neary:

being at the bottom of the unemployment totem pole. The worst position, Sir, of any other Province in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. minister spoke for a government that now has had four years in which to gestate such plans. Surely, Sir, by now they must be ready to announce at this late date, surely, Sir, if they do have such plans and the plans are workable they must be now in a position, and I would go as far as to say, Sir, it is the duty of the government to outline these plans, to get on with them immediately, and put an end, Mr. Speaker, to the cruel uncertainty that is undermining the morale of our Newfoundland people in every section of this Province at this particular time because they are unable to find employment.

The springboard for my question, Sir, as the House probably is aware, on Tuesday past, was the increase in our unemployment rate for March by a disgraceful .6 per cent up from 13.4 per cent in March to 14 per cent in April. This increase, Mr. Speaker, is at a time of year when employment opportunities should be opening up and at a time well in advance, Sir, when we will soon see the rush of young people pouring out of our university, our colleges, and our vocational schools and high schools and flooding the employment market and just **worsening** the situation in the next few weeks.

Mr. Speaker, this unhealthy increase represents the most joblessness that we have ever had in this Province, Sir, and represents a group, in the statistics that were released the other day by Statistics Canada, represents the group of twenty-five years and over, men and women in that category. Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask the hon. House and the hon. members of the government how can a government when it claims that it has in its possession a fullfledged plan for relieving the unemployment situation, according to the hon. minister, the Government House Leader, how can a government, Sir, be so ruthless and cruel as to allow our people to remain in the valley of humiliation and suffering and hopelessness while the government clutch these plans to their bosom and refuse to let the House know what these plans are,

Mr. Neary:

and not to announce their plans to the people of this Province.
Mr. Speaker, in the names of the ordinary, hard pressed, unemployed people of this Province who want above all things, Sir, to be able to enjoy their human right to a decent job and a decent wage I ask the government if it does have a plan to give at least some indication of that plan to the House and to the people of this Province so at least, Sir, that they will have some sign of hope to help them to cope with the hopeless employment slump that apparently we are passing through at this particular time, and give them some hope, Sir, before this present session ends, to give them some hope to light their way through the austerity days that are ahead, that have been announced by the Minister of Finance.

MR. SIMMONS: Green, 1976.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister Without Portfolio

MR. WELLS: I thank the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, for -

MR. NEARY: You would not like to have the glasses shoved right down your throat would you?

MR. WELLS: What is happening, Mr. Speaker?

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir, on a point of order.

MR. SIMMONS: I have been threatened to have the glasses shoved down my throat. The answer to the member's question is, "No, I would not like to," but to my point of order, Sir -

MR. NEARY: Just say the word.

MR. SIMMONS: - to my point of order, Mr. Speaker, I was merely informing the House on the source of the information. I added at the end, as it is appropriate at the end of any abridged or borrowed document or even given document, Mr. Speaker, or prepared document, I added the source of the information. I said for the record, "Green, 1976." It is appropriate, Mr. Speaker. The onus is on me as the editor here in the House to do that kind of thing; Green, 1976. That is all I said, Mr. Speaker. If giving information to the House means that I have to run the risk of having the glasses shoved down my throat, well, that is a risk I will take as a member of this House.

MR. CROSBIE: Hear! Hear!

MR. NEARY: My son, we would not have you around when we were knocking around Bell Island. We would not have you around.

MR. SIMMONS: They kicked you off Bell Island, though, did they not?

MR. NEARY: No, they did not kick me off Bell Island.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. CROSBIE: He is too green to burn.

MR. SPEAKER: I would have to presume that the hon. member for LaPêche's remarks were made in friendly jest and not as a serious threat, which I am sure he would concur.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but any time the member wants to put it to the test.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister without Portfolio.

MR. WELLS: I am sorry that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is gone because I was going to respond to some of his remarks. I think it is important to realize, Mr. Speaker, and I hope my five minutes begins now, Mr. Speaker, it is important to realize that what has happened in Newfoundland, particularly in the last five years is what is called an increase in participation in the labour force. In 1970 on the average only 43.4 per cent of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador were members of the active labour force of the Province, but by 1975 49.2 per cent, which is an increase of 5.8 per cent were registered as part of the labour force.

Now the statistics show, the statistics available to government show that in these five years there have been an increase of new jobs in this Province of 23,000, between 1970 and 1975 which is a 17.8 per cent increase which compares very favourably with the Canadian total of 18.3. But because of this increased number of people in the labour force in Newfoundland still there is unemployment here and significant unemployment. But I think we have got to see this in the light of the increased participation in the labour force.

Now there have been a great many new jobs created, a great many jobs in the service field, but there is a limit as you get more and more hospitals and as you get more and more restaurants and whatever else comprises the service field, there is a limit to the number of such jobs that can be provided. In

MR. WELLS: other words you reach your saturation point.

These jobs will continue to increase, Mr. Speaker, and I am not saying that we have reached a saturation point but we are getting along very, very - you know to a high degree in providing the service jobs in this Province.

Now the objective of government is to redirect itself into assisting job creation in the resource industries. Now there are two aspects to industry, one is what you might call the more simplistic kind of economic development in which you get a great big industry going if you can and you rely on that to create jobs. Now that is fine and nobody is beefing about it but the record of Newfoundland in the last twenty-five, twenty-seven years in that field has not been too good. Big industries have started and a good many of them have failed. And it has been hard going. And obviously the government will continue in every way to encourage any industry that can and will and wants to locate in Newfoundland, any industry unless it be bad for the Province. But there is a limit to how much success can be expected along that route. So the government has announced, and says that its policy is, and it is working on policies to get smaller industries going because this is very important.

Now included in the plans of government, and that I think was the specific jest of the question, there are plans for a further cement plant on the West Coast of the Province, plans for construction of concrete platforms and development of the Julienne Lake iron ore deposits. Now these are not at the stage where development can begin. They may not ever work out. But they are something the government is working toward.

Another thing that the government is working toward is the establishment of co-operative fishing arrangements with foreign fleets. At the present time there are certain offshore areas which Newfoundland vessels do not have the capability

MR. WELLS: to fish and co-operative arrangements would see utilization of foreign vessels to fish the areas with landed fish being processed in the Province. If for example this worked out and was able to be brought to fruition, landings of 100 million pounds a year would generate approximately 1300 jobs. Now I cannot say and we cannot say at this time that we are going to be successful in this but we are working toward it.

Mr. Wells:

In the forestry, the sawmilling industry currently produces about 30 per cent of the lumber required in the Province, in spite of the fact that it has the capacity to supply 75 per cent to 80 per cent of the market requirements. A variety of factors have been identified by the Department of Industrial Development as causing this situation, and one of them is money, Sawmill operators lack the working capital to carry them over the slack period and the department is working on procedures to assist them in this way and make it possible for a larger amount or a greater amount of lumber to be produced in Newfoundland. There is a definite target here over the next five years, We hope to increase local lumber production to 75 million board feet which would, if we can do it, and the industry can do it, create some 2,000 more jobs in the sawmilling and logging industry. The use of hardwoods in Newfoundland is something else that government is concerned with, and are negotiating now with Newfoundland companies with a view to purchasing birch lumber.

The Department of Industrial Development is very actively engaged in the identification and analysis of industrial opportunities and the active promotion of particular projects. Some opportunities are lost because no private individual with a technical and managerial expertise is available, and the government is working and the department is working on this, Things like herring barrel manufacturing which could provide jobs on a year round basis for perhaps as many as thirty persons supplying barrels to the industry, Also furniture manufacturing, which we feel could be a viable thing in Newfoundland provide perhaps fifty, sixty, seventy jobs in that field. The Department of Industrial Development 's efforts are being complemented by the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation. In 1974 the corporation provided financial assistance for fifty-five projects to the amount of \$9 million in equity and loans. The corporation was only created two or three years ago - well not three years ago, Mr. Speaker, and has a considerable economic impact in this way. I know the time is short, but the Department of Fisheries is particularly interested in

Mr. Wells:

the fish processing industry. One of the problems is that Newfoundland's fish products have been exported historically in a semi-processed form and the finished product done elsewhere. The departments are in co-operation with each other. The resource departments are working on this to develop new products. And the Salf Fish Corporation is co-operating there and the Department of Industrial Development and Fisheries.

The Province is also pursuing negotiations with a view to establishing other major fish processing industry or at least enterprise in Newfoundland, but it is perhaps too early to go into any detail about that.

The mining industry; considerable strides have been made and there are new projects which have a reasonable expectation of coming on stream by 1981. One of these, for example, is the Brinex Uranium Mine. There is the matter of agriculture wherein basic commodities like milk, vegetables, chickens and hogs. We expect that agricultural production will increase significantly in the next few years - things like blueberry processing - there are ever so many. There are marine and offshore related industries, NORDCO, rural development. Mr. Speaker, with all the faults that may be laid at our door there have been tremendous strides made and tremendous groundwork laid for creation of jobs in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The final subject for debate is the subject concerning thousands of cords of wood being permitted to float free on the Red Indian Lake. The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of this House what I consider a distasteful and criminal waste of our resources that is been perpetrated on this Province by the way that Price (Nfld.) has been permitted to log in the Millertown-Buchans-Red Indian Lake area. And I think, Sir, the waste has been perpetrated with the concurrence of every government we have had up to this point. Today

Mr. Flight:

there are thousands and thousands of cords of wood floating free in Red Indian Lake. Every cove and beach on Red Indian Lake is full. It is new wood. Hundreds of thousands of cords must have sunk up to this point in time over the years that Price have been logging in Red Indian Lake.

Now, Sir, up to this point in my lifetime I have been told that our forestry resources is too limited to allow that type of waste, we cannot allow, we must utilize every part of our timber resources.

MP. FLIGHT:

Price (Nfld), Mr. Speaker have not sacked - and for any hon. gentleman here who does not know what sacked means, it means to clean up Red Indian Lake since they have been logging there. But still in answer to an enquiry made by the Department of Environment, a gentleman representing Price, whom I will not name, confirmed that their normal sacking operations have been in effect. Well, Sir, their normal sacking operations is nil. They do not have a normal sacking operation. They dump the wood into Red Indian Lake and they trust on the wind and the weather and God to get that wood forty-eight miles down to a main dam so they can run it into the main river. What gets trapped in coves, trapped in the woods or floats free floats until it becomes water-logged and sinks. Mr. Speaker -

MR. WELLS: Now long does that take?

MP. FLIGHT: Well I was just about to make the point, Mr. Speaker, that a log floating will not float five years. I would imagine there comes a time when the log will sink and we cannot assume that the logs that are floating around Red Indian Lake today were dumped in Red Indian Lake five years ago. The logs that are floating around Red Indian Lake today is new timber being lost to this Province.

There are two concerns, Mr. Speaker. One is the loss of the resource. If Price (Nfld) has got a quota for the mill, if they are going to cut 100,000 cords of wood this Winter and they lose 10,000 cords in the process of getting it to the mill that means they have to cut 10,000 cords to replace it, free standing timber. Then we worry about our ability to provide timber to the Linerboard Mill. So, Mr. Speaker, there are two areas of concern. One is the waste to the economy that this Province just cannot afford. And the other is the damage to the environment that is being inflicted on Red Indian Lake through the method that Price is using in getting their wood off Red Indian Lake.

Sir, I will pursue this subject in the House of Assembly from now until I see a change in the attitude of Price (Nfld) on Red Indian

MR. FLIGHT:

Lake. If the legislation does not exist that would require Price to number one, clean up the lake now, salvage the timber that is floating around Red Indian Lake and log in a way that will keep the lake clean, if we cannot do that, if the legislation does not exist then the legislation should be brought in. If Price (Nfld) cannot be made to conform to this type of legislation, then I submit that the general public of this Province should be permitted to go to the shores of that lake and clean that wood up and sell it where they like, burn it in their stoves. But certainly they should have the right to take that wood. There is no way that Price (Nfld) should be justified in number one, allowing the wood to float free and be lost to the economy while at the same time denying a Newfoundland picking up one piece of wood.

Mr. Speaker, I am out of time but I want to assure this House that I intend to pursue this issue and I intend to pursue it until one of two things happens; either the government shows some concern and shows some desire to control the way that that resource is being vilified. It is not decent what Price (Nfld) is doing in that area. Until I see some concern on the part of government to bring about controls that will stop this waste or until I see some effort in Price being asked to control the waste, I will continue to bring it to the floor. And if I cannot do it any other way I will bring on enough public pressure that will cause somebody to take a look at the situation. Up to this point, Sir, I doubt very much if the minister responsible is even aware of what the situation is on Red Indian Lake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. POUSSEAU: Everything was going well until the last remark. I can assure the hon. member that the minister is now aware of the situation in Red Indian Lake. He was not when the member first brought it up but he is now. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member there is no need to bring any public pressure on the minister. The minister is aware of the situation and agrees environmentally and

MR. ROUSSEAU:

from a resource point of view that this cannot be permitted. As a matter of fact the hon. member raised that four or five or six weeks ago. I forget anyway but between that and the time the member raised the question again a couple of days ago we have written Price (Nfld) on this topic. I have no intention of bringing in legislation for Price (Nfld) or anybody else that I have to deal with as a minister if it can be done by dialogue and by co-operation. If it cannot be done by dialogue and co-operation we certainly have to look at that method of stopping this vilification as the member says.

MR. FLIGHT: It has not been done up until this point in time by dialogue or co-operation.

MR. ROUSSEAU: I can only say that from dealings I have had with Price - and I have not had that many recently because I have been dealing with Bowaters quite extensively - that they have been co-operative and if we have any problems we are going to talk to them. We will talk to them. Next Wednesday or Thursday I hope to meet with the Price Board of Directors out in Grand Falls and we will certainly bring that to their attention.

As I mentioned to the House six to eight weeks ago, one day we would have to look at discontinuing the use of rivers to drive the logs. Certainly that is a point we are going to bring up to Price. As a matter of fact yesterday I met with Bowaters and I brought the point up with Bowaters and suggested that to them.

Mr. Rousseau:

They were not in any great fear of that. All they asked was our co-operation in letting them know far enough ahead of time so they could plan to use other methods.

Now unfortunately we live in a fact of life, you know, five days a week you are here in the House of Assembly, one morning a week you are in Cabinet, one morning you got a meeting, you have got phone calls to do, and you know there are only so many things a minister can do when he has got to cope with the House while the House is open. But I can assure the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans, and I can assure the House and I can assure the people I know who are quite concerned in the Millertown and Buchans area that will be a matter I fully intend to take up with Price (Nfld.) Limited. I intend to pursue the matter, that amongst other matters that I have mentioned in the House of Assembly. And it is certainly not our wish as a government to see our limited timber resource used in that way. And, number two, from a point of view as all Newfoundlanders feel, in thirty, forty, fifty, hundred years to see the environmental impact as something that we do not really understand the repercussions of now, but we can see way down the line as another point well taken. So I can assure the hon. member it is my intention to bring it up with Price and hopefully that we can have the situation rectified by co-operation and dialogue, and not by legislation. But if legislation is necessary we have no hesitation in taking that. And it is my hope within the next week or ten days, the hon. member tells me, the water level is low enough now to fully appreciate the problem out there, it is my hope that if I have the opportunity, possibly this weekend, I do not know, I hope to go out and take a look at it firsthand just to see how bad it is. But I have asked the departmental officials as I suggested in the reply to the original question to investigate the matter. We have written Price, and as well as that we are investigating the matter from a departmental point of view. But I would certainly like to take the opportunity to look at it firsthand which I hope to be able to do before the levels rise where I would

Mr. Rousseau:

not really appreciate it, and to assure the hon. gentleman and the people in the Millertown-Buchans area that when the House closes and I have more opportunity to do that, it is a point that I certainly intend to press with Price (Nfld.).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The motion before the Chair is that the House do now adjourn. Is the House ready for the question. Those in favour "Aye", contrary "Nay", carried.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: "Nay".

MR. SPEAKER: In my opinion the "Nays" have it. I therefore leave the Chair until 8:00 P.M.

The House resumed at 8:00 P.M

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, Please!

Before resuming the debate it has been drawn to my attention that there are a number of Grade XI students from Mount Tan Collegiate in Triton in the House and they are here with their teacher Mr. Amos and I know that all hon. members join me in welcoming them to the House of Assembly and in hoping that their visit here this evening will be an interesting one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir had adjourned the debate.

MP. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, before getting back to the subject at hand, I would certainly like to endorse Mr. Speaker's comments in welcoming the Grade XI students from Triton and their principal, Mr. Amos. I am delighted to see them. It was my pleasure to work very closely with their school during the period when I was involved in education in Green Bay and I am delighted, as I am sure the member for Green Bay (Mr. Peckford) is, to see them here this evening.

MP. PECKFORD: Ninety-four per cent.

