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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: Order, please!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

MR. P. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of 118 residents of Hant's Harbour in the district of Trinity-Bay de Verde. Sir, it is a very simple petition. It simply states, "That we the undersigned feel that it is the Council's duty to provide a clean, healthy place for us to swim. The brook is very unsanitary and it is about time the Council did something about cleaning it up and providing us with a decent place to swim." And then, "All in favour please sign below."

So actually, Sir, I guess this petition should more correctly go straight to the Town Council of Baie de Verde. However, I do wish to bring it before the House of Assembly. It is a very simple request. It is simply the cleaning up of a brook in the community so that the children in that particular community can swim in relatively clean water. So I would ask that this petition be presented to the department to which it relates, and presumably that would be, because it involves the Council, possibly the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and maybe even the Department of the Environment.

MR. MURPHY: Has this been brought to our attention?

MR. ROWE: This is the first indication, so I do not know whether it has been brought to the minister's attention or not, Sir. So I do support the petition, and I ask that it be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

Sir, if it is in order I have a second petition to present.

MR. ROBERTS: Somebody may want to comment on it.

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. member wishes to present both together then I would presume that hon. members may speak on either.

MR. ROBERTS: Are they both the same?

MR. ROWE: No.

MR. SPEAKER: If anybody else wishes to speak on it.

MR. ROWE: It is really a completely different petition.

MR. ROBERTS: Do you want to speak on the first one, 'Ank'?

MR. MURPHY: It does not matter. I would just like to say a word on the first one.

MR. ROWE: Okay, I think it would be better if the minister commented now.

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

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to support the prayer of the petition, and it might give me a chance now to inform the House that we are becoming very much concerned with the type of thing that the hon. member refers to, and we are investigating to the best of our ability these happenings, and particularly where construction is on the go. I have two cases now where construction is taking place and the contractors took it upon themselves to insert culverts and this type of thing, and divert and pollute rivers and this type of thing. So I do not know if we had any little notice in our department about it, but I would certainly like to make note and get the thing looked at, because, and I say this again, Sir, and I do not wish to make a speech on it, but many of us are aware in this particular area here where we live in St. John's, all these surrounding ponds are no longer fit, not talk about drinking, to swim in any more, and if this continues on what is happening with these rivers and what not I think it is going to be pretty tragic for our young people for recreational purposes and for many other purposes. So I support the prayer of the petition, and I would urge all members who have any similar occurrences with water ways or anything else let us know, if we do not handle it we will go to EPS which is the Provincial Environment group and we will have a long hard look at it and see if we can rectify some of the mistakes that are being made.

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

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, before presenting the second petition I would just simply request the Clerk of the House to probably get a copy to the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the

Mr. Rower

Department of the Environment as well. The second petition, Sir, is on behalf of fifty-one voters on the West side of New Harbour in the district of Trinity-Bay de Verde. And, Sir, again this petition is a relatively simple request, but very important to the people who live on that particular stretch of road on the West side of New Harbour. Sir, they claim, and I can testify to this, that the road is hardly fit to drive or walk on. And the claim of many citizens in the area is that no fill has been placed on that particular road for quite a number of years. However the grader does pass by from time to time, and to use the expression contained in the petition, "The only purpose and function that that grader fills is to shine the rocks on the road." I think it is probably a marvelous expression to describe "polish and shine the rocks on the road."

At the present time, Sir, there is a water line being built, being installed to the two fish plants on that point there in New Harbour, and consequently the road is being torn up and in filling in this water line they are actually widening the road. However, the fill that is being used to widen the road and cover the water line is very loose indeed, and with the normal erosion, with wind and rain and this sort of a thing, the people do not expect that to last too long and in fact you cut into the actual dirt road itself.

So the people, Sir, are asking to have this road paved, and it only involves about three-quarters of a mile or a mile of pavement. So that is the simply request of the fifty-one residents of the West side of New Harbour. The other side is indeed paved as is the main road to the community. So that is the only remaining local road, the main local road if I can use that, the main local road, in New Harbour that is not now paved, and this would also serve citizens beyond the fish plant. But these fifty-one

MR. F. ROWE:

signatures are from the citizens who actually live on that stretch of road from the bridge to the fish plant itself. So, Sir, I heartily endorse and support this petition and I would ask that the Minister of Transportation and Communications might support it and speak to it and I ask that the petition be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. W. CARTER: I have the honour to present a petition from the residents of the Colinet area the prayer of which calls upon the government to upgrade and eventually pave the roads in that area. Mr. Speaker, I support this petition. It is very important to the people in that general area. A lot of people are using the road. It is probably one of the last remaining places on the Avalon that does not have any pavement. Certainly the community is a large one. People who live there commute daily to other centers to work and consequently the condition of the road is very important to them. I would ask my colleagues to support this petition and ask that it be tabled and referred to the appropriate government department.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I second and support, Sir, the prayer of all three petitions that have been presented to the House so far.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I am overwhelmed by the eloquence and the brevity of the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary). I would like to say a word with particular reference to the petition presented by the Minister of Fisheries in his capacity as the member for St. Mary's-The Capes, one of the more euphoniously named districts, a very pretty name indeed and a very historic one. I think the prayer of the petition is well taken and I think the request is a reasonable one and I know that we on this side would very much like to see the

MR. ROBERTS:

prayer of that petition granted and see the work that is requested, to see that work carried out. I have no doubt it will be, Sir, and I hope it will be this year because the Minister of Fisheries has a most heartening degree of influence with his friend and his colleague and his soul mate, the Minister of Transportation and Communications. We are seeing the results of this happy communion, this happy band of brothers, by virtue of the fact that a very large sum of money has already been allotted for work in the St. Mary's-The Capes district, I think particularly the road coming along the Eastern side of St. Mary's Bay from St. Mary's itself coming down towards Trepassey. I believe that is the road, contracts have been called in respect of paving that road. It was upgraded last year and it is being paved this year and that is a very good thing.

I hope, Sir, the minister is equally successful with his colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Communications in getting money for this work this year. I think it would be a very good thing indeed for the people concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Placentia.

MR. PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition presented by the hon. Minister of Fisheries. Very few miles of paving would be required down there and then the people from Colinet would have a paved road right through to St. John's across the Salmonier Line. It was only in the past couple of years that the people of St. Mary's received any paving. They were totally neglected for twenty-three years.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct this question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. Would the minister advise the House as to whether or not he has decided, or a decision has been made, to appoint a magisterial or public enquiry into the tragic drownings that took place on the Trans-Canada Highway yesterday?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, as a result of the very unfortunate and tragic accident yesterday I have now been assured by my colleague, the Minister of Justice, that a magisterial enquiry will be carried out into that accident.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, to the minister. Has the minister been in touch with Price (Nfld) Limited to see how much of the responsibility for this accident they have to share in this particular thing, or will that be a part of the terms of reference?
A magisterial

MR. NEARY:

inquiry is just a routine thing. Does the minister intend to carry out a public inquiry or just a magisterial inquiry? Magisterial inquiries are routine.

MR. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communication.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the officials in my department have held discussions with Price Newfoundland Limited earlier this year. These discussions and negotiations will continue.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Is this a supplementary to the former question?

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, all right. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I want to ask the Minister of Justice if this is just a routine magisterial inquiry that will be carried out in the case of this tragedy or will it be done under the Public Inquiries Act or a judicial inquiry.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

HON. A. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, under the provisions of the Summary Jurisdiction Act a magistrate conducting a magisterial inquiry has all the powers conferred on a commissioner pursuant to section (3) of the Public Inquiries Act. The magisterial inquiry will be a public inquiry. Full, complete and all available relevant evidence will be given before the magisterial inquiry under oath.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary to the minister, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member for LaPoile for an additional supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the minister care to name the magistrate now who will be conducting this inquiry? Is the minister in a position to give the name of the magistrate?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Again, Mr. Speaker, under the Summary Jurisdiction Act

MR. HICKMAN:

there is a statutory obligation on the magistrate within whose jurisdiction, meaning in whose magisterial district, the death occurs, to hold the magisterial inquiry.

MR. NEARY: Who is the magistrate there at the moment?