MR. SIMMONS: I see. Mr. Speaker, as I adjourned the debate this afternoon, I had made some reference to the matter of the gear replacement programme. It is a subject, Mr. Speaker, that we did not get to discuss in very much detail because, of course, the time ran out on the estimates. Perhaps it is appropriate that we have a few things to say about it here in this particular debate. It certainly relates pretty centrally to the matter of the expenditure of public money.

We will all recall that this whole thing goes back to 1974 when the present Minister of Health was then the Minister of Fisheries and he, I believe, in a joint statement with the federal minister, Mr. LeBlanc, announced the federal government's approval of the use of a so-called peacetime disaster formula whereby inshore fishing gear lost or damaged because of Arctic ice conditions would

MR. SIMMONS:

be replaced, a programme to assist with the replacement of such gear losses. It became known as the Special Gear Replacement Programme. It was originally estimated that programme would cost about \$3.5 million to \$4 million. By February of 1975 the government of the Province was aware that the cost of the programme would not be \$3.5 million but would indeed exceed \$6 million. The government was aware of that in early 1975 or in 1975, I should say. In February last year.

For some reason the government did not see fit at that time to look into the question of why there was such an increase in cost from \$3.5 million to in excess of \$6 million. That is the first of many questions that have to be asked about this programme. Why did the government not think there was any investigation needed at that time even just on the basis of cost escalation alone? Indeed up until February, 1975 we were led to believe that the minister was still accepting the explanations of his officials, the officials of the Department of Fisheries, who said that an investigation would be practically impossible.

Last year in April, I believe, when we were discussing the estimates of the Department of Fisheries in this House in the Committee there were some figures mentioned which suggested that the total volume of sales of fishing gear to inshore fishermen during 1974 would amount to somewhere between \$2.5 million and \$3 million. Yet here again, even though it was obvious that the Gear Replacement Programme, this special programme I am talking about now, was actually going to cost more than twice that amount, more than twice the actual volume of fishing gear to all inshore fishermen, here was a Replacement Programme running twice the amount it would be if you just supplied fishing gear to everybody in the inshore fishery, yet, Mr. Speaker, even with that kind of evidence in the public record, that kind of evidence available to the minister, to the Department of Fisheries, still in April of last year no investigation was launched.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, I believe it strongly, and I think it

MR. SIMMONS:

needs to be said, I believe in the last couple of weeks - and I am referring in particular among other incidents, I am referring to the interview that the present Minister of Mines and Energy, one-time Minister of Fisheries, I am referring to an interview he had on Here And Now. I cannot tell him the date, but it was certainly in the last couple of weeks or so when he was questioned about this matter. I believe the interviewer was Mr. Rick Seaward of CBC. I am referring to that interview in particular where the minister among other things I believe lost his temper a couple of times, you remember, and invited the member of the press who was interviewing him to launch an investigation or - I forget the wording of the tantrums but the tantrums were there as we all remember. It was a good show and it was certainly worth repeating. I am surprised it was not rerun.

But, Mr. Speaker, I believe most people in the House will know the interview I am talking about. I just refer to it as one of the number of incidents in the past few weeks which makes it more and more apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the various ministers who have held the Fisheries portfolio during the past two years or so, the various ministers, the three of them, the present minister, the member for St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr. W. Carter), the past minister, the member for Gander (Mr. Collins), and the minister before that, the member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie), it has become increasingly apparent to me in the last two or three or four weeks that these men in their capacities as minister of that department were involved in the mismanagement of public funds.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not saying, and I am not even suggesting because I do not believe there was anything deliberate about that mismanagement: It would be unparliamentary to say so but I also do not believe it. But I believe strongly, Mr. Speaker, that during the administration of these three gentlemen the public funds voted for the Department of Fisheries has been seriously mismanaged.

MR. SIMMONS:

I believe also, Mr. Speaker, that these men have displayed a blatant disinterest, complete disinterest in the obvious irregularities that were taking place in their department. Now it is not good enough for the former minister, now the Minister of Energy, to be on television and to say that he cannot be responsible for all the actions of his departmental people. Of course he can. He has to be under the system we operate. This disregard by a minister of a department, Mr. Speaker, has continued despite questioning in the House last year during the estimates, questioning this year, despite the criticisms of the Auditor-General and even, Mr. Speaker, in the face of somewhat detailed investigative reporting by the press and quite heavy questioning by members of the new media.

Mr. Speaker, on this one there is a lot of answering to be done. There is a lot of money involved. There is an important principle involved too. Were the Premier in his seat at the moment I would ask him, call upon him to tell the people of the Province - when I do it, really, he will hear about it - I would like to call upon him as the leader of the government to tell the people of the Province just what went wrong.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know we are all aware that certain matters are being investigated by the police. We have heard that story before. And the old smoke screen approach here is to get up and say, "It is all in the hands of the police." Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not care what is in the hands of the police. That does not make the Department of Fisheries or its minister any less answerable to this House,

MR. SIMMONS: and the House has not been even given the courtesy of an explanation on this.

MR. CROSBIE: It has been explained a half dozen times. You do not want to listen and you do not want to -

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I always listen to the member for St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) very, very carefully, including the night he was on television, I referred to a moment ago.

MR. CROSBIE: That did not show any evidence.

MR. SIMMONS: And that particular night, Mr. Speaker, it was intriguing to listen, because the minister who is usually cool, calm and collective, usually has every answer at his elbow, was that night caught badly without the information or not wanting to give it. I never saw a man so much on the run as he was that night on television.

MR. CROSBIE: There are thousands who would disagree with you.

MR. SIMMONS: There is at least one who disagrees with me, Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's West. But there are an awful lot of people who were saying after, "What happened to Crosbie, what happened to the minister? He was really on the run last night on television. He lost his cool."

MR. MURPHY: It is a pity I did not see that.

MR. SIMMONS: You missed a good show.

MR. MURPHY: Good show.

MR. SIMMONS: You missed one of the best and worst shows in the minister's career, for him one of the worst shows, one of the shows when he gave the fewest answers. A shameful performance but he has to answer for that.

MR. ROWE: The Wayne and Shuster Show.

MR. SIMMONS: Without Shuster; The Wayne and Shuster Show without Shuster.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MURPHY: Back at the shoots.

MR. SIMMONS: No, when the Minister for St. John's Centre shoots he never scores. He never scores.

MR. DOODY: He does all right.

MR. MURPHY: Man of the Year.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, that is a nice picture.

MR. MURPHY: It would win a beauty contest.

MR. SIMMONS: A costly picture but a nice picture. That picture cost the taxpayers of this Province \$150.

MR. DOODY: That did not cost the taxpayers nothing.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh the minister himself paid for this.

MR. DOODY: That is right.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. That is proper. That is the way it should be. Mr. Speaker, I can understand the Minister from St. John's wanting to get me offstride on this and he succeeded in doing so for a brief period, but I have got all the time in the world on this and there are certain things I want to say about this special gear replacement programme, and I will get to say them in time and the central thing I want to say I have said, that I am disturbed by the mismanagement of the three ministers, the present minister and his two predecessors on this matter, the mismanagement of \$4 million of public funds. Now the Minister from St. John's West can sit there all he wants and tell us about how it has been explained. It has not been explained very satisfactorily to the public insofar as I am concerned and a lot of other people in this Province are concerned. If it is explained to the satisfaction of all concerned why is the investigation going on still? The minister would like to think it is explained. His explanation was very far from complete that night on television. If I ever saw a person bomb out in a public interview it was the Minister from St. John's West on that particular night.

MR. DOODY: I never saw a man being badgered and harrassed like that and he so statesmanlike. He was very cool and calm.

MR. SIMMONS: If saying nothing is being a statesman, he was a real statesman that night, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: You are no Disraeli; you are a Bismark.

MR. SIMMONS: I have said that the minister mismanaged the funds of his department during his administration.

MR. CROSBIE: I am not even going to get annoyed about it. I absconded with them. Why not say I defalcated with them. Say something controversial.

MR. SIMMONS: No. No. The minister does the whole subject a grave injustice when he gets on like that. Nobody is saying -
SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Go ahead. Enjoy yourselves. I have all the time in the world.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: As it happens I am saying much less than the members on the opposite side about now, Mr. Speaker. The member for St. John's West can make light of this situation all he wants to, but it is a very serious situation and one that requires an explanation. And I say to the Minister of Finance that there is no reason why he should get sucked in and be a party to it. He does not know what went on in the Department of Fisheries. I say some very unsavoury things went on there.

MR. DOODY: That was suspected. That is why the RCMP are investigating.

MR. SIMMONS: Right. And I would say that this thing could have been nipped in the bud a long time ago. The minister told us a year or so ago he knew there was something wrong with the situation.

MR. CROSBIE: It could have been stopped.

MR. SIMMONS: It could have been stopped, the minister says.

MR. CROSBIE: Lord save me from men in forest green and high heels.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister had it within his hands, Mr. Speaker, to do something a long time ago and he can get funny as he wants. He knows as well as I know, he knows better than I know on this subject. He had it well within his reach and grasp to do something about this before. And, Mr. Speaker, as a result of this, as a result of this issue, whatever the findings of the investigators, as a result of this issue there is a new image of that particular minister around this Province. He used to be a man who was the epitome of confidence. He could do no wrong. He was the font of wisdom in this government. He was the one thing who was keeping her together as far as the Province was concerned. Well, now the word is out, Mr. Speaker, that after he got, against his wishes, assigned to the Department of Fisheries as its minister, he had no interest in the affairs of the department and now we have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where, because of disenchantment or whatever the minister sat as Minister of that department and allowed this situation to continue for a year or so, right under his very nose, and accepted the explanations of his officials that it was impossible to have an investigation. I guess it was impossible.

The word is out, Mr. Speaker. The great, competent minister of this government is actually vulnerable like us all, actually has his weak moments too.

MR. DOODY: The minister is recovering from your savage onslaught.

MR. SIMMONS: I hope so. I hope so. Mr. Speaker, it is not even attempted to be savage. I find it rather sad that I have to say this kind of thing because I always had a lot of respect for the minister's competence and I am somewhat disillusioned, somewhat disillusioned that I find that the one hope we had in that particular Cabinet is perhaps not such a great white hope as we thought it was. Perhaps we cannot hang our hats on that one nearly as much. We would always believe that as long as that man was in Cabinet then

MR. SIMMONS: we could expect competence to be the order of the day. We would expect sound administration to be the order of the day. That obviously is not the case.

MR. CROSBIE: We being whom?

MR. SIMMONS: We being the public. We being the members of the Liberal caucus. We being the taxpayers of this Province. We always look to the Minister OF Mines and Energy as he is now with a certain degree of confidence, but we are a bit concerned after this shemozzle in the Department of Fisheries.

MR. CROSBIE: It has been explained.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister says it has been explained. I say it has not been explained at all very satisfactorily and I would hope we would get an explanation. We are not going to get it from the minister obviously, Let us get it then from the Premier and let him tell the people of this Province what happened in that particular case. I believe that several of the Premier's ministers have not come clean on their explanations about this gear replacement programme. I think we have heard far less than a plausible defence of their actions while they were ministers of that department. I would go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, that there has been an obvious attempt to hide a case of gross mismanagement within the Department of Fisheries.

Mr. Speaker, let us now then have an explanation from the Premier of why his ministers did not take action to protect these public funds. Ultimate responsibility for the minister's actions of course rests with the Premier. Let him now accept that responsibility and give us some of these answers about the gear replacement programme.

We do not need an explanation of the individual cases. That is not what we are asking for, any of the cases that may be and are under investigation by the Police. What must be made clear though, Mr. Speaker, what must be made clear, and despite all the explaining by the member for St. John's West has never been made clear, what must be made clear is why he, when minister, did not order an investigation of

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MR. SIMMONS: the special gear replacement programme when it became clear to him that expenditures were almost double what had been estimated back in 1974.

MR. CROSBIE: I did . I had five or six investigations.

MR. SIMMONS: When did the minister first order the investigation?

AN HON. MEMBER: October . . .

MR. SIMMONS: Of what year?

MR. CROSBIE: I do not know the definite date, but it was in 1974.

MR. SIMMONS: Nonsense! That is news, is it not? That is a lot of news. That is the first time. At least we have got one bit of information the like we never had before, which goes to demonstrate, Mr. Speaker, that had the minister the inclination he could tell us a lot about this particular programme.

AN HON. MEMBER: We are waiting for the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, we are waiting too, and we are waiting a long time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROWE: About five months.

MR. SIMMONS: Indeed on that one the minister and his colleagues have always broken the law on the subject.

MR. DOODY: Broken the rules !

MR. SIMMONS: Here we are! We are going to have the same charade we had last time where the Committee gets posted out there the week before the House closes in June.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: After five months.

MR. DOODY: After you have broken the rules of the House.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, what a charade! The Public Accounts Committee. When is it supposed to be appointed, 'Fred'? How many days after?

MR. ROWE: Within a few days.

MR. SIMMONS: Within a few days, 'Fred'. How many days after
The Public -

MR. ROWE: Twenty days. They are supposed to -

MR. SIMMONS: Appoint the Committee on Committee.

MR. ROWE: - appoint the Committee on Committees

MR. SIMMONS: At most.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: I just wanted a little information about the Public Accounts Committee. The Committee last year was appointed, I believe, the 5th., the 6th. or the 7th. of June about a week before we rose or two weeks or something. No, not even two weeks as I remember. And it looks like we are headed in the same direction this time. That Committee should have been appointed early in the session. We met last - when? - November?

AN HON. MEMBER: The 14th. of November.

MR. SIMMONS: The 14th?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Anyway we met late in October or early in November. And here we are now up into the middle of May with no Public Accounts Committee. So the Minister of Energy says he is waiting for a committee. So am I. But I would tell him not to hold his breath, not to hold his breath if our past experience on this subject is any indication. But I would ask him, since he is so anxiously awaiting to clear himself of this charge in mismanagement that he light a fire under his people and get those committees appointed. Now if they are waiting on us for forty-eight hours we will see that that is speeded up and get our nominees to the minister concerned pretty quickly.

MR. DOODY: Chairman of Committee, I am fair game.

MR. SIMMONS: Is the minister Chairman of a committee?

MR. ROWE: No way!

MR. SIMMONS: My Lord help us all! The minister Chairman of a committee.

MR. MURPHY: I am not allowed.

MR. SIMMONS: Now that should be vetoed immediately.

MR. ROWE: What a long shot!

MR. SIMMONS: That should be vetoed. That requires -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: The minister is having such fun as the President of the Treasury Board that he would like to be Chairman of all

Mr. Simmons:

committees.

MR. CROSBIE: No, no, no, no, no

MR. SIMMONS: I see. Well we will look forward to having the Minister of Finance before the Committee.

MR. DOODY: No, I want to be Chairman.

MR. SIMMONS: We will make you Chairman for a day, we will make the minister Chairman for a day. He scrooged for a year, at least we can make him Chairman for a day.

MR. DOODY: The most one could ever ask for.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Newfoundland's year-round scrooge is the Minister of Finance, the President of Treasury Board, my nominee for permanent President of Treasury Board.

MR. DOODY: You are happy, kind hearted. That is the way they do things in Quebec.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister has friends in Quebec?

MR. ROBERTS: I do not think he has friends anywhere.

MR. SIMMONS: What is the -

MR. MORGAN: The Budget of a couple of days ago.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh the Minister of Transportation was not here this afternoon. My term 'scrooge' had nothing to do with his -

MR. DOODY: Talk about air pollution, and what a body blow.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh a real body blow, One of his worst moments.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, we are still talking about the gear replacement programme, and we are still asking, yes, we are still asking -

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not say you never knew it.

MR. SIMMONS: No you would never know it. You would never know it, there are so many distractions, I have never seen a more participating audience. This is what Mr. Trudeau used to call participatory anyway you know what I mean - democracy.

MR. SIMMONS: Participatory democracy.

AN HON. MEMBER: We are with you.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, you know what I mean.

MR. SIMMONS: Quite a participating audience, Mr. Speaker.

But if I may get back and put the question in another form: Why did not the government order that investigation? Why was there no investigation ordered, Mr. Speaker, until the officers of the police and fire departments determine that arson was the cause of that fire last August?

MR. DOODY: There is a Kojak in a thirteen week contract.

He is a patient in it. What foolishness!

MR. SIMMONS: What foolishness? I asked the minister a question; does he think it is foolishness that the public expenditure was allowed to escalate for a number of months and the only reason it was discovered -

MR. CROSBIE: No not at all. The investigation had been ongoing.

MR. SIMMONS: That is a completely new line we have heard tonight for the first time. A completely new line. Is that correct?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Right.

MR. SIMMONS: For the first time. Suddenly tonight they are getting into the record, Mr. Speaker, that they had the investigation launched to the preceding October.

MR. MURPHY: Immediately after the fire.

MR. SIMMONS: The fire, Mr. Speaker, was in August of the following year.

AN HON. MEMBER: It took a while to put it out.