MR. HICKMAN: In that case it would be one of the two magistrates in the magisterial district of Grand Falls. They are Magistrate Allan LeGrow, who is the senior magistrate there, and Magistrate Chester Stone.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the Leader of the Opposition and after him the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) on a supplementary.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you. My question is also for the Minister of Justice. Perhaps I could put it in two parts. First of all, can the minister tell us whether this magisterial inquiry is ordered by Cabinet or whether it arises out of the normal course of the work of the Department of Justice and the Minister of Justice under the Summary Jurisdiction Act? Secondly, could the minister assure us that the report of the inquiry being carried out by the magistrate will be made public?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: In answer to the first part of the question, Mr. Speaker, the Summary Jurisdiction Act provides that there shall be an inquiry into all sudden deaths. It is a statutory obligation. But there is conferred upon the Director of Public Prosecutions the right to waive a magisterial inquiry in the case of a sudden death. For instance, if a person dropped dead on the street and there was a medical certificate indicating that he or she died of a heart attack, it would be an unnecessary burden and hardship and waste of money to hold a magisterial inquiry. Even that can be overruled by the Attorney General, a waiver by a Director of Public Prosecutions. In this instance my colleague, the Minister of Transportation and Communications, asked for an assurance from me that there would be a magisterial inquiry. I have given him that assurance. My decision has been communicated to the Director of Public Prosecutions and it will be held.

MR. HICKMAN:

With respect to the answer to question No. two, I cannot give the commitment at this time that the report of the magisterial inquiry will be made public. The rule generally is that any interested party who requires and wishes a transcript of the evidence that is given and whatever is contained in the report can, upon request of the magistrate and/or the Department of Justice through the Director of Public Prosecutions, obtain same unless there is some criminality involved where it would not be in the public interest. So I do -

MR. ROBERTS: There is no question of criminality, surely.

MR. HICKMAN: No. But again I would not want to be placed in a position where I could prejudge the outcome of the inquiry at this time.

MR. ROBERTS: Can the minister give us an assurance that absent criminality the report will be made public. There is a lot of public interest obviously.

MR. HICKMAN: Oh yes, I am quite certain it will. But I do not want hon. gentlemen to say that I have given an absolute assurance because I know from experience that sometimes these inquiries reveal matters

Mr. Hickman.

that are not anticipated and may fall within that public interest category.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans who also has a supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, this is a supplementary to my original question which may get lost in the debate. Would the Minister of Justice indicate to the House when this magisterial inquiry will be commenced? And number two - what seems to me to be very important and it may not indeed be, but to me it seems to be very important - will the terms of reference of that magisterial inquiry be given to the House or to the public? What indeed will be the terms of reference of the magisterial inquiry?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, there is not a terms of reference per se as you do, say, with a royal commission. There is a statutory obligation on the magistrate within the jurisdiction where a death occurs to conduct an inquiry into the cause and all the circumstances respecting to such death. Now I forgot what the hon. gentleman -

MR. FLIGHT: When?

MR. HICKMAN: Oh, when.

I cannot put a date on when. The procedure that is followed in most magisterial inquiries, if not all, is that immediately following a sudden death the police commence their investigation. And their investigation is as much to ascertain the number of relevant witnesses there are, where they are located, and that is then submitted to the Director of Public Prosecutions who in turn sends it on to the magistrate, and this gives him an idea as to how many days the inquiry is going to take, how many witnesses will be called. If during the course of the inquiry it becomes apparent to the magistrate or to the Crown that additional witnesses are necessary, then these will

Mr. Hickman.

be subpoenaed as well. But that does take a bit of time. It certainly will not start next week or the week after next. But it will be held as quickly as possible.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans for a supplementary.

MR. FLIGHT: I would like a clarification Mr. Speaker, and I will address the question to the Minister of Justice. It seems to me that the Minister of Transportation and Communications yesterday indicated in the House that his department had objected to Price raising the level of the dam at Rushy Pond, but another department of government, namely Environment, had approved the raising. Now it seems to me that such an act would have to be a Cabinet decision. Would the minister indicate to this House now as to whether or not the Government of Newfoundland or the Cabinet gave Price (Nfld) the right to raise that dam by six feet which had the affect of rising the water level six feet which, of course, led up to the accident we are talking about now?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: I am not in a position to indicate to the House Cabinet decisions, Mr. Speaker. I would suggest that the hon. gentleman check the act of the Department of the Environment to see whether or not the environmental officer has conferred upon him that authority to grant the permission. I do not know whether he does or not.

MR. ROBERTS: . The minister does.

MR. HICKMAN: Or the minister. But he may give it on behalf of the minister. But if it is a ministerial responsibility then obviously - if the minister by legislation is given the right to give a permit, it is not incumbent upon a minister to come to the Lieutenant-Governor in Council for approval of any permit.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. member for LaPoile on a supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation and Communications what remedial action has now been taken by his department to correct this situation to repair that and reconstruct that stretch of road so as to ensure the public that there will be no more accidents along that piece of highway? And when will work start on the reconstruction?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, work has been going on on that project with regards to the engineering work, and the engineering design. Only last week the chief engineer from my department was out in the area and completed the design work, and in the estimates this year there is an allocation of funds in the estimates for that very purpose of carrying out this work, and now that the engineering design has been completed tenders will be called within a matter of days for the work to be carried out as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Transportation and Communications to give us a report on the situation now, today, West of Grand Falls, in view of the fact that the person who owns the road, - or who owns the land that the detour went on - closed off that road last night. I mean, what is happening there now today?

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

MR. MORGAN: I did not get the -

MR. WHITE: Well, Mr. Speaker, just to fill the minister in, the road which was detoured was barricaded last night by the owner of the land, and for about an hour and a half, two hours, the traffic was backed up on both sides of this particular stretch of road until the RCMP asked the gentleman who owns the land to lift the barricades. I am wondering if the minister knows whether or not the barricades have been lifted, whether or not they are going to be put back, or what the situation is.

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

MR. MORGAN: Well first of all with reference to the section of the Trans-Canada, that one mile section, the situation today is that 800 feet of the Trans-Canada is now submerged under six inches of water. So that means that we have to use the detour. Now the property mentioned with regards to the detour, if there is a problem there I will be checking into it this afternoon and get the reply for the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to ask the minister that in view of the fact that he has had twenty-four hours or so to look into this matter, and in view of the fact that a magisterial enquiry will not held for a couple of weeks, whether or not he has anything to indicate whether or not there was incompetence or negligence on the part of any of his staff with regards to this accident the other night in Grand Falls?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the reports I have received from the regional office, from my officials in that office in the Grand Falls area indicate to me that the staff did take every necessary precaution and did act very prudently.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Will the minister assure the House that the minister's officials and the minister's department got correct information from Price (Nfld) in connection with the rising of the Rushy Lake Pond. Did in fact the Price (Nfld) Company give the minister's department the wrong information? Is this a possibility?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the only information that my department received from the company concerned, Price (Nfld) Limited, was to the effect that the dams were opened in the Middletown area at 2:00 A.M. the morning of the accident and they expected the crest of that water to reach the Grand Falls area at 2:00 P.M. the same day. That is the only information we received from the company. Whether or not the information was correct is something that I cannot answer at this time.

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

MR. NEARY: There is another supplementary, Sir, go ahead.

MR. SPEAKER: It is not a supplementary?

The hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. WHITE: To the same minister, the Minister of Transportation and Communications. I am wondering about the activities of Price (Nfld) in all of this and I am very suspicious of their activities and I think they are to blame for a lot of it. I am wondering if the minister can assure us whether or not his department has veto power over Price (Nfld). Can they raise the dam whenever they want to, just tell you they are going to do it? Or can you say, "No, we want to check this out." I mean, do you have veto power over decisions by Price or can they do what they want to, as it seems they can?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, my Department of Transportation and Communications does not have the jurisdiction nor the complete control over a company of that size in the Province or in fact any company, not one department. So with regards to what jurisdiction and what control government has in general, I take the question under advisement.

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

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the minister suggested yesterday that there were barricades placed on the road as well as lights, would the minister like to comment on the eyewitness report that there were no barricades on the road at all, but just a light on the side of the road?

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

MR. MORGAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the 'barricade' was an incorrect terminology used by myself in this hon. House yesterday, but I clarified, I think, in answering questions later, that the barricade did not mean the road was closed. Actually by my saying 'barricade' I meant that there were signs, caution signs. They are approximately three foot high and the width, I think, is approximately one foot in width, and these caution signs were placed on each side of the section referred to going in each direction with caution lights attached to these signs. Now I referred to them as barricades, which was an incorrect terminology. There were caution signs with caution lights. The road maybe could be interpreted by being barricaded as being closed. The road was not closed until after the accident, but the actual caution sign and the caution lights were established at 7:30 P.M. as indicated yesterday in my answering.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) have a supplementary?