MR. SIMMONS: It took a while to put it out. Not nearly as long, Mr. Speaker, as it is going to take out this other fire that the Minister of Energy allowed to start while he was Minister of Fisheries. That is the fire I would be concerned about if I were on that side.

Mr. Simmons:

That is the fire I would be concerned about.

MR. MURPHY: Get back to your speech.

MR. SIMMONS: I am working up to it. I am working up to it, if the minister will sit down, I am working up to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MURPHY: The Bob Hope Special.

MR. SIMMONS: We have a couple warming up back there. They are slow warmers up.

MR. MURPHY: It is all according to whose bed they are warming up in.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay, I will try it again, Mr. Speaker. Why did not the government authorize, order any investigation until that fire of last August? Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the question that needs to stand on the record. We are told that there was one the October before. I say tonight that it is new information we have heard for the first time tonight. Why was that information, if it is correct, if it is not a contrived bit of information, why was that information withheld from the House and from the public before now?

MR. CROSBIE: What information?

MR. SIMMONS: The information we are hearing now from the Minister of Finance that this investigation was on-going well before the fire.

MR. DOODY: I did not say that. I say as soon as -

MR. SIMMONS: I interpret - okay well if the minister did not say that, the Minister of Mines did a moment ago. He indicated the investigation had begun the previous October. I hope for his sake -

MR. CROSBIE: Do not be such a jerk!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. NOLAN: Make him take that back.

MR. SIMMONS: Sorry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the minister is sitting there tonight, he must have had a good and late supper, and he is insisting, Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: I am on a point of order now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. SIMMONS: He is insisting, Mr. Speaker, on interrupting the debate. I have made serious efforts for the last half hour to get on. I appreciate the bit of joviality and all of that. I am glad to see the minister not with a black, long face on him for a change, but there is a limit to this, Mr. Speaker. And apart from the fact that he should withdraw the term whatever he used a moment ago, I believe he should be asked to keep silence while I make some points on this subject. I know he does not want to hear about it. I do not particularly want to talk about it, but I think it is important that it be said.

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

MR. CROSBIE: Mr. Speaker, apparently this is a point of order, if it is I withdraw the word "jerk", I did not mean jerk, I meant the hon. gentleman was a quiverer.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has withdrawn the objectionable word, the other one I am not -

MR. SIMMONS: Oh, Mr. Speaker, if he can find something to entertain his troops, if they can laugh at that they are in bad need of entertainment and I hope they enjoy it. I hope they enjoy it. I hope they enjoy it that is all. But he can do a lot better than that, Mr. Speaker, and he probably will.

AN HON. MEMBER: How do you spell that by the way?

MR. SIMMONS: Q-u-i-v-e-r-e-r.

MR. DOODY: He who carries a quiver.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, Mr. Speaker, that is my spelling of it. I am not sure it is right, but I am sure -

MR. MURPHY: Would the hon. minister kindly spell that for the House?

MR. SIMMONS: The member could check the -

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is a pity it is not being televised.

MR. SIMMONS: I say the same thing.

AN HON. MEMBER: What a pity?

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. gentleman has risen on a point of order.

MR. ROWE: You know, I do not think my colleague needs any defense here, but I do not think I have heard a complete sentence for the past fifteen or twenty minutes, and it has all been the result of the fact that there have been mumblings and grumblings and interruptions and interjections from hon. members opposite. So I would ask - and we have people in the galleries, students in the gallery here tonight, and if this is the impression that they are going to carry away from this House of Assembly it is going to be very sad indeed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROWE: So I would ask that hon. members opposite maintain some degree of silence while my colleague is speaking, and I would ask Your Honour to call the hon. members opposite to order at any time that they attempt to interrupt the speaker who is presently on his feet or who is speaking at the time.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no doubt that every hon. member has a right to be heard in silence. As hon. members know as well there are times when a certain hon. gentleman when speaking acquiesce in certain interruptions or cede for questions or for brief comments. However it not infrequently happens that when this is the case the position generally deteriorates. So now that the House Leader for the Opposition has requested that the right be observed, and there is no disputing the fact that it is a right, I would direct hon. gentlemen not to interrupt the hon. member.

MR. SIMMONS:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I somewhat enjoy the interruptions. It does give me a break, but also it tends to interrupt one's train of thought and the subject I am on is a fairly serious matter. I am puzzled beyond words tonight, the last fifteen or twenty minutes, why some people in this House think it is so funny or if, as I have said, it is just the results of a late, full dinner. But, Mr. Speaker, this Gear Replacement Programme is one that we do not have the answers on yet. I intend to keep asking the questions until we get some of the answers. My colleagues over here intend to keep on asking the questions. I do not think we have gotten nearly all the answers yet. I believe it has been gross negligence, mismanagement of the first order that this matter has been allowed to go on and only got discovered, only got brought to the public light as a result of that fire in the Viking Building last August.

Mr. Speaker, until we have satisfactory answers to these questions, the questions raised by that set of events, then the three men, the present minister and his two predecessors in Fisheries, in my view do not have a very, how shall I say - I was going to say good reputation but that would imply other factors - but just let me say that I feel that these gentlemen until this matter is cleared are the subject of considerable question. Their ability to manage a department is in question. Their ability to manage public funds is called seriously into question. We are talking about a lot of public funds here, Mr. Speaker. The overriding concern is if this is what happens to one replacement programme, one subsidy programme, then it does not promise much for the other programmes that we could be involved in as a government.

On top of that we have heard a statement recently by the Minister of Fisheries, Mr. LeBlanc, federally that is, that - or I am not sure it is by the minister, but a report to the effect that the federal government's share of this programme is being withheld pending the outcome of the investigation.

MR. CROSBIE: We had a telex from Mr. LeBlanc saying that Ottawa

MR. CROSBIE:

are meeting their share as the Minister of Fisheries said the other night.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay.

MR. MURPHY: Sounds better to say it the other way.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker, now that is most unfair from the member for St. John's Center (Mr. Murphy). He should know the difference.

MR. MURPHY: Fact is fact.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have just gotten the information this moment in the House.

MR. MURPHY: You were told the same thing the other day.

AN HON. MEMBER: And during the budget debate.

MR. MURPHY: Yes and again the other day.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I was not in the House -

MR. MURPHY: Oh, so sorry.

MR. SIMMONS: I was not in the House when the minister spoke in the budget debate, and I got this information for the first time when the member for St. John's West just uttered it.

MR. MURPHY: Sorry.

MR. SIMMONS: So my comment just now was, as it happened, based on some unupdated information.

MR. NEARY: : It was in the morning newspaper.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I do not study the morning newspaper nearly as closely as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: Well, why do you not get Mr. Milley or Mr. Carter to study it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, Mr. Speaker, they are not available for early morning breakfasts.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not take it up?

MR. SIMMONS: They are not nearly as available.

MR. NEARY: No they do not get up like their leader -

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak for Mr. Milley or Mr. Carter.

MR. SIMMONS:

Here we are again, the old character assassination approach, dragging in the names, the old thing that he is so good at, Mr. Speaker, assassinating everybody he can get ahold of, every name he can drag into it. I do not care what time Mr. Milley and Mr. Carter get up. Mr. Milley is up now. He is in the upright position out in the lobby right in front of Mr. Speaker. He looks wide awake to me. Nonsense!

MR. NEARY: We had an awful job to get you awake during the by-election.

MR. SIMMONS: The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) - an awful job to get who up?

MR. NEARY: The hon. member and his leader.

MR. SIMMONS: No way, Mr. Speaker. No way, Mr. Speaker. I could beat that member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) -

MR. NEARY: We would have about five games of forty-fives before the member would get out of bed in the morning.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if by forty-fives the member means cards, he played a dozen games of forty-fives. As a matter of fact, the famous contribution he made to the campaign of which he is bragging about today consisted mainly of playing forty-fives to the point that at one point I asked them all to go back to St. John's or get involved in the campaign, if you want to know how many games of forty-fives he played.

MR. NEARY: That was because your leader was in bed.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh now, I was not looking after my leader. I was looking after me.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could we not get this supervised!

MR. F. POWE: We could have won that campaign.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The people should have let you have a chance -

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) is so concerned, if he would restrain -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, I am concerned.

MR. SIMMONS: If he would restrain his good friend to his right perhaps I would get on with my debate. I am having difficulty

MR. SIMMONS:

because the man he admires so much insists on interrupting every syllable I make. So if the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) is such an admirer of good parliamentary debate and such an admirer of the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), he can achieve both by having his friend shut up while I get on with the subject at hand.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I am sick and tired of this pious two-facedness that sits there and talks about television and talks about dignity and so on and so forth, and then every time I try and utter a comment the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) and his cohort from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) are engaged in one of the loudest whisper sessions I have ever heard. The two people, they may know a lot of things but they do not know how to whisper. It is outside their area of capability. They cannot whisper. They know how to interrupt. They know how to interrupt the proceedings of this House. They are experts at it. Then they stand there with this pious concern about how the people of Newfoundland should see it. I wish the people of Newfoundland could see this debate, Mr. Speaker. I wish they could see it as it has transpired for the last few weeks. Among other things, I say to the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), they would see his contribution to the debate. Before he sticks his shoulders out, Mr. Speaker, I say to him that I would be somewhat less than proud to have on television some of his contributions in this debate during the past few weeks. I say that kindly but I say it from my heart, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Do not ridicule people.

MR. SIMMONS: I am not ridiculing anybody, Mr. Speaker. The truth is best to be told and I wish the people of Newfoundland could see this debate. I am not sure it would all go down to the credit of the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) or the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) or perhaps to my credit either for that matter. But if we are going to call spades spades, Mr. Speaker, let us call them good

MR. SIMMONS:

and black. This hypocrisy, this nonsense, this business that you hear all the time, fellows speaking from both sides of their mouth at the one time, would make you wonder somehow if they had special, large-sized halos that they bought specially or had them specially made for themselves or something.

MR. NEARY: Why do you not go down and see Dr. Bhattacharya

MR. SIMMONS: There is what I mean, Mr. Speaker. There is exactly the kind of thing I mean, Mr. Speaker. I like to think that in this House we are a bunch of human beings, and I do not subscribe to this old halo complex. I never did and I never will. And when fellows to my right to to my left or across from me get on with this nonsense about how their halo is bigger than mine, then they get my dander up. I am sick and tired of this pious two-facedness, sick and tired of it.

I have bit my lip for a couple of months in this session and told myself that perhaps the problem would go away after awhile to Florida somewhere. But the problem is with us. But I will not, Mr. Speaker, be intimidated by the problem. Now, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: You have a teacher's background.

MR. SIMMONS: Ah, here goes - I was going to say the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), Mr. Speaker, literally speaking he is the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). The people of LaPoile are looking for him but that is another story. But the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) literally speaking, Mr. Speaker, chooses to interrupt the debate once again. Well, I can take his interruptions.

MR. NEARY: I was talking to the House Leader.

MR. SIMMONS: The member was probably talking to himself as he usually is, Mr. Speaker, probably talking to himself. Mr. Speaker, while we are on the subject of fisheries there is a related subject that needs to be raised. It is the matters involved in the Auditor General's report. I went through a part of it, and I must admit to you, Mr. Speaker, that I also got sick and tired of looking at the

MR. SIMMONS:

points that the Auditor General raised. So I did not really get through the whole report, but I did find on the first sixty pages a number of items requiring some red marks and question marks and so on. This, as members will know, is the Auditor General's report into the accounts of the Province in which he, among other things, sets out to determine to what degree the money of this Province is being spent in accordance with the law. If he

MR. SIMMONS: finds that it is not being spent in accordance with the law, if he finds that a department is breaking the law in spending the money, then, Mr. Speaker, he brings it to the House's attention. And I have before me, Mr. Speaker, the report for the last year, the year ending 1975, and the Auditor General's comments which called into question a number of procedures being used by various departments.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a lot of these matters have been raised at various times during question period, they have been raised in the House generally, in Committee and so on, and I do not propose to go through them in any degree of detail. But, Mr. Speaker, there are some questions that need to be asked, and I would refer in general to the whole section, page 10 to 136, which is the comments by department, comments on the various departments. Perhaps we could give just an example or two. There is no -

MR. NEARY: Is the hon. member finished?

MR. SIMMONS: No, the hon. member is just taking his time to find some of the examples. For example, on page forty-five, talking about the audited accounts relating to the Consolidated Fund Services. "The audit disclosed several weaknesses during the 1974-75 year. The weaknesses," the Auditor General says, "resulted in many transactions of a high dollar value either being recorded incorrectly or not being recorded at all." He says, "Some of the transactions include the following:

- (i) payments charged to the wrong accounts;
- (ii) payments charged to the wrong financial year;
- (iii) receipts credited to the wrong accounts;
- (iv) payment without proper voucher;
- (v) both originals and duplicates of bank debit memos were actioned and cheques issued;
- (vi) transactions not recorded in the province's accounts at all, not even recorded;
- (vii) inconsistent accounting," and so on.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Those accounts were not recorded.

MR. SIMMONS: Accounts not recorded, not even recorded.

He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, that while these deficiencies, these problems were brought to the attention of the Department of Finance in the previous year 1973-74, there was actually a worsening of the situation in the following year. The thing got worse. "It was only by extending the scope of our audit," the Auditor General says, "to cover practically all of the transactions that we were able to ascertain the full effect upon the accounting for this Head."

The Auditor General says, "It was necessary to make fifty-six journal entries, having a total dollar value of \$218 million." Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General tells us and I repeat, that they had to make fifty-six entries in the journal, representing \$218 million to correct transactions which had been recorded incorrectly in the accounts of the Province.

MR. MURPHY: Is this a phenomena?

MR. SMALLWOOD: It certainly is.

MR. MURPHY: It never happened before?

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) asked whether it happened before. I do not know, because I am not concerned, because I believe firmly that two wrongs do not make a right.

MR. MURPHY: You would swear someone was after doing away with \$218 million, put it into their pocket.

MR. SIMMONS: What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that when you have -

MR. MURPHY: - erred and put it under the wrong heading, it has to be corrected.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the member knows better than that.

We are talking about \$200 million. We are not talking \$50,000 or \$1 million. We are talking \$218 million.

MR. SMALLWOOD: How many departments?

MR. SIMMONS: This is under Consolidated Fund Services.

MR. SIMMONS: This is on page thirty-six of the Auditor General's Report, under Consolidated Fund Services.

MR. MURPHY: Petty cash. Petty cash.

MR. SIMMONS: \$218 million petty cash, eh? Twenty per cent of the Province's Budget, twenty per cent of the Province's expenditure recorded in the wrong places. Now, Mr. Speaker, you know, this is too much. Not only that, it did not just happen once, it happened in the preceeding year and it was brought to the attention of the House. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Comptroller for the Province, I guess the Deputy Minister of Finance is the same person, the Minister of Finance could probably indicate, the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Comptroller is the same person.

In his capacity as Comptroller, Mr. Speaker -

MR. DOODY: An officer of the House.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, and in his capacity as Comptroller, Mr. Speaker, I have to ask this question. I know the gentleman concerned. I am somewhat acquainted with him and all that, but Mr. Speaker, in view of this we have to clearly ask the question, in view of the Auditor General's findings for at least two years, Sir, we have to ask the question whether there is any competence involved here. We are not talking minor amounts. We are talking \$218 million. And we must raise the question; is this officer, this comptroller competent or is he too busy doing other things? Is he too saddled with too many other assignments? Is he neglecting, as the Minister of Fisheries for the last three appointments have done, the last three ministers have done, is he neglecting the administration of funds for which he is responsible as an officer of this House? Or does he have adequate staff? What is the problem? There is something wrong.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at this particular Auditor General's Report, and I am glad that the Minister of Finance is in the House because I have a comment which particularly relates to

MR. SIMMONS: his area of responsibility. The Auditor General has his usual comments about various departments, there is something wrong here, and there is something wrong there, and he goes to Tourism, Education and Transportation and so on down the line and some of them are being corrected and so on and so forth I would assume. But, Mr. Speaker, pages forty-one to fifty-nine, nineteen pages altogether addresses itself to accounting weaknesses related to the Department of Finance. Nineteen pages talking about the accounting weaknesses and so on relating to one department.

Now to put that in prospective, Mr. Speaker, comments on all the departments stretch over 127 pages. So nineteen of the 127, I do not know what that is, it is fifteen or something percent or whatever of the comments relate to the Department of Finance. If you like, a nineteen page of an indictment. Nineteen pages of an indictment.

MR. DOODY: A nineteen page criticism.

MR. SIMMONS: A nineteen page criticism? A nineteen page indictment of the Department of Finance! Now, Mr. Speaker, that department is the one saddled obviously with the centre responsibility of administering in the overall, administering the funds of government.

Look at page forty-seven, the Auditor General says, "The department is not maintaining adequate control with respect to its purchasing of goods and services."

MR. DOODY: It is on the same page that he says that, that systems have been changed over the year. There will not be a repetition.