MR. NEARY: No.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs. It grows out of the same unfortunate accident, but it is a little different. Under the Provincial Affairs and Environment Act, Section 24 is the relevant one, the minister has the power to approve water works which would include the work done on the Exploits River. My question, Sir, is whether the minister would make public by laying on the table of the House the permit which was granted—I want to say by him as minister, I am not sure whether the present minister was in the Portfolio; or it does not matter, there was a minister there—and the correspondence relating to it, including, in particular, I think this is very relevant, any objections formally or in writing filed by the Transportation and Communications Department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. A. MURPHY: I will check the matter out. As a matter of fact I am quite prepared to do so, because in most cases, and I just say this now for the information of the House, when dealing with Municipal Affairs or any other groups, we approve something environmentally as not being interfering with the environment as such. But the case of our overruling someone else, I never knew it to happen in any case where it became a danger to a council or anything like that. But the first paragraph of all our permits say that this applies to the environment only and it does not take effect over any other law as laid down under Municipal Affairs so on and so forth. But I will certainly check the thing out. And as a matter of fact I want to work very closely on this thing with my hon. colleague and see just what the whole story is.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I thank the minister and I understand he will let the House know whether this, you know, the permit itself could be made—I guess it is public; but the reports because under the act the

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minister has to have information submitted to him, and I have no doubt that was required. But did I understand the minister to say, Mr. Speaker, that the practice which his officials have followed, and which he as minister obviously follows, or which they follow in his direction, or whatever way you want to put it, is that they, the Provincial Affairs Department do not overrule another department. In other words, if another department takes a valid objection to the grant of a permit that that is enough to end the matter. Because under the act the minister's authority is far beyond that of merely the environment, as he will agree. His authority, as I read the legislation, Mr. Speaker, is quite complete, and, you know, the minister gives permits. Nothing can go ahead unless the minister has approved in writing is what Section 24 says.

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

MR. MURPHY: My experience, Mr. Speaker, has been the fact and deals primarily with waste disposal sites, this type of thing. But we will say environmentally it is all right to put this site here, but if your council or whoever it is objects to it, and anyone who has any objections, we do not overrule them on it. But this is a far more serious thing -

MR. ROBERTS: It is a little different, yes.

MR. MURPHY: - the implications are very serious, and where it created a hazard, so I will certainly check the whole matter out and see what the story is on it.

MR. ROBERTS: One further supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: One further supplementary. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, growing out of it again. Could the minister also undertake to let us have any correspondence subsequent to - the permit was presumably granted - but when was the dam raised 'Graham' last Fall, that dam was put up on the river, at Rushy Pond?

MR. ROWE: Last Spring.

MR. ROBERTS: Last Spring. You know, any correspondence that has come subsequent to that, because the permit would have been granted

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before the dam was built, of course. And then subsequent to that whether the minister or his officials have received any representations about the potential hazard which unfortunately has now become a real one?

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

MR. MURPHY: I will certainly check it all out, Sir. And as I say, in keeping with the announcement made by the hon. Minister of Justice and the minister that there will be an inquiry into it. I am sure whatever is in the Department of Environment will become very pertinent a part of the whole on-going inquiry.

MR. ROBERTS: The inquiry may not be directed to that point. The inquiry-

MR. MURPHY: I will see how it fits in anyhow.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, just to change the subject for a moment, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice who is responsible for the Newfoundland Constabulary why the police are hopping mad about various breaches of contract? Could the minister enlighten the House of what is happening there in connection with violations of the contract between the government and the Police Brotherhood?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

HON. T. A. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not in receipt of any evidence to indicate that the members of the Newfoundland Constabulary are hopping mad.

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

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Sir. Is the minister aware of the item in the morning News indicating that the Police Brotherhood are hopping mad?

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is out of order.

MR. NEARY: What is out of order?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Does the minister not read the newspapers? Has the minister had any communications from the Chief of Police that there

Mr. Neary:

may be grievances as a result of breach of contract?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I did read the Daily News, and I repeat my previous answer that I am not in receipt of any evidence to indicate that the members of the Newfoundland Constabulary are hopping mad.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Municipal Affairs, in his capacity as the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee, I would assume it is, on the Come By Chance situation. I ask this question in the absence of the Premier and in the absence of the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations. Could the minister tell the House, Mr. Speaker, when the most recent representations which have been made by representatives of the men at Come By Chance, namely the security workers and tug boat workers, to the effect that they wanted the -

AN HON. MEMBER: Who is the question directed to?

MR. ROBERTS: To the Minister of Municipal Affairs. I think he is the relevant man. The point of the representations is to the effect that these two groups of employees, about fifty in all, I am told, have not received the \$750 golden handshake that the government gave out. The question is when will they get a further answer? As the minister no doubt knows, the Premier met with representatives of the men on Monday morning and they were assured they would have an answer by Tuesday. Today is Thursday and no answer has been received.