MR. SIMMONS: Where does he say that?

MR. DOODY: On page forty-seven, paragraph two.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. Yes. The Minister of Finance -

MR. DOODY: Do you agree with that?

MR. SIMMONS: Oh sure. The Minister of Finance refers me to something above which says, "The Comptroller and the Deputy Minister of Finance has now informed me (the Auditor General) that, in the last month or so there have been systems changes within the Department of Finance and the proper maintenance of these systems should prevent a repetition of the situation reported to him as a result of the 1974-75 audit."

Now let us hope that the intentions as stated there, and that is all they are, the intentions stated there bear fruit in the next Auditor General's Report and we see an improvement in the situation, we do not see this nineteen page indictment of the department.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope also changes have been made to correct this situation on page forty-eight, item three. Listen to this. "During 1973-74 a conditional sales contract was entered into by the department covering the purchase of microfilm equipment at a total purchase price of \$11,373, plus finance charges of \$2,730, with the total payable," and here is the government, Mr. Speaker, that is spending \$1 billion, or bragged it was spending \$1 billion and here they are, Mr. Speaker, they are buying \$11,000 worth of microfilm on forty-eight instalment period. Can you believe it? Forty-eight instalments,

MR. SIMMONS:

including \$2,700 in finance charges to pay out a bit of microfilm equipment. Mr. Speaker, the Auditor says, "It appears to me that the department - listen to this, Mr. Speaker - has chosen this method of financing and incurred the finance charges involved because funds were not appropriated by the House of Assembly." Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is not an abuse of authority I do not know what is! This House Mr. Speaker, must have the final say about what money is voted for any given expenditure, any public expenditure.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And what the government spends.

MR. SIMMONS: And what the government spends as well. Here we have a -

MR. SMALLWOOD: With one proviso, that His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor say -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. SMALLWOOD: What is wrong with the minister?

MR. SIMMONS: Well if I were the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) I would not ask that question because the answer required is much too long. We could never in this brief period get into the whole business of what is wrong with the minister. But now I yield for the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). He has some information on the subject and indeed it reinforces what I am saying, that here we have a situation where the monies were not voted by the House of Assembly and somebody goes out and takes it out on the installment plan, \$11,000.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Oh, oh!

MR. POWE: What is the total cost?

MR. SIMMONS: It does not really say.

MR. SMALLWOOD: **If it is not Lieutenant-Governor warrants and not voted by this House, it is an outrage.**

MR. CROSBIE: Yes, it is an outrage.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is an outrage.

MR. POWE: It is a windfall for somebody. I wonder who got it?

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, we could go on. On the top of page 49 it refers to an expenditure incurred without the use of any purchase order. We hear also on page 49 that payments were made to some suppliers without any proper certification that the goods had ever been received. Imagine paying out good money, good taxpayers' money, without even knowing whether we had received the thing we are paying for.

Also on page 49 of the Auditor General's report we are told that the Department of Finance is processing payments for entertainment expenses in excess of \$100 that have not received the prior approval of Treasury Board. Once again, as we all know, that is against the law. So it goes, Mr. Speaker. Every page I look at I have got some red underlining drawing my attention to items which do not meet with the Auditor General's approval.

Now what is the Auditor General's assignment? Is he to be the devil's advocate? Is he to just disagree with everything the government does? No, Mr. Speaker. He is to assess the expenditure of public funds in terms of whether or not it meets the requirements of the law. If it meets the requirements of the law and good accounting practice, he has nothing to say other than that it is in line with the law. But if it does not meet these requirements, Mr. Speaker, he is duty bound as an officer of this House, he is duty bound to bring to the attention of the House where the expenditures have been out of line in terms of the law.

On page 53, Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General outlines that a policy statement issued by Treasury Board in 1974 said that employees may provide entertainment for officials of other governments where there is satisfactory evidence that entertainment is in the public interest, and that the conduct of government business is facilitated thereby. Now, Mr. Speaker, we are told in the next paragraph that payments for entertainment totalling \$164,000, or \$164,259 all together, \$164,000 was paid out under entertainment. The Auditor General says - and I agree with him - "The category of expenditure described here is not in the view of the Auditor General

MR. SIMMONS:

entertainment related to facilitating the conduct of government business as set out in the Treasury Board directive. In other words, it is against the law. \$164,000 for entertainment, that is a nice entertainment account to have, \$164,000.

The Auditor General goes on to say that payments such as these should be presented to the House of Assembly as a separate, adequately described classification. Come in and ask the House whether they will vote that kind of money. Do you want as members of the House to vote \$164,000 for expenses? I would like to be asked that question. I was not though. I am told after the fact that \$164,000 of my money and the taxpayers' money has been spent on entertainment.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. member not only would like to, he has a right.

MR. SIMMONS: Very much a right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Everybody, that is why we are in here.

MR. SIMMONS: So it goes, Mr. Speaker. Now I would like to come back to page 52 because in the pages preceding 52 you remember I referred to a number of weaknesses, a number of deficiencies, all of which I have here underlined in red and which I can bring to the attention of the ministers' concern if they would like me. But what is important for the purpose now is the paragraph in the center of page 52.

The Auditor General says, "In my opinion, the deficiencies outlined above, illustrate a weakness in control"- that is the key word, Mr. Speaker. When you get to a situation in the public administration where there is a weakness in control, whether it is a lack of effective control, then, Mr. Speaker, you have a situation -

MR. MORGAN: A stinging attack, you would have us believe.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan). It is not a stinging attack. It is too sad to be stinging. I could say some things to him that would be stinging

MR. SIMMONS:

and true. I just had the sad, the distasteful experience, Mr. Speaker, of having to travel that section of the road West of Grand Falls as I have two or three times this Winter. I could tell him some stinging things about that section of road.

MR. MORGAN: Go ahead.

MR. SIMMONS: Well one thing I would tell him is that it is only neglect that has allowed that situation to continue so many months, neglect by the minister. If he had spent more time attending to the affairs of his department than blowing off his mouth publicly we would not have that situation out there, and he knows that full well.

MR. MORGAN: Out where?

MR. SIMMONS: West of Grand Falls.

MR. MORGAN: What situation, the detour or the road?

MR. SIMMONS: I am talking about the fact of the detour. The detour itself is not my concern.

MR. MORGAN: Go away, boy! You are sick!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, listen to it again, listen to it. The people of Grand Falls, the people of Central Newfoundland, the people of this Province who have to use that two mile section of road deserve a lot better. But I knew, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MORGAN: Read the papers. Tenders were called yesterday. Just read the papers.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, tenders called yesterday will not undo, Mr. Speaker, what we have been through in this Province because of that road over the past few weeks and months. The minister finally closed the gate after the horse was gone. The minister finally got the message.

MR. MORGAN: Have your say. Have your say.

MR. SIMMONS: I do not expect the minister to agree with me. The minister thinks he does everything right. Well, this thing he bungled badly, Mr. Speaker, on this one, bungled badly. If he wants stinging attacks we will give him stinging attacks.

MR. SIMMONS:

I am concerned now, Mr. Speaker, about the Auditor General's report, not very stinging. If I were in government I would think they would be pretty stinging. If I were told that I bungled the administration of the Province by the Auditor General I would think that was stinging. If I had the brains to think it. That might be their problem, Mr. Speaker. I am not surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) cannot see the import of what we are saying here.

MR. MORGAN: Stop making a fool of yourself.

MR. SIMMONS: What are dollar signs to him, Mr. Speaker, except something to drool over.

MR. MORGAN: Stop making a fool of yourself and sit down.

MR. SIMMONS: Some people can make a fool of themselves without even standing up.

MR. DOWE: If he had as much pavement as he has lip he could do the Trans-Canada over and under.

MR. MORGAN: Where is your fish plant for Burgeo?

MR. SIMMONS: Is there any way, Mr. Speaker - we had such a pleasant day with the minister up combing his hair in Ottawa wherever he was. But now he is back in the House, Mr. Speaker, the little tyrant from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan). We are all scared to death of him.

MR. MORGAN: Announced the Burgeo Road.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, a week after I did, by the way.

MR. MORGAN: Announced the Burgeo Road, did you?

MR. SIMMONS: A week after I did, yes.

MR. MORGAN: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Too bad. Too bad.

MR. MORGAN: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: I see, that is good. Well at least he is not upset with the minister for a change.

MR. MORGAN: He is upset with you all right.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have never particularly relied on that

MP. SIMMONS:

minister's version of the facts.

MP. MORGAN: Why do you not call his office in Ottawa?

MP. SIMMONS: Not really.

MP. MORGAN: Oh, shut up!

MP. SIMMONS: Not really. Not really.

Mr. Simmons:

Now, Mr. Speaker, for the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) it may not be very stinging, but if I were in government this indictment of the Auditor General would be a very stinging indictment indeed. And what I want to know relating to Page 52, that paragraph in the centre, I want to ask a question about that. First of all I will read a part of the paragraph where it says, "In my opinion, the deficiencies outlined above, illustrate a weakness in control as it relates to the authorization, certification and documentation of expenditure for the acquisition of goods and services in the Department of Finance. It is my opinion that the department should undertake a thorough review of its methods and procedures with a view to ensuring that the controls over the committing and payment of public funds are strengthened and improved." Now, Mr. Speaker, the obvious question is what steps have been taken since? What steps have been taken since to carry out the recommendation of the Auditor General?

MR. MORGAN: Go ask Dear Abby.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister could answer that question now if he wanted to.

MR. DOODY: We are taking on some additional C.A.'s who are working on that particular area, it is broken down into some new subdivisions, the department has been.

Some of them are from outside of the Province unfortunately, and that causes some problems, but it is necessary to get these people in because we need the pros.

MR. NEARY: Did they bring their horses with them when they came?

MR. DOODY: Not at government expense, no. They brought them after they arrived in the Province.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister's reference to some of them are outside of the Province, is he saying they are on just an assignment, they are not hired as such?

MR. DOODY: No, no, they are permanent employees, but they are not Newfoundlanders.

MR. SIMMONS: They are moving into the Province to take up their jobs, you mean.

MR. DOODY: We have tripled the number of C.A.'s in the department during the past seven or eight months.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes.

MR. DAWE: Carried.

MR. SIMMONS: And would the minister indicate how many C.A.'s this involves now, how many you would have on staff?

MR. DOODY: There are probably about - that is a little bit difficult, I do not want you to yield because I am only going to be here a second. There is a difference in a C.A. and an R.I.A., and there are three or four different categories of accountancy degrees, but there are probably eight or ten new professional people put in there during the past seven or eight months who are trying to tighten up some of the loose ends that you see here in this thing, and hopefully it will work. There are obviously inadequacies.

MR. SIMMONS: I thank the minister because this is the ultimate question that needs to be asked, It is not enough to go on about what has been wrong in the past, if there are things being done to correct it. Now we have seen Auditor Generals reports and we have seen an example just now where he said, "I told the government about this last year, and I am telling him again this year." That is what concerns me, when the same deficiency continues to exist. And I hope that the minister's indications of the last few minutes mean in effect that the Auditor General's recommendation in his report on Page 52 is being taken seriously and that the government is looking at, or the department is looking at new procedures with a view to ensuring that the controls over committing funds and paying out public funds are strengthened and improved. That would certainly remove a lot of the criticism which shows up in the proceeding pages.

MR. DOODY: We are looking forward to a better report next year.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and we are looking forward over here to a better report next year as well. Now there are things in

Mr. Simmons:

that report, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. CROSBIE: You can not look at the reports until we see it first.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh the -

MR. CROSBIE: He was called up on the floor here.

MR. SIMMONS: Who was called up on the floor, the minister?

MR. DOODY: The Auditor General was screeching and bawling like Brier Rabbit.

MR. SIMMONS: John Shaheen fashion?

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Minister of Mines and Energy ought to remember that his president is the one who was here on the floor along with the Auditor General.

MR. CROSBIE: Scandalous.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And the minister ought to remember who was at fault and who was in the right.

MR. CROSBIE: The Auditor General.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Was in the wrong?

MR. CROSBIE: Not necessarily.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And Mr. Groom was in the right.

MR. CROSBIE: Some names as the hon. gentleman -

MR. SMALLWOOD: And it is the same Mr. Groom?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Well, Mr. Speaker, we have hit now I believe in that exchange on the very crux the issue. I have never met Mr. Howley in my life. I would not know him.

MR. DOODY: An excellent person.

MR. SIMMONS: I would not know him. I would not know him. I just would not know the man. But the Minister of Mines and Energy has just in his exchange with the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) reminded us that we are dealing with the same Auditor General. And the member for Twillingate says on that occasion it is Mr. Groom was right. And the inference I get is that the Auditor General was wrong. Well, Mr. Speaker, the only two routes that we can go, you know, we cannot talk through our teeth on this one, there

Mr. Simmons:

is only one or two routes we go; we are either satisfied with the Auditor General's performance or we are not.

MR. HICKEY: You take the first shot.

MR. SIMMONS: We cannot have it both ways.

MR. CROSBIE: Do you realize that he only expresses an opinion and there can be other opinions?

MR. SIMMONS: I realize that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CROSBIE: You realize that.

MR. SIMMONS: But the least there can be -

MR. CROSBIE: Right.

MR. SIMMONS: - I say to the member for St. John's West ~~his~~

plausible explanation, and we have not had that, Mr. Speaker, and a couple of the minister have gotten up and have made statements. I believe the Minister of Tourism did at one point, and the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. That is the two I remember, there might have been others. But by and large we have not had explanations about the points raised in this report or indeed any undertaking except the kind of thing we got from the Minister of Finance tonight.

MR. DOODY: I will have them all made operational for you.

MR. SIMMONS: Okay. Any undertaking from the various ministers, you know, one would think, Mr. Speaker, that with the kind of indictment or the kind of criticism that shows up here so often, the ministers concerned, I know they are quite busy answering questions these days, but if they would take some time out from their questions and supply the House with some information which would tend to either rebut, or supplement or complement the comments of the Auditor General, I think that would be a very worthwhile exercise. And in the absence of any rebuttal, in the absence of any information to the contrary from the various departments, I can only believe what is in the Auditor General's report, and I have no particular reason, Mr. Speaker, to disbelieve it until it is proven to the contrary.

Mr. Simmons:

Mr. Speaker, a matter that I raised some time ago, just before Easter I believe, just before Easter, was my concern - I was talking at the time about the Rural Development Authority. I only wish the Minister of Industrial Development were in his place right now, Rural Development, it is a matter that affects him - and perhaps I should leave that for the time being, it is a matter that would involve his department. I shall leave that because I prefer he were in his seat when I have these things to say. So I shall come back to that, Mr. Speaker.

Also, Mr. Speaker, some comments that I had about the Department of Industrial Development, some questions, I shall leave these too because that affects the same minister.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I did not go through the entire Auditor General's Report but nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation has shown some interest in this matter. And before he has much to say he ought to look at pages 108, 109, 110, and 111 of the Auditor General's Report. He read them. I would like to know what he is going to do about them.

MR. MORGAN: I was not there last year.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, now we have heard it all! he was not there last year!

MR. MORGAN: Action will be taken

MR. SIMMONS: The minister is indicating there is going to be some action taken on these subjects?

MR. MORGAN: Naturally we hope to take action wherever possible.

MR. SIMMONS: I see. I see.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, with friends like that, 'Joe', you do not need enemies.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of items here affecting the Department of Transportation. The minister has said that -

MR. ROUSSEAU: I spent four years in that department.

MR. SIMMONS: Four years? I see.

MR. ROWE: It only seems that long.

MR. SIMMONS: It seems that long, that is all.

There are a number of items here though, Mr. Speaker, which affect the Department of Transportation, the minister has just indicated that some action is going to be taken. All right, he is new at the job, Mr. Speaker, As a matter of fact that is one of the problems we are running into these days with the Department of Transportation is that we have got a very new minister at it, an eager minister who is very new, very new in a roundabout way. So we will give him a little time. We will see how he does. And I hope perhaps during the Budget or during the Throne Speech he will tell us exactly what he intends to do about the recommendations of the Auditor General.

Now, Mr. Speaker, perhaps in some respects while I have not strayed off the subject, I have certainly strayed from the immediate subject of the Budget itself. Perhaps as the lead-off speaker I should be asking the question of what is the idea of a Budget in the first place? What is it intended to do? Is it intended just to snowball us with figures? What is it suppose to do anyway, Mr. Speaker? Well, I hope that in part it would be some kind of a financial plan, and perhaps the best way to assess this Budget of two months ago is in terms of its ability or in terms of the degree to which it addresses itself to the financial need of the Province, and the financial programmes which are required to administer the Province in a prosperous and proper way.

MR. SIMMONS: Of course, Mr. Speaker, the Budget can only be as good as the framers, the makers of the Budget. It can only be as competent, as good intentioned as the people behind it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this I fear in some respects is where we run into the problem. I am not saying that the Cabinet has no good intentions or is not competent or anything of that nature, but I have a very strong feeling, Mr. Speaker, that they have given up. I have a very strong sentiment that somehow this government, this Cabinet, has thrown in the towel. They have somehow admitted, or come to the conclusion, I ought to say, that there is nothing they can do about the situation and that they are biding their time.

The comments you get from them would seem to indicate that somehow they know they are on their last legs and therefore what is the use of trying anyway. I think they are getting the same message -

MR. MORGAN: That is wishful thinking on your part.

MR. SIMMONS: They are getting the same message, Mr. Speaker. I invite the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) to check out his opinion on that and he will find who is doing the wishful thinking. He will find who is doing the wishful thinking. The people, Mr. Speaker, of this Province have lost all faith they had in that great team.

Remember all the campaign slogans, "The Moores Team". Remember? That great team we were told about. Well, we know what happened to some members of the team - Mr. Cheseman, Mr. Senior, these gentlemen used to be in the Cabinet, the member for St. John's North now (Mr. J. Carter), and the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). Remember that team? What a great force for good.

MR. BRETT: It will not be long now.

MR. SIMMONS: Oh the member for Trinity North tells us that his team got elected. Yes, he is right, Mr. Speaker. I know where I sit. I sit in the Opposition, he sits in the government. There is no question about that, and I could remind him of the percentages, but under the law of the land his party was elected the government. I was not begging that question. I was saying remember about the great team. Remember the team of 1972 and such hope there was, and what a change there has been in three or four years.

Now there is still, Mr. Speaker, no shortage of members on the team. There are some very competent people on that team as well. But I am beginning to wonder, Mr. Speaker, if somehow this team is not on some kind of an ill fated trip, they are not doomed before they begin somehow. I am wondering - well, for example, remember the press reports about the buck being passed on the car wreck programme? Remember that one where the Minister of Transportation was telling us one thing and the Minister of the Environment, I believe, was telling us another thing. Did they ever get that one sorted out I wonder? Did the great unity team ever sort that problem out? Have they figured yet whose department that belongs to?

MR. MURPHY: I have not yet.

MR. MORGAN: We are going to give it to the Opposition.

MR. SIMMONS: They have not sorted that one out yet? I see. That is one example of how the team really functions. The member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy), and the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan).

MR. MURPHY: The few survive.

AN HON. MEMBER: - the Opposition will provide.

MR. SIMMONS: Is that right? We keep informed, Mr. Speaker. We keep informed.

MR. BRETT: : Never survived.

MR. SIMMONS: We at the same time get coloured pictures, black and white pictures, some blacker than others. There is one example, Mr. Speaker. And then remember the discussion, the Premier talking about the establishment of the Consumer Affairs Department? Remember the Minister of the Environment disagreeing on that one? Another great example about that team functioning, one fellow saying something publicly, the other fellow saying something else publicly. Lord help us! And that is the crowd. anyway Mr. Speaker.

MR. MURPHY: Everybody's friend. Do not look so serious!

MR. SIMMONS: I know, Mr. Speaker, the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) does not take the thing seriously. I know he does not take it seriously. He treats it all as one big joke.

MR. MURPHY: How do you stand yourself?

MR. SIMMONS: It is not difficult. It is not difficult. I say if I were the member I would have a lot more trouble standing myself, a lot more trouble.

MR. MURPHY: God help us and save us. Since 3:00 o'clock this afternoon listening to this drivel.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker. Three parts of it has been interruptions from members like the member.

MR. MURPHY: That is the only thing alive in it.

MR. ROWE: With the legs and the arms on him, he looks like a ten pin bowling ball.

MR. SIMMONS: I know the member does not want to hear this, the business of his bungling the Premier's attempts to set up a Consumer Affairs Department. I know he does not want to hear that.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we could point to a couple of other people and their views on borrowing, the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), who unfortunately is not in his seat tonight, his views on borrowing versus the Premier's views on borrowing are worlds apart, worlds apart. So it goes, Mr. Speaker. That is the team we thought we had. the team the people of the Province thought it had. What is most disgusting

MR. SIMMONS: about it, Mr. Speaker, what is most lamentable about it is that while all this is going on, while the government members choose to treat the matter very lightly, the future of our Province is at stake and I am particularly disturbed that the government does not seem to take this matter at all seriously. Nero - ~~was it?~~ fiddled while Rome burned. Here we have a crowd that is diddling while Newfoundland burns as it were. People who are not at all taking the issue of government leadership very serious.

Mr. Speaker, the Auditor General, the situation in the Fisheries Department, the unemployment situation, all these demonstrate clearly that the present team is mismanaging badly the affairs of the Province. One would even be forced to the conclusion it cannot be a very competent team as a whole. There are competent members in it but as a whole they do not function as a unit. It would seem, the impression is, that they spend so much time bickering among themselves, parading their own pet peeves on every turn, not only privately but publicly, that they do not get time to address themselves to the affairs of the Province.

This Province deserves a lot better than that, Mr. Speaker. It deserves a government that is answerable to the people of the Province through this House. It deserves the immediate setting up of this public accounts committee. It deserves, Mr. Speaker, taking seriously the recommendations of the Auditor General in his report.

I believe it was The Daily News, yes, The Daily News back in April, just two weeks ago, that pointed out that without the controls advocated by the Auditor General, we as a Province and as a group of taxpayers were being left wide open for wrong doing and fraud. I believe there is a lot of truth in that statement, Mr. Speaker, particularly when the advice of the Auditor General has come to be treated so lightly by the present government.

MR. SIMMONS: I find it very, very disturbing, Mr. Speaker. I think it is uncalled for. I believe that either the government has faith in the Auditor General and listens to his recommendations or gives a plausible explanation to the House why the recommendations cannot be listened to, or comes before the House with a recommendation concerning the appointment of a new Auditor General.

There are only so many options, Mr. Speaker. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. You cannot criticize the Auditor General endlessly and then at the same time lean on him when you need to.

MR. NOLAN: Did you originate that one?

MR. SIMMONS: I am sorry.

MR. NOLAN: About your cake.

MR. SIMMONS: I believe so. I am not sure. It was -

MR. NOLAN: Pretty.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes is it not? It was either me or one of the other members for Trinity. I am not sure which of the three of us did it. Certainly one of us worked on it, you know.

MR. SIMMONS: There he goes again, Mr. Speaker. There he goes again. If he were not so small, Mr. Speaker, he would be big enough to be worried about. I suppose he would, Mr. Speaker. We spend a lot of our time being concerned about the Province, but some of our time oozing pity for that member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan). How nice it was all day with him up spending some of our money in Ottawa somewhere. Not doing much good with the money, but doing the good of being out of our way for a while anyway.

MR. MORGAN: I was trying to get some co-operation as well as some money, but it is not so easy to do.

MR. SIMMONS: I see. Well, at least I commend the minister for taking the approach of talking to them instead of barking at them through the press, which is what most of his colleagues have been doing. The Minister of Fisheries could take a sheet out of the member's book, the Minister of Transportation's book, because he believes in deriding them publicly and the Minister of Mines and Energy has had his share of that in this House. But I am glad to hear that the minister at least is talking to the people from Ottawa. That is a good sign. It is a very good sign indeed, very good.

I, in one of my idler moments, I got thinking about the real problem with this particular team, Mr. Speaker, and the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) reminds me. I am told that in hockey they got the big M, in business they got three M. I cannot make up my mind in this government whether they got four M or five M. It depends on who you count. Names are not allowed to be used. But when you remember the people that I talked about a moment ago involved in the buck passing incident on the car wrecks you have got a couple of M's. And remember the people involved in the altercation in the Consumer Affairs Department, you have got another additional M. Perhaps that is their problem, Mr. Speaker. Then the people who have the various views on borrowing, you have a couple of more M's. All together you have about a four or a five M syndrome in this government. All the people beginning with M are creating problems

MR. SIMMONS:

for the Premier, including the Premier himself. There is the problem, Mr. Speaker. There is the secret code. Root out the M's in this administration, get rid of the M's. Perhaps that is the answer, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PECKFORD: Does that cover democracy?

MR. SIMMONS: No I am talking about in the administration, Mr. Speaker. I have nothing against Ms. I have just come to some conclusion about those particular Ms in government.

MR. MURPHY: Did you ever put your initials in the same class?

MR. SIMMONS: No, and I will tell you somebody else who has not.

MR. MURPHY: The hon. member is in his class.

MR. SIMMONS: No. Now do not get nasty. The member is not sitting in his place or standing, whichever he is doing at the moment. He is not at all in his place, Mr. Speaker. But the member who sits next to where he is sitting now, the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall), I appreciate. He is one of the Ms I am talking about. He is a fellow who in conscience sometimes cannot agree. The member who is sitting down in that corner right now is a member who, you know, might not let conscience stand in the way, but he does not agree anyway. That is just his approach. He just loves being cantankerous about it. There is one of the problems.

The member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan), of course, his problem is he does not know whether he agrees or not. He says, "If I cannot comb it, it does not exist," or sometimes to change the line he says, "As the minister I agree but as the member I disagree. In my capacity as minister I disagree." So it goes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MORGAN: That should keep me safe.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, I think we have made the point, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOWE: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Yes. And of course as far as the other M is concerned -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there is the kind of threat, there is the kind of threat -

MR. MORGAN: It is not a threat, it is a fact.

MR. SIMMONS: There is the kind of threat that I am sick and tired of. I was sitting here the other day, Mr. Speaker, when we had a fairly serious exchange between the Leader of the Opposition and I believe that member, and he threatened, Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Lewisporte (Mr. White) and I have now just heard him threaten the member for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) using his ministerial office, Mr. Speaker, saying, you will not get this and you will not get this. It is unbecoming of a minister of this government.

MR. MORGAN: To a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, to a point of order. The hon. gentleman is not giving correct information to the House of Assembly. This hon. gentleman did not threaten any hon. member of this House of Assembly at any time. My comment was that the hon. gentleman for Trinity-Bay De Verde is unable to get his fish plant, his fish plant from Ottawa.

MR. SIMMONS: What has that got to do with what I am talking about?

MR. MORGAN: I am not threatening the hon. member for Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) so the hon. gentleman for Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) should be asked to withdraw that remark. There are no threats being made by this hon. gentleman, none.

MR. ROWE: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker. The minister did not say what he did say on his point of order. He said, "You will not get your fish plant." And that can be certainly interpreted as a threat.

MR. MORGAN: You cannot get one.

MR. ROWE: No, the hon. member specifically said, "You will not get your fish plant." And that came from a minister of this Crown and that can be interpreted as a threat. In any instance, the member did not rise on a point of order. It is simply a difference of opinion.

MR. MORGAN: What are you speaking to it for if there is not point of order?

MR. ROWE: Well, I am speaking to the point of order, and I am saying that the -

MR. MORGAN: You said there was none.

MR. ROWE: Will the hon. member -

MR. MORGAN: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I ask for protection from the loudmouth from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan). I am speaking -

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of personal privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! A point of privilege has been raised.

MR. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) in that kind of remark is making a very unparliamentary remark and throwing derogatory comments at another member of this Assembly and he must withdraw that kind of remark.

MR. ROWE: To that point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing in Beauchesne nor in the Standing Orders that says that a loudmouth is unparliamentary. It is quite obvious the hon. minister has been loudmouthed tonight. I am just stating the obvious. If the obvious is unparliamentary I withdraw it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

To settle the point of privilege first, the phrase of course that was brought into question was the one mentioned by the hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) and I think he is quite correct to say that the reading of Beauchesne does not include that phrase nor does it come near to that. It is certainly a phrase that has a connotation of discourtesy. But I do not think that as such it is unparliamentary.

We are therefore on the point of order. I think that the point of order can be disposed of as being one of a matter of a difference of interpretation between remarks that were passed between hon. members.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your ruling and it demonstrates once again that - not the ruling, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to discuss that. It is not my right but the set of events which just transpired demonstrates once again how difficult it is to make a point in this House when you have a member such as the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan), who has been introducing complete irrelevancies because I was not at all talking about any fish plants at the time, introduces complete irrelevancies to harrass and to interrupt the flow of the debate.

MR. MORGAN: You are punishing us.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there is what I mean you see. If he is not talking, the only person he can listen to is himself. Even his colleagues cannot stand him. Mr. Speaker, I would say -

MR. MORGAN: That is just trash.

MR. SIMMONS: I would say, Mr. Speaker - yes and I hope that what I say will always sound like trash to the hon. member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) because that is the best endorsement I have. I know that anything that sounds like trash to his ears has got a chance at being received pretty well by anybody else. I have never regarded him, Mr. Speaker, as much of a judge of what is tasteful.

MR. MORGAN: Stop making a fool of yourself and sit down.

MR. SIMMONS: Why does he mutter all the time, Mr. Speaker? Do they wind him up or what is it about him, Mr. Speaker? Does he come back because he talked to people in Ottawa - what capacity was he up, as the best dressed man, the minister? How was he up there Mr. Speaker?

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. What are we debating, Mr. Speaker? I understand we are now in the budget debate.

MR. SIMMONS: Committee of Ways and Means.

MR. MORGAN: Committee of Ways and Means.

MR. SIMMONS: Make your point, will you?

MR. MORGAN: The hon. gentleman's comments now are not relevant at all to the debate. I would ask the Chair that if the hon. gentleman is going to continue in his speech that he be asked to be relevant to the

MR. MORGAN:

debate.

MR. SIMONS: Mr. Speaker, to the point of order. I, of course, have not been relevant, Mr. Speaker. There is nothing more irrelevant in this House than the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan). I withdraw the comments. I am sorry I made them and the only plea I -

MR. MORGAN: Stop making a fool of yourself.

MR. SIMONS: Mr. Speaker, I cannot even make a point of order without the Yahoo just going on and on and on. Mr. Speaker, the only plea I would make is that if that member would shut up and do quietly whatever he is doing there -

MR. MORGAN: Listen to the Prime Minister's language. Shut up -

MR. SIMONS: - then, Mr. Speaker, I would be allowed to continue.

If I have been dragged into some irrelevancies -

MR. MORGAN: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMONS: Mr. Speaker, here is what I am talking about.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Order, please! To dispose of the point of order in the first place I understand the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) has withdrawn the remarks that gave rise to the point of order so we need not discuss that further. I would reiterate what was said from the Chair some little while ago that a certain amount of sparring between hon. members is certainly the tradition of the House but it should not be allowed to go to such an extent that it does disrupt debate.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I saw the Premier coming in a moment ago, but I think he has left again. I am sure he is getting lots of advice these days and he does not need a lot from me, but if I were giving him advice there is one choice bit of advice I would like to give him, I have talked about his team tonight and I believe that the basic problem, I have said the basic problem is that there are some members on his team who are letting him down. I put a frame around them. I said that they all begin with "M". I left out one of the "M"'s, Mr. Speaker. I did not refer to the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Maynard). There is not too much can be said about him except that he is certainly a staggering testimony to the need for sober dialogue in government, but perhaps him included, Mr. Speaker, perhaps he included for letting the team down, Mr. Speaker. And if the Premier could only smarten up and perhaps have a house cleaning. He has got no election to worry about for three or four years. Why does he not have a house cleaning? Why does he not look at the members on his side, he has got some good people over there who are not in the Cabinet.

I would love to see the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) in the Cabinet. The member for St. John's North

MR. SIMMONS: (Mr. J. Carter) has proven that he is Cabinet material, the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). On experience alone the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) deserves to be in the Cabinet. So it goes.

Mr. Speaker, the advice I would give the Premier is to have a courageous look at the people in his caucus. There are not elections to worry about. The word is around that he is not going to run again as leader in the next election, that he is going to bow out before then. So he could do the country a real favour by taking a courageous look at the manpower he has got over there and drawing up a Cabinet, perhaps a reduced Cabinet. I do not think he needs as many people as he got in the Cabinet. But a Cabinet of fourteen or fifteen perhaps at most, of the people over there best able to do the job. He is overlooking some fine talent now, men with a fine contribution to make who are not in the Cabinet at the moment and who should be in the Cabinet and he has in Cabinet, perhaps for political reasons or whatever, people who should not be there in my view. I have given them a clue. I did not want to come out and name names. That would be unfair and uncouth of me. But I did just, in terms of the alphabet, just give him a suggestion about who he should look at first. He should look at his five "M" syndrome or his four "M" plus himself, his five "M" syndrome. He should ask himself whether perhaps he might not better utilize the talents in the caucus.

Now I do not expect him to drop all of these, Mr. Speaker, but I would say, Mr. Speaker, I would say, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MORGAN: How long is this going to last?

MR. SIMMONS: There he goes muttering off again, abusing the rules of this House. How does he get away with it? Why is he not named, Mr. Speaker? What special privilege has that member got, Mr. Speaker, that he can sit there for hours on end and harass members of this House?