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

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the Leader of the Opposition's question, the government's position is that all the employees of Provincial Refining Company Limited will be paid the money indicated by the Leader of the Opposition which is the correct sum of \$750. That is the government's position right now. That is our decision. The other workers mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition were not in the opinion of the receiver or of the government employees of Provincial Refining Company Limited.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary. The Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: A supplementary. Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. minister for his answer. But could he make it clear whether this position is the position which the government have adopted following the meeting which the Premier had on Monday past with representatives of the union. Certainly it was

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MR. ROBERTS:

the position before. But then the union came in and the Premier was kind enough to see them for a few minutes. The Premier undertook to have a further consideration made of this question and a further answer in turn made. Is this position being stated by the minister the result of that further study?

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

MR. PECKFORD: My understanding of the situation is as I have related it a few minutes ago in answer to the first question. Any other questions relating to it in which the Premier is involved will have to be directed to the Premier when he returns to the Province.

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

MR. ROBERTS: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the fact that the minister, I know he was not at the meeting and he may not have been - I asked the question in the absence of his colleague. It was the Minister of Industrial Relations who was to get in touch with the men, not the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. PECKFORD: I was out of the Province.

MR. ROBERTS: But I just want to be clear on one point, that the position in which he stated is not necessarily the position which resulted from the most recent request made and received in behalf of the government by the Premier. That is really what I want to be clear on.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The hon. Leader is acting like the executive assistant to the Premier.

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

MR. PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I can only reiterate what I have already said. My understanding is that government's position is as I have stated, that we pay the employees of Provincial Refining Company Limited, which has been done, that the other employees who have requested some compensation do not come under that ambit as detailed by government. Any subsequent questions would have to be referred to the Premier or other people who were involved at

MR. PECKFORD:

that time. I cannot answer directly therefore the question put to me by the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: But you have heard nothing of the Monday meeting in effect?

MR. SPEAKER: If this is not a supplementary, I recognize the hon. member for Terra Nova who has been endeavouring to be recognized for some time.

MR. T. LUSH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question for the Minister of Education. I wonder if the minister is in a position to inform the House whether or not he has received any representation from any school board in the St. John's area respecting the fact that the St. John's School Tax Authority apparently will not collect the revenue which the Authority had predicted it would? Boards, of course, have made commitments on the basis of the projected revenue that the Authority said it would collect.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

HON. W. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, I have not received it directly as yet. I do not know if it is at the department, but it has not reached my desk as yet.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary.

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

MR. LUSH: I wonder if the minister is aware that on the basis of the fact that the St. John's School Tax Authority will not collect the revenue that it projected, that there are school boards in St. John's who will only collect the amount of money this year that they collected from the ten dollar poll tax last year?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MR. HOUSE: No, I am not aware of that, Mr. Speaker, but I will attempt to investigate it and apprise the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile and after him the hon. member for Lewisporte.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, could the President of Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance, Sir, confirm or deny the fact that the negotiations with NAPE for a general agreement for the workers in the public service that the talks are now at a standstill and that a strike vote is now being taken?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: I was half listening to the Leader of the Opposition, the official Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Give us a progress report on the statements from -

MR. DOODY: This is a very difficult position, Sir, because the negotiations with the general service sector and with the liquor store employees have been in a state of, I guess, limbo or flux or what have you since the employees of the union went on strike asking for working conditions and salaries and so on which the union were unwilling to grant to their employees. And this has placed the negotiating committee of Treasury Board in a rather difficult position because they have not been able to sit down and discuss things with the NAPE people who are on strike against NAPE. Mr. Locking and his people in NAPE find it quite embarrassing because they do not have the staff to supply the backup and even to the stenographic level, the typing level that is necessary. And so we have been just treading water as it were and waiting for these people to come forward and continue to negotiate. The current status is that the last position that was on the table is still there, and we are still waiting for NAPE to get itself back into a position to be able to talk to us. We need to get that internal situation resolved, which is a problem between the Labourers' Union, which Mr. Goodland represents

Mr. Doody.

as business agent, and NAPE, who presumably is represented by Mr. Locking and his people. That internal problem has really to be straightened out before we can get our negotiations with the public service really underway. We are quite prepared, willing and anxious and able to get into it. What happens within the unions themselves, of course, is something that we cannot control, nor would we want to. It certainly is not within our ambit. We sympathize with Mr. Locking