MR. MORGAN: Are you challenging the -

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker, I am not challenging but I am about to challenge because I am fed up to the teeth with that little Yahoo from Bonavista South yapping away at every turn and it is very difficult, Mr. Speaker, to maintain a sober thought in this House, and his colleagues over there who talk about dignity allow him to go on. Why do they not take him under control, Mr. Speaker, and tell him to shut up for once in his life? He makes a much bigger impression.

MR. MORGAN: Shut up this and shut up that!

MR. SIMMONS: He makes a much bigger impression, Mr. Speaker, with his looks than with his words.

MR. MORGAN: That is only meant to embarrass.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, there he goes again. He makes a much bigger impression with his looks than his words I assure you. He goes on and on and on, Mr. Speaker, on and on.

Now, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MORGAN: Keep on embarrassing me.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, name him! Name him! It is the only way. Of course he would not recognize the name would he? He would not know what capacity the Speaker had named him as. That would be a problem. He would probably leave in his capacity as member and stay in his capacity as minister or something.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if the Premier were here the one bit of advice I would give him if he could not follow my advice about the complete reorganization of that Cabinet, would be to get rid of the biggest embarrassment he has got over there. Get rid of that embarrassment before it drags him down completely.

We have seen the situation, Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks with respect to that stretch of highway west of Grand Falls I referred to. We have seen a number of cases where the whole administration of the Department of Transportation and Communications has been completely bungled since this minister took over.

MR. SIMMONS: Now, Mr. Speaker, in the public interest, and I am a taxpayer, and I believe I have a right, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MORGAN: Are you a taxpayer? Do you pay taxes?

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, indeed I do pay taxes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MORGAN: He is a taxpayer.

MR. SIMMONS: Do not be such a child boy. Do not be such a child. It would be in the public interest, Mr. Speaker, if the Premier had the courage to dismiss that man from Cabinet for incompetence. Mr. Speaker, he has got to be -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh! Oh!

MR. SIMMONS: There is always an option if the minister wants to go that route.

AN HON. MEMBER: There is always a way out.

MR. SIMMONS: I would not close all the options to the member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) if I were you.

MR. MURPHY: I think our member just went out the window.

MR. DOODY: Yes, one has to move to the side of the House.

MR. SIMMONS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just think, Mr. Speaker, just think what a service would be done this Province if easily the most incompetent minister ever to serve in an administration - who? - the Minister of Transportation, the most incompetent minister ever to serve in an administration in this Province, Mr. Speaker, without question in my opinion. It is only my opinion. I do not know who else shares it but I am prepared to stand by it. We have had all kinds of demonstrations.

The minister, Mr. Speaker, just lacks the wherewithal to be a Minister of the Crown in this Province and I was offended when I just heard the announcement but I swallowed hard and I said, "Well, let us give the fellow a try." But my goodness, how far do you go with an experiment? At what expense do you continue to carry on an experiment? What expense to the Public Treasury and to the people of this Province and their

MR. SIMMONS: welfare do you continue to carry on an experiment, a very expensive, dear experiment indeed, Mr. Speaker, the kind of experiment we cannot afford to carry on much longer.

MR. ROUSSEAU: No.

MR. SIMMONS: I am not talking about the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, I am talking about the public performance of the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture. It is utterly ridiculous, absolutely ridiculous. Shocking. Shocking. And we can do better than that. We have over there twenty-nine members, Mr. Speaker, and it is unfair.

MR. MORGAN: The only financial spokesman. The only financial spokesman.

MR. SIMMONS: I will allow him, Mr. Speaker, to demonstrate. I will allow him to demonstrate, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the charge I am making. Give him enough rope to hang himself. The danger is that he might hang some other people with him.

MR. ROUSSEAU: A man of the common people.

MR. SIMMONS: He is common all right, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PECKFORD: Personal abuse. You are always good for it.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker, no personal abuse at all.

I just have a very strong opinion on this subject and I am affronted every time I see my tax money and the public's tax money in this Province being misused, misadministered because we do not have in government somebody with the courage to say to the Minister of Transportation, "Boy you cannot hack it. You cannot do it. Now we have got public funds here so we are going to get somebody in who can do it." A disgrace, Mr. Speaker, a disgrace of the first order. I believe that the Premier would do a great service to this Province if tomorrow morning or tonight, it would be such a break they would have a special newscast on it tonight, I daresay, tonight or tomorrow he would announce that he is dismissed, not even given the option to resign although he could do that. There is nothing

MR. SIMMONS: wrong with it if he wanted to. Let him resign.

MR. MORGAN: I will be around when you are gone my boy.

I will be around when you are long gone.

MR. SIMMONS: That is what frightens me, Mr. Speaker. That is what frightens me, the possibility that the minister may be speaking the truth without knowing it. It is certainly without knowing it.

MR. MORGAN: You will be long gone, I will still be around. With your personal attacks, you will not be around much longer.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister misunderstands me. I have nothing against the minister personally at all, despite the fact that he has engaged in a fair amount of -

MR. MORGAN: You have attacked me plenty of times.

MR. SIMMONS: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. WELLS: A point of order.

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

MR. WELLS: The member may not appreciate the minister. That is fine, that is his right. And he has said so, and it is possible to say so in a sentence, or two or three sentences, his opinion of the government or of a minister in it! in his ministerial capacity that is fine. We accept that. But the hon. member has gone on and on and on -

MR. SIMMONS: No, no. No, no.

MR. WELLS: - on this subject, and I do not say this unkindly, but there is a rule against repetition. If he does not appreciate the minister, if he thinks the minister is not competent, that is fine. That is his right. But I do not think he has a right to say it to the House fifty, sixty times over. And that is what is happening and I ask Your Honour to remind the member that having made his point it is not necessary to make it fifty times and I would ask Your Honour to remind the member of it.

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

MR. ROWE: On that point of order: I suggest, Sir, that there certainly has not been any repetition in the magnitude suggested by the hon. House Leader, fifty or sixty times. It might sound like it to the hon. Leader of the House because his colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Communications, insists on interrupting my colleague, -

MR. SIMMONS: What is the minister's (Mr. Wells') position on that?

MR. ROWE: - and as a result -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: You condone that, do you?

MR. ROWE: - my colleague tries to get back on track. And I would submit that if there has been any repetition, it certainly has not been needless, It has been provoked and caused by the fact that we have had interventions and interruptions and mouthings off from the Minister of Transportation and Communications, and my colleague has had to restate and start all over again the sentence that he was half ways through when he was interrupted by the hon. - well, I am using the word loosely - the Minister for Transportation and Communications.

I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that if the Minister for Transportation and Communications was brought to order and asked to keep silent, as he should according to the Standing Orders of this House, that we would not be running into any problem with respect to repetition in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The point originally made by the hon. Government House Leader is certainly a valid one, and that is that there is a rule against unnecessary repetition. When an hon. member is speaking and is interrupted of course he frequently goes back and starts off a sentence or a topic or whatever it is again, and it makes it extremely difficult to give a specific direction to an hon. member on that point.

What I would suggest in order that the debate might progress in an orderly fashion, and would call to mind of hon. members, number one, of the hon. gentleman to my right that it is out of order to make personal allusions derogatory to members. Now, you know, when a criticism

Mr. Speaker:

of a minister occurs no one is obliged to get up and compliment the minister. If one is in Opposition, one does not expect necessarily that remarks are going to be complimentary. But I draw that to the attention of hon. members to make allusions derogatory to members, and I call equally to the attention of hon. gentlemen on my left that they are out of order when they do interrupt. I would now direct hon. members not to interrupt further.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to come to some comments I want to make about the Department of Industrial Development, the minister was certainly within my view, at least he was a moment ago. These are questions that I would want to raise during the estimates, but did not get the opportunity because this is one of the departments that were not called because of the guillotine, the seventy-five hour guillotine rule. It is not a rule that we brought in, Mr. Speaker; it is a rule that the government brought in to restrict the debate.

I refer back to my comments this afternoon when I suggested that if we could have the Budget Speech debate before the estimates, then I would be in agreement with shorter speeches during estimates, twenty minutes or whatever. I did not say that I would be against a delimitation of the time. I think this is wrong, and it is wrong for a couple of reasons. One of the consequences of this delimitation of time is that the government have no onus to get on with the job. If we were in an open-ended situation then the government colleagues would be saying to each other, "Fellows, look! Shut up so we can get this over with as quickly as possible." But knowing we are all in this together in terms of time, what is happening, of course, is that the ministers have been particularly long-winded in their opening remarks and in their answers to question. And I would guess, although I do not know, but we did have an estimate of time done part-way through

Mr. Simmons:

and the proportions then were that the government had used up about twice as much time as the Official Opposition, about twice as much time, at the thirty-five hour mark or the forty hour mark; the government had used up about twice as much time as the Opposition and had used up about the same amount of time as did all the Opposition put together, twice as much as the Official Opposition, about the same amount as all the Opposition put together. Now I would say that would not have happened, Mr. Speaker, were we in an open-ended situation.

Anyway, I digress, because we did not get a chance to talk about Industrial Development so I raise it now in the general debate. One of the things that has always bothered me about the department since it was brought in a couple of years ago is that the department, unlike other departments of government, to the best of my knowledge the department does not publish an annual report, the Department of Industrial Development. And I have often wondered why, because here you have a department that is more so than say Transportation or Social Services or Education, it is involved in promotional activities, activities which would be almost unique, ad hoc in some respects. You can guess what kinds of things would go on in Transportation or Social Services, you have an idea of the kinds of activities that would go on because you know in pretty prescribed terms what the functions of these departments are, or Education for that matter.

But when you get into a department such as Industrial Development whose terms of reference, whose objectives involve such broad items as determining industrial development opportunities in the Province, and development of these opportunities by attracting new industries into Newfoundland and by encouraging their establishment expansion, when you get into terms of reference and objectives as broad as these then what might happen in the department one year may be very different than what happens in the succeeding year. And for that reason, it might seem to me, that it is particularly important, particularly germane, that there be made available to the House a

Mr. Simmons:

report of the department's activities in a given year. Now I know in theory we have to report or the report is available to us in that the minister is always there and we can ask questions. But I believe it ought to be formalized, just as we get a report, for example, from the Department of Social Services and from other departments, I believe we ought to have an annual documentation from the Department of Industrial Development which I do not believe exists - I stand to be corrected, I have never seen one - an annual report containing information on the department's activities during the preceding year. I am told also that Newfoundland is the only Province, with the possible exception of Prince Edward Island, the only Province which does not produce a report of its Department of Industrial Development or the counterpart department in the various provinces. I am told that reports of the Departments of Industrial Development in all the provinces except probably P.E.I. and I should say B.C. as well, I am not sure of these two, but in the other seven provinces my information is that such reports are issued on an annual basis.

In view, I say again, in view of the nature of the objectives of this department it would seem that such a report would be a very welcomed document and I would hope that the minister in time will be able to respond to that particular suggestion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what would that department have to report? if there were an annual report? What could that department report? Well, Mr. Speaker, in terms of developing new industry I would submit that the Department of Industrial Development since its formation in the last three or four years, whatever, that department can really only claim credit for two projects, two projects. I do not belittle these projects, if there are only two that is reason enough for a department to exist. If we can create one job that is justification for the effort. But, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about a full-fledged departmental structure with a minister and a senior staff and so on. And to my knowledge the only two projects - I listened very carefully to what the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) had to say this evening

MR. SIMMONS:

in responding to a matter on the late show - but notwithstanding, there are really only two projects that can be identified as having been begun at the initiative of the Department of Industrial Development. I refer to the Pyramid Mobile Homes at Argentia, and we all know in recent days that that particular project is in considerable difficulty. I hope that it is not terminal, the difficulties are not terminal. But it does not sound good from the press reports at least or indeed from the comments which the minister made a week or so ago here in the House. But that is one project that the government did initiate.

The second one I refer to, of course, Mr. Speaker, is the Newfoundland Zinc Mine operation at Daniel's Harbour. Again a project which actually really goes back to the late 1960's in effect and the British Cold Mines concession of the late 1960's. But even, you know, stretching the point in that the operation did begin during the term of the present administration. We are talking about two projects. Now, Mr. Speaker, there has to be more reason for a department than that. Is that why we do not have a report? Is there nothing to show? Is there no evidence of the results of this department's activities? I recognize they have had a growing period. But the growing period should pretty well be over now. I would hope the minister in the absence of a report this year, a formal report, will be able to give us during this debate some indication of what the successes, the activities of his department have been over the last year or so.

I do not know what is happening here tonight. All kinds of funny sounds. Now, Mr. Speaker, while I am addressing myself to items pertaining to the Minister of Industrial Development, let me move to his other portfolio, that of Rural Development. A day or so before the House closed for Easter, members will recall that I was talking about the Rural Development Authority. At that time, Mr. Speaker, I introduced some evidence into the - I believe it was in Committee, actually.

MR. MORGAN: Innuendo, was it not?

MR. SIMMONS: Here we go again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the

MR. SIMMONS:

member for Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) says (innuendo) I say information, Mr. Speaker. The information is at hand as it was then. It is easy, Mr. Speaker, to sit there and snipe. It is very easy to sit there and warp and distort the record. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not talking about innuendo. I am talking about documentation, the kind of documentation I was not allowed to introduce before into the record of the House.

MR. MORGAN: Table it.

MR. SIMMONS: I was not allowed to table it, as the member knows, Mr. Speaker. I was not allowed to read it, I am sorry. I have told the minister before why I cannot table it, because the matter is one of confidence. I raise the issue now because it has now been three or four weeks since I first raised the issue. I asked the minister then - I said that I felt there was arm twisting going on by a political appointee of one of the departments of government. I said the comments when I was speaking to the Rural Development Authority which came under the Department of Rural Development and I gave some evidence, Mr. Speaker. I do not think it is necessary to go through the information again except to raise the question.

The question I have for the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development is - because it is within his purview, his area of responsibility. He knows, I believe, the person I am talking about. I would like to know what he has done. I believe I made a very serious charge. I believe I repeated a very serious charge made first by people, a couple of people in a smaller community who were being harassed. They say they were harassed for political reasons. Now Mr. Speaker, that kind of thing cannot go on. It just cannot go on. I am wondering when the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development is going to respond to this matter. I believe he knows who I am talking about. I think it is sad that in 1975 or 1976 we should have this business of the political bouncer going around keeping people in line.

MR. SIMMONS:

I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the people of this Province would like to know, if this is what the tax money is going to be used for, to pay people to go around this Province twisting arms of those who do not tow the party line. We are not talking, Mr. Speaker, about Boston politics of the 1880's or the 1910's or 1915's. We are talking about 1975 now. We are talking about people who have been, who say in writing they have been intimidated by a political appointee of this administration.

MR. MORCAN: Do not be a coward and give the name.

MR. SIMMONS: The Minister knows who I am talking about; the Minister of Industrial and Rural Development knows exactly who I am talking about. Mr. Speaker, I believe in the last little while I have raised a number of issues which require some answering. I hope in the next few days in this debate we will get some of the answers.

I would like at this time, Mr. Speaker, to move an amendment to the motion, the motion that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair. I would like to move to amend the motion by striking out all the words after that and substituting therefore the following, "This House regrets the failure of the government to present a budget speech which is consistent with their announced policies and promises" — hang on to what I am doing here, Mr. Speaker. I have a feeling that I am reading the wrong amendment.

MR. NEADY: It is the wrong amendment.

MR. SIMMONS: That is right.

MR. NEADY: That was last years.

MR. SIMMONS: That is right, Mr. Speaker, that was one we were using for reference and I picked up —

MR. MORCAN: The competent member.

MR. SIMMONS: We all, except the Minister of Transportation, we make mistakes. When he makes one, he makes a doozie, he makes a real doozy, Mr. Speaker. He makes a real doozie. I was confused by all my paper here, Mr. Speaker. My amendment would be to amend the motion that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair by striking out all

MR. SIMMONS:

the words after that and substituting therefore the following,

"This House regrets the failure of the government to disclose completely and fully the present financial situation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the government thereof." I so move, seconded by my colleague from Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe).

MR. SPEAKER: I have the hon. gentleman's amendment.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I assume the amendment is in order and I may speak to the amendment. I believe, Mr. Speaker, I have gone on for some time and most of the points, Mr. Speaker, that could be germane to this particular amendment I have made. I have talked at some length about the financial situation of the Province. I did not talk at any great length because in estimates I addressed myself particularly to financial items and I did not care to repeat them at this time. So I got today rather into the matters of initiatives to cure the unemployment situation and so on. But I believe they are all pretty relevant to the amendment which is now before the House. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move the amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion

MR. SPEAKER: before the Chair is the amendment of the hon. member, which is seconded by the hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde to amend the motion by striking out all the words after "that" to substitute therefore the following, "This House regrets the failure of the government to disclose completely and fully the financial situation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Government thereof."

The hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde.

MR. ROBE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sir, I rise in support of the amendment moved by my colleague from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir saying that this House regrets the failure of the government to disclose completely and fully the present financial situation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the government thereof.

Sir, the reason why I support this particular resolution is simply this, that over the years the people of this Province have been given the impression that everything was a bed of roses, that everything was going along quite well. That we were going to have reasonable industrial and rural development and that we would have a reasonable rate of employment in this Province and that we would have a reasonable provision of the services that are so badly needed in the various communities throughout our Province. And, Sir, the reason why people thought that is because of the many, many, many promises and commitments that were made by the administration over the past number of years. So I do not know whether it was directly or indirectly but certainly the impression was left that the financial situation of this Province was pretty sound and stable. Because if a government is going to make numerous and many promises and raise the expectations of our citizens and the electorate, one can only assume that we are on a safe and sound financial basis.

MR. ROWE: Now as it turns out, Sir, we have seen the current account deficit increase year after year after year since this administration took over and if one, and I will not bore the Assembly, Sir, by reading through this, but in the sixth - there is one missing here, I guess the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) must have taken it - but if you look at the highlights of the various budget speeches delivered by this administration, the sixth budget speeches, including the Fall emergency Mini Budget Speech, you will see something, you will see the current account deficit steadily rising. In each case you will see the revised estimates for such a year indicate a current account deficit of so many million dollars and capital requirements of so many hundreds of millions of dollars and if you progress from year 1972 to the present year 1976 you will see that that has been a steady increase, and our borrowing requirements have increased over the years, but still, particularly in the 1975 Budget Speech it contained promise after promise, commitment after commitment with respect to the provision of hospital facilities, school facilities, highways, recreation, you name it, **anything** that the people would want, the normal amenities of life.

Sir, I will give you a typical example, just a very small example of why we feel that this administration has not disclosed completely and fully the present financial situation of the Province. I will give you one very small example. Last year, being of course an election year, the government went berserk, completely berserk with respect to the drilling of artesian wells in this Province. Drill hole after drill hole after drill hole was sunk all over the Province.

CAPTAIN WINSOR: No water in most of them.

MR. ROWE: That might well be so, but that is not the point I am trying to get at whether there was water in them or not.

Now, Sir, a hole is fine in the ground.

AN HON. MEMBER: A hole is a hole.

MR. ROWE: A hole is just that, a hole. And it is pretty difficult for homes to drink out of a hole if it is 200 feet deep. You would need a very long straw and you would require the wind power and jaw power of the Minister of Transportation and Communications to get it up.

MR. MORGAN: Quite a job!

MR. ROWE: But, Sir, what happened was this, is the government went flat out of money in the Water Services Division in drilling holes prior to the election, and there is hole after hole after hole in this Province drilled in the ground with no pump, no pump house, and no distribution lines to the homes that this drill hole was to serve. So the people got their well dug all right but they cannot get the water out of it. Now my understanding, Sir, is this, is that the money voted in the Water Services Division this year will be just barely - it will not even be adequate to complete the holes already drilled during the election year. The present vote this year will not be adequate to complete the utilization of these drilled artesian holes in the ground.

In other words the money was not available. And if that is not painting, if I can use the expression, a wrong or false or untrue picture of the financial situation of this Province I would like to know what is, or what is not.

MR. MURPHY: Would they be for private people or this be a public thing.

MR. ROWE: No, Sir, for the edification of the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy), these artesian wells largely go to my experience, now I have only had the honour of serving two districts, but to my experience these artesian wells generally speaking go into unincorporated communities that do not have, for instance, a local government that might get a water system through grants from Municipal Affairs and Housing and they would have a water reserve and a dam and an intake and a water line and distribution lines throughout the community. So you would get an artesian well dug that would probably serve eight, ten

MR. ROWE: or twelve or fourteen houses, this sort of thing. And this is the sort of thing that happened throughout the Province.

But, Sir, it is no good to give a man a whiskey glass without the whiskey.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?

MR. ROWE: Sir, the fact of the matter is that we got these holes drilled all over the Province and the people are not getting the water and this year's water services vote, it would be lucky, the amount of money in that vote would be lucky to complete the distribution lines and attachments and what have you for the holes that have already been drilled in the past year. So it is anticipated, and I expect that we will see no new drilling of artesian wells in this Province to any significant degree this year because this government failed completely and utterly to disclose the financial situation of the Province.

Now the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) has uttered words in this House that makes me shiver in my seat, shiver when I am at home, shiver when I am trying to relax. The hon. member for Twillingate has gone as far as to suggest that we are going to go bellies up as a Province.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I have. I repeated it.

MR. ROWE: Right. I am saying that. I do not entirely agree. In terms of - I do not know if the hon. member was suggesting that we will not be able to borrow money. My own feeling,

MR. POWE:

and the hon. member is much more experienced than I, but in my humble opinion, any province of this nation will be able to borrow money somewhere from some financial house somewhere in the world. We will always be able to borrow money.

MR. SMALLWOOD: You think so?

MR. POWE: Right. That is what I think. I may be wrong. What I am saying is that.

MR. NEARY: I hope you are right.

MR. POWE: Here we go again, Mr. Speaker. I am very sensitive, very easily drawn off track particularly if I am in the area where I might be getting in over my head. But the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) has suggested that this Province will not be able to borrow money this year, or at least this is what I understand from what the hon. member has said.

MR. PECKFORD: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. PECKFORD: I have not seen, Mr. Speaker, a copy of the amendment as was proposed by the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir (Mr. Simmons). But as I remember it and understand it the amendment had to do with regretting the failure of the government to disclose the true financial picture of the Province. If that is the amendment, I would suggest and submit that the hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Powe) is not being relevant. He is being extremely irrelevant because he has not as yet proved in his submission to this to date anything which would indicate that we have not disclosed the finances of the Province. That being the case the hon. member must be irrelevant because in his comments relating to artesian wells he did not prove that the Department of Municipal Affairs representing the government did not disclose all the finances that were spent last year in the operation of that programme.

All he proved was that we put holes in the ground and that all these holes were not developed in the same year. So it seems

MR. PECKFORD:

to me that the hon. member has not been relevant to the amendment, to amend the motion by striking out all the words after that and substitute therefore the following, "This House regrets the failure of the government to disclose completely and fully the present financial situation of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the government thereof." Every word and phrase and sentence that has been uttered by the hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) so far in his debate on the amendment has done nothing to prove or substantiate the amendment that was made by the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir (Mr. Simmons). So I submit, Your Honour, that the hon. member has been completely irrelevant in all the things that he has said so far on the amendment.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order. What can be more relevant than the very example that I used in the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing. I have used that as an example of the failure of the government to disclose the financial situation of the Province. I have used that as a very small example of the fact that the government went ahead and drilled these hundreds of holes all over the Province, presumably with the intention of giving distribution lines, pump houses and pumps and what have you. And the people must realize that money was forthcoming for that but money is not forthcoming for that.

MR. PECKFORD: Over the years.

MR. ROWE: Over the years, the hon. member says. We are talking about this year.

MR. PECKFORD: We will come through in time.

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

MR. ROWE: What can be more in order than so much borrowing -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The point of order has been raised that the hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde (Mr. Rowe) is not being relevant to the amendment. The amendment essentially is a criticism of the government

MR. SPEAKER:

for failing to disclose the present financial condition of the Province and of the government. On the face of it, the hon. member has to speak on that subject. Whether of course what he says is proof or not, conclusive proof or partially conclusive, is of course up to every hon. member's own judgement. But I think the real ruling here is - and I will quote from May, page 379 - "The object of an amendment may be either to modify a question in such a way as to increase its acceptability, or to present to the House a different proposition as an alternative to the original question." Now that is what this amendment is. Again quoting Beauchesne, "The latter purpose may be affected by moving to omit all or most of the words of the question after the first word 'that' and to substitute in their place other words of a different import." That is clearly what this amendment is.

Here is the operative part. "In that case the debate that follows is not restricted to the amendment but includes the purpose both of the amendment and of the motion, both matters being under the consideration of the House as alternative propositions. Now the rules are somewhat different in a different kind of amendment which instead of substituting might add on or modify in some way. This is an amendment which deletes all the words after 'that', puts forward a quite different proposition and then both are before the House as alternatives. The words are quite clear here, "In that case", and he is talking about amendments which drop all the words after "that" and substitute something else, "the debate that follows is not restricted to the amendment but includes the purposes both of the amendment and of the motion, both matters being under the consideration of the House as alternative propositions.

The hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde.

MR. POWE: Thank you, Your Honour, and I do apologize to Your Honour for not sitting down. I had my back turned to Mr. Speaker when I was trying to defend myself and I did not see the Speaker stand. So I do apologize, and I thank the Speaker for his ruling. I shall continue on with my speech as I had intended to do so.

MR. ROWE:

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make quite clear what I am saying, that I believe very strongly that the government has not disclosed the present nor the past financial situation of the Province. It is unparliamentary for me to say the government has in fact misled the people with respect to the financial situation, but that will become obvious when I indicate to the House the kinds of promises that the government have made over the years that would give the impression that everything was well with respect to the financial situation of this Province.

Now when I was interrupted on the point of order, I believe I was alluding to some comments made by the experienced member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) who has suggested that we will find the need to borrow more money this year, and something that the hon. member had said during the course of some his speeches indicated to me that we may not be able to borrow any more money. Now I do not know whether I misinterpreted the member. If I did, I apologize. But my feeling is -

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. member will allow me?

MR. ROWE: Sure.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I will be very glad and eager to say very explicitly what I do believe and put the matter beyond doubt. But that will be in a speech. I cannot do it just now in a few casual remarks.

MR. ROWE: Well, Sir, my own feeling is that the Province, any province of this nation, will be able to borrow money from some financial house somewhere in this world of ours. But the cost of that money will be exorbitant. The cost will be exorbitant and that is where we are going to get ourselves into trouble.

But, Sir, as an example of the reasons why I believe that the people of this Province have not been given the full picture, I will relate some of the commitments and some of the promises that have been made by this administration over the years. Sir, the government have promised right up to the bitter end a polytechnical institute and residences for the College of Trades and Technology. That has given to the people of this Province an indication that there is money to be spent. This administration,

Mr. Rowe:

right from the Premier's own lips, promised that a province-wide T.V. system, educational T.V. system would be instituted in this Province. That, Sir, can only indicate to the people of this Province that there is money to be spent and there is revenue flowing into this Province one way or the other, whether it is through the taxpayers, because money is being generated in this Province, or whether it is from Ottawa or from royalties or any other sources.

Sir, this administration promised not a **Regional College** in Corner Brook, but a system of regional colleges throughout the Province which requires the expenditure of money, which apparently now does not exist. This administration, Sir, promised such things as subsidies for teachers and professionals in Rural Newfoundland. This again, Sir, came from the lips of the Premier during a campaign speech. Another doozy, Sir. It was promised that there would be S.S.A. tax exemptions for low income people or **rebates** for low income people, and that the Moores Administration plan to look into the possibility of devising a method to give higher basic exemptions to low income groups or to give them a **rebate** on some S.E.A. taxes. Now, Sir, that could only mean if we are talking about **rebates** for low income people that can only mean that we got money flowing out of our ears, because what we are saying here is we are reducing taxes for a certain segment of our society. Now that is a commendable commitment. But it was made, Sir, at a time when the government must have known that they were getting more deeply and deeply in trouble in this Province. So that is further evidence that the government has not disclosed fully the financial situation in this Province this year, last year, the year before or any other year, and have in fact misled the people of this Province with respect to the financial situation of the Province; full employment and complete price stability was promised.

Sir, when we get into the area of the fisheries, a gear insurance programme was going to be established, an inexpensive **shared** - cost insurance programme covering the loss of fishing gear. This

Mr. Rowe:

was going to be a Provincial programme, Sir. And the only thing that we have heard of course was the emergency programme that was wholly and solely, I might be corrected on that, but if I could ask the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy who was Minister of Fisheries at that time, that emergency gear replacement programme was 100 per cent financed by Ottawa, am I correct on that?

MR. CROSBIE: 90/10.

MR. ROWE: 90/10?

MR. CROSBIE: No -

MR. ROWE: It was administered by the Province.

MR. CROSBIE: The emergency was in disaster form. It depended on how much - it was \$1 for \$1, then 75 per cent, 25 per cent.

MR. ROWE: 75 per cent, 25 per cent for the Provincial Government. Sir, but that was an emergency programme, disaster programme. But this administration, Sir, promised to establish an inexpensive shared cost insurance programme covering the loss of fishing gear on the part of the fishermen. And this was made very early on.

Then we had a \$40 million fund for a great trawler fleet, \$40 million for a great trawler fleet. Also, Sir, it was indicated to the people of this Province that legislation will be introduced concerning a great new financing approach to provide the supply of fish necessary to have fish plants efficiently utilized. Again, Sir, this indicated to our people, not only progress, but expenditure of money, gross expenditure of money, new assistance for inshore fishermen for the obtaining of boats and gear and equipment. This has to involve the expenditure of money. Regional advisory councils will be a little bit less, a Select Committee for the Inshore Fisheries was set up, which was a commendable thing. Expansion of the Department of Fisheries was promised, but I do not know what kind of expansion. It certainly was not in the vote. We have had consistent decreases in the vote for the Department of Fisheries. Additional advance reprocessing facilities were promised, and such thing as fish auctions.

Sir, a farm equipment bank in the area of the hospitals,

Mr. Rowe:

this is old hat I realize, but I am trying to make a point. No ifs, ands and buts. No ifs, ands and buts. Clarenville, Bonavista, Burin Peninsula, North West Coast, regional hospitals, not medical clinics, regional hospitals. Now we know what the story is with respect to that. Mobile, medical and dental clinics. I understand there is an experiment with respect to either a medical or a dental mobile clinic, I am not sure which one. But it certainly is not the great programme that was enunciated back in a campaign speech in 1971 by the now Premier of this Province.

The price of drugs, Sir, the hon. Premier indicated that the price of drugs must be reduced one way or the other, and that the government are alarmed at the high cost of drugs in this Province, and the government were considering a method to reduce the price of drugs. Now if the Premier of the Province, Sir, is considering a method, or formulating a method for reducing the price of drugs, what do you call that? What do people immediately say? Not Medicare, not Legicare whatever you call it, but Pharmacare. That was being spread throughout this Province.

MR. H. COLLINS: I do not spread it.

MR. ROWE: Well, that is what the people thought, Sir. Anybody who is talking about reducing the price of drugs immediately thinks of Pharmacare. Again expenditure of money.

Cement plants, industrial deep water sea ports, off shore concrete platforms were going to be built in this Province, a great aluminum industry. Sir, I can go through the list. It makes me want to throw up. I cannot say that my stomach is weak, because it is strong enough now to throw it a mile, when I go through this list, Sir, of promises that raised the aspirations of the poor people of this Province beyond any level that it should have been raised.

Housing, well there was an announcement made by the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing with respect to housing which I think will go a long ways.

Mr. Rowe:

Sir, we were going to have a reduction in the size of the Cabinet, a reduction in the size of the Cabinet. **Instead of that we had an increase in the size of the Cabinet, and we had an increase in the number of seats in this Province costing the people more money and to make matters worse it was gerrymandering in its most blatant form, They took an independent commission report, threw it out through the 9th. floor window and gerrymandered and carved up the seats, and without gerrymandering the hon. members opposite would be sitting on this side of the House today.**

So, Sir, the point that I am trying to make is this; if one looks at the 169 promises that we have referred to over the past years, couple of years, one will see that 90 per cent, 90 per cent to 95 per cent of these promises indicated that huge amounts of monies would have to be expended by this administration. So, Sir, one could only come to one conclusion, that the financial situation of this Province was sound and healthy and is sound and healthy. But, Sir, once the hon. members squeaked through the election we got the bombshell in the 1975 emergency budget, mini budget and in the 1976 budget, then it came out.

MR. ROWE: the desperate debt situation that this Province is in. The total debt now, I have just forgotten the figure, the total debt of this Province is astronomical. I can remember hon. members opposite, Sir, when they were in Opposition saying, "The Province is on the verge of bankruptcy. We are approaching a \$1 billion debt." What is the debt of this Province at the present time? Can some hon. member indicate to me?

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is three times as much as it was the day I resigned.

MR. ROWE: Three times as much as the day the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) resigned. Now is the hon. member for Twillingate including what has to be raised to develop the Lower Churchill for example?

MR. SMALLWOOD: No.

MR. ROWE: Two point - I am sorry.

MR. SMALLWOOD: \$3 billion.

MR. ROWE: It is \$2.4 billion and steadily climbing.

MR. DOODY: It had to be more.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Almost \$3 billion.

MR. ROWE: \$3 billion to develop that, if it is going to be developed. And I would submit, Sir, that because of the present financial situation of this Province I just cannot see where the government is going to get money to develop the Lower Churchill.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The hon. member need not worry. It will never be borrowed.

MR. ROWE: It will never be borrowed.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Never.

MR. ROWE: I tend to agree. I tend to agree. But I hope there is some other way of getting that Lower Churchill developed, some other way.

Sir, it was a political crime for the administration to have raised the expectations of the citizenry of this

MR. ROWE: Province and then let them down so extremely badly so shortly after the election. And, Sir, from what I have heard so far from hon. members who are much more expertise in the area of finance than I am—I am not the finance spokesman, but I got a few clues, I got some common sense, some common sense— from what I hear when various hon. members speak in this House, not just on this side but hon. members right down there in that corner, Mr. Speaker, speak.

MR. RIDEOUT: The two of them are together now.

MR. ROWE: I have reason to believe that we have not had complete disclosure of the financial situation of this Province. When we have hon. members belonging to a party taking two completely different approaches, or taking two completely different points of view with respect to our capacity to borrow and whether we should borrow something has to be wrong, Sir, something has to be wrong.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROWE: Do the hon. members who are in the backbenches of this administration know the full story?

MR. MARSHALL: You are putting us on the spot.

AN HON. MEMBER: What are they?

MR. ROWE: I am not trying to embarrass the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall). The hon. member for St. John's East is a very clever lawyer, Sir, and I know better than try to embarrass and tangle with the hon. member for St. John's East because with his legal jargon he could gut me to pieces I am sure in five or ten minutes.

AN HON. MEMBER: He would not do it.

MR. ROWE: But of course the hon. member being a distant relative by marriage -

MR. SIMMONS: What? What?

MR. ROWE: - to my other - I am sure, Sir, would not attempt to do

MR. ROWE: such a thing.

But the point I am trying to make, Sir, is this.

MR. RIDEOUT: We have got to get a new House Leader.

MR. ROWE: When an hon. member in government or in the backbenches of the administration sees fit to basically argue against the fiscal policy of his own administration one wonders if in fact the caucus of that administration knows the full financial situation of the Province. One wonders. Probably they do. Sir, I just do not know. But I am at a loss and I am very worried and concerned over the future of this Province because we are in a real dilemma, Sir. In the districts that I drive through and in the district that I represent, people are there, they are going to have hepatitis this Summer because of the poor drinking water in some of these communities, because the sewage tanks - There is a time when the sewage tanks catch up on you. And there is going to be health problems in this Province.

Bay de Verde is a septic tank, is a gigantic septic tank.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Not as bad as Conception Bay South.

MR. ROWE: Conception Bay South is the greatest septic tank in this Province, Sir. On the one hand, Sir, we have those desperate needs for a simple thing like drinking water, the paving of a few roads, sewage systems. In certain areas of our Province a great need for improved educational facilities. And, Sir, you almost feel guilty when you get up here in this hon. House or in Committee and beg, you almost feel guilty when you beg for more expenditure in order to bring these badly needed amenities to the people of this Province, when you ask yourself the question, "Can we afford to spend that money?"

MR. DOODY: Where is the money coming from?

MR. ROWE: It is a shocking situation to be in, Sir.

Well the hon. Minister of Finance is saying where is the money coming from?

MR. DOODY: That is right.

MR. ROWE: Well, Sir, the hon. minister, if I could just find an unbelievable - his first Budget Speech to this House, Sir.

Just listen to this, Mr. Speaker, this is the emergency one, the first disaster.

MR. RIDEOUT: That is not the On the Rocks Budget, is it?

MR. ROWE: That is the half on the rocks, the rocks are in the background. We are adrift as the hon. member said in one Budget, we are on the rocks in the last one.

That point has been made.

MR. DOODY: Wait until you see the next copy.

MR. ROWE: This is the hon. Minister of Finance in 1975, in the Fall Budget Speech, November 24, 1975. "Having already held the Treasury Board portfolio for more than a year I was completely aware of the financial situation facing the Province and the need to put together a revised financial plan and just six weeks after assuming my new duties it comes as no great surprise to be presenting this emergency Budget."

MR. ROWE: Now, Sir, there is something very peculiar about that statement. If the Minister of Finance, who was not Minister of Finance the year before but who was President of the Treasury Board knew one year in advance of November 24, 1975. In other words he knew this in November of 1974 and waltzed and took part in an election campaign promising everything but gold pavement. Now, Sir, what kind of a situation is this? Is that disclosing the financial situation of this Province?

MR. SIMMONS: Defeat. Defeat.

MR. ROWE: That is, Sir, misrepresenting the financial picture of this Province before the people of the Province for political purposes.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROWE: That is the only way I can interpret that.

And presumably this was not a secret that the President of Treasury Board held to his own bosom. Surely he must have shared this awareness of the financial situation with some of his financial colleagues. Why then did this administration see fit to go out and promise the world.

MR. MURPHY: Who promised the world?

MR. ROWE: The hon. members promised the world. Hospitals there, roads there, who promised? The hon. member whom I had the honour to defeat, Mr. Jim Reid, who was a Minister of the Crown at the time had in a campaign pamphlet, "The Hant's Harbour - Custard's Head Road will be paved by September 30th."

MR. MURPHY: He was not elected. How can he pave it?

MR. ROWE: Just one second. This was in a campaign pamphlet from a Minister of the Crown, Sir, and I checked it out, the contract was not even called.

MR. MURPHY: There is where they made their mistake. If they had elected him they would have had their road paved.

MR. ROWE: It was disgraceful. The minister is absolutely right. Here is a member with a promise in a campaign pamphlet, black on white saying that a road will be paved, no tenders have been called, no contract awarded, and to this day no commitment to pave that road,

MR. POWE:

and he is where he deserves to be at the present time.

MR. SIMONS: They were going to do what they did in Gaultois, give him the contract.

MR. MURPHY: Did they take away the school tax in Trinity-Bay De Verde?

MR. POWE: No, they have not done away with the school tax.

MR. MURPHY: The hon. member promised he would and he did not.

MR. POWE: The hon. member -

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not be so foolish, boy, do not be so foolish.

MR. POWE: Now listen, Mr. Speaker - I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am not allowed to ask Mr. Speaker to listen. I will ask the hon. minister to listen. But, Mr. Speaker, I will make one commitment on behalf of my colleagues in this House today, that if this party has the honour and opportunity to administer this Province after the next election that there will be no school tax authorities nor any school taxes in this Province. And the hon. minister can poke fun at this mysterious general revenue whoever he may be.

MR. MURPHY: Fun a good man in St. John's West and I will vote for him if they are going to fulfill that promise.

MR. POWE: We will fulfill that promise, Sir. We do not break our promises.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. POWE: It has already been demonstrated, Sir, that the amount of money that is to be collected through the school taxes is not that which was expected. It has already been demonstrated that there is inefficiency, not because of the people running it, but there is administrative costs. You do not realize 100 per cent of the dollar collected for educational purposes.

Some poor little old widow - I am getting like the hon. member for LaPottle (Mr. Neary) now - but some poor little old couple out in the district gets this final demand notice delivered in the mail and gets the life frightened right out of them and rings us up and says, "What am I going to do? The mounties are going to come in and grab me and drag me into court."

MR. SIMMONS: The wage attachment.

MR. BOWE: Ridiculous, Sir. And the only reason this hon. crowd opposite did not bring in this is because we suggested it first.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BOWE: I would submit, Sir, that if the Liberal Party did not make that commitment and did not speak out against the school tax authorities over the past four years that this administration would have had that as a plank in their platform during the last election.

MR. PIREOUT: And there would have been lots of money for it, too.

MR. BOWE: And do not tell me that the money cannot be found.

\$218 million the hon. member pointed out tonight they had to find a place to allocate it, was it? So do not tell me, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot find an additional \$10 million in this Province that can be realized through school taxes. Now, Sir, I do not have time to get into the argument for school taxes. I have argued about the school tax concept in this House. I have presented our case on many occasions. I will only be boring hon. members if I get into it now and in any case my time has run out. I would simply like to say, Sir, that I feel very strongly, very, very strongly that we have not had complete disclosure of the financial situation of this Province. It is the responsibility and it is incumbent upon this administration to level with the people of this Province, tell it as it is, as we used to hear from the hon. the Premier, tell it as it is and really let the people know what the story is. May I plead with this administration that in the next election they do the right and honourable thing and not hoodwink the people of this Province like they did in the last election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NFAPY: Mr. Speaker, after the lessons in oratory that we have had since three o'clock this afternoon, Sir, I hardly know where to start. Mr. Speaker, I think I will start with something that I raised during the Oral Question Period this afternoon. That has to do, Sir,

MR. NEADY:

with the transfer of the lease of the Marystown fish plant to Fishery Products Limited. Members might remember this afternoon I asked the Minister of Finance a few questions about the new agreement between the government and Fishery Products and the minister appeared to be rather taken aback by my questions and promised me to get some of the answers to the questions tomorrow. The minister may get the answers tomorrow, Sir, but Mr. Speaker, if for no other reason, Sir, that I would support this vote of non-confidence in this government it is for the reason that in my opinion, Sir, the agreement that the government has entered into with Fishery Products is ultra vires, is a violation of the privileges of this hon. House, that the original agreement that was entered into with Newfoundland Fish Processing was entered into by a statute of this House.

I have it here, Sir. I did a little research tonight. I have the agreement, the original agreement and an amendment to the agreement. The agreement, Sir, dates back to - it is called the Mooring Cove Fish Plant Building Act, No. 46, 1966. It is a statute that was passed by this hon. House establishing a crown corporation to build and lease the fish plant to a firm called Atlantic Fish Processors which was a subsidiary of Atlantic Sugar Refineries Company Limited. This agreement, Mr. Speaker, did not give the Lieutenant-Governor in Council the authority to change the lease from one company to another.

What it did, Sir, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council under section 10 of the agreement, they said the agreement may be amended from time to time and every amendment shall be made in the same manner - the same manner meaning by this House, by this honourable House - as the agreement was made and every amendment may be made upon such terms and conditions and for such consideration as the Lieutenant-Governor in Council approves.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I for the life of me do not know why the government up to this moment has not seen fit to table the new

MP. NEARY:

agreement in this hon. House. And in my opinion, Sir, they have breached the privilege of the House. I doubt if the new agreement, Sir, is legal or is binding. I think, as my legal friends would say, it is ultra vires. I am going to call upon the government now, here tonight at this late hour, ten minutes to eleven, that the first thing when the House opens tomorrow that the new agreement with Fishery Products be tabled in this House. It should have been tabled the moment the House opened, as a matter of fact before the signatures were put on the agreement.

PREMIER MOORES: Whose signatures?

MP. NEARY: Before the signature of the Minister of Finance and Fishery Products and Janock Corporation and Newfoundland Fish Processors and Newfoundland Refinery were let off the hook, before that happened there -

PREMIER MOORES: Nonsense!

MP. NEARY: They were let off the hook, Mr. Speaker. There should have been a new agreement introduced in this House, an amendment to the original agreement. And they have been let off the hook, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Act.

MP. NEARY: Act. Well it is the law of the Province, it is the law of the land, it is an act.

So, Sir, if for no other reason I support the amendment, the vote of nonconfidence in the government, it would be for that reason. Why are they concealing this agreement? What is the story behind it? We know, Mr. Speaker, from the new agreement that was entered into with Fishery Products Limited that the government now have consolidated all the outstanding guarantees and loans with Fishery Products Limited, which may not be a bad idea as I said this afternoon. They practically nationalized the company. The agreement was dated December 27, 1975. It was signed in March. But it seemed to me, Sir, to be a kind of a forerunner to Fishery Products taking over, leasing the fish plant at Marystown.

MT. NEAPY:

Mr. Speaker, it could be that Newfoundland Fish Processors were pulling the same bluff with this government that they tried to pull with the former administration back in 1968 and 1969 when they wanted to get out and the government of the day would not allow them to get out. As a matter of fact the government of the day had a special report prepared by Kates, Peat, Marwick and Mitchell and Company. They were commissioned by the Province to determine the future of the operation which at that time employed 350 people.

Mr. Neary:

because they said they were operating at a loss, and Kates, Feat, Marwick and Mitchell proved that they were not operating at a loss, and that the markets were on the upswing and that there was a great future for the plant. Did Newfoundland Fish Processors and the great Janock Corporation come to the government and threaten to close down that plant? Is that why they got frightened and stampeded into this agreement with Fishery Products Limited without coming to the House, without bringing the information into the House?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Without amending the Act?

MR. NEARY: Without amending the Act? Is that what happened, Sir? Well if they got frightened and scared and stampeded and railroaded and frightened by this great giant, this Janock Corporation, Newfoundland - what is it called? Atlantic Refineries.

AN HON. MEMBER: No, no,

MR. SMALLWOOD: Atlantic Sugar.

MR. NEARY: Atlantic Sugar, Sir, is the parent company, a wealthy company who were on the hook, who would have to meet all of the financial obligations in connection with the construction and the operation of that plant. If they wanted to get out why did they not sub-lease it to Fishery Products? Why did they put the financial responsibility now over on the taxpayers, over on the government of this Province? If they closed down the plant of course they would have put 350 or 400 men out of work, but I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, if they could close it. The hon. former Premier says they could not close it. I am inclined to agree with him.

MR. NOLAN: Would the member permit a question?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. NOLAN: I wonder if the member remembers when one of the companies he referred to at one time came before the government asking for a considerable amount of money, and if it were not granted that they would be forced to lay 150 or 200 men whatever it was at the time out of work which caused great anguish naturally in the government

Mr. Nolan:

at the time. And upon the investigation that the hon. member referred to they had to back track somewhat?

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I remember it well because I was on Treasury Board. And I remember how they came down here and they tried to bully the company of the day around but we did not take any nonsense from them, and that is why we commissioned Kates, Peat, Harwick and Mitchell to do this independent study. And then back in 1969, when the member for St. John's East, the former Minister without Portfolio, when the hon. gentleman was interim Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party - just listen to this, Mr. Speaker - "Wants Report on Fish Plant Made Public." "Government refusal to release a consulting firm report on the Marystown Fish Plant must surely be unacceptable to Newfoundlanders according to William Marshall, interim Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party."

Well, Sir, if that was unacceptable, the fact that government of the day would not release that report, how unacceptable now is it when the government changed the whole contract and have put the fish plant in the hands of another company without telling the House and without telling the people why they did it, and giving the people the facts of the new agreement? How unacceptable must that be, and letting Janock and Atlantic Refinery and Newfoundland Fish Processing, a wealthy company, off the hook.

AN HON. MEMBER: Atlantic Refining.

MR. NEARY: That is the parent company.

MR. DOODY: Atlantic Sugar.

MR. NEARY: Atlantic Sugar, the parent company.

"Mr. Marshall said yesterday that under the Mooring Cove Fish Plant Building Act the government were empowered to construct a plant and lease it to Atlantic Fish Processors Limited for a rental sufficient to repay construction and land costs, and lend up to one-third of the cost of the ten trawlers to the parent company, Atlantic Sugar Refineries Limited." Well, what about the trawlers now, the ten trawlers my hon. and learned friend referred to? What about these trawlers? They were owned not by the fish plant, but were owned by the

Mr. Neary:

parent company. What happens now, are they released to Fishery Products? Did Fishery Products buy the trawlers? And how could a bankrupt company - we are told the company is bankrupt - That is what the hon. minister signed an agreement, signed this agreement in March that indicates that the company was bankrupt.

MR. DOODY: Read me the part that says bankrupt.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is bankrupt for about five or six years. I know.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it does not spell it out, Sir, but you would want to be awfully stund if you could not interpret this agreement that would have never seen the light of day only I stumbled across it today in my research.

AN HON. MEMBER: Table it.

MR. NEARY: Yes, there it is. Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied to table it, but it is the only copy I have right now.

MR. DOODY: Tomorrow will be all right.

MR. NEARY: But I want the minister to bring in and the House should demand to bring in all of the documents, not only this document that I have -

AN HON. MEMBER: Table it now.

MR. NEARY: Well I only have one copy. I will table it when I am through with it.

MR. DOODY: Leave it in the filing cabinet.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent upon the minister and the government to lay every document in connection with this new agreement on the table of this House.

MR. DOODY: It would look like your desk, boy.

MR. NEARY: What do they have to hide? Why is it all done in secret?

MR. DOODY: Because it is the government.

MR. NEARY: Because it is the government. Because it is the taxpayers money, and because the government have let Janock, have let Atlantic

Mr. Neary:

Sugar Refineries off the hook.

MR. DOODY: Oh, no, no, no, no.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, yes, yes, Sir.

MR. DOODY: No, no.

MR. NEARY: Well I would like to see the minister explain it tomorrow. It is too late, Mr. Speaker, for me to get into it tonight and I would like to move the adjournment of the debate if I could, and carry on tomorrow with this.

MR. SPEAKER (DR. COLLINS): Motion is that this House do now adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, May 14 at 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon.

On motion the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday May 14 at 10:00 A.M.

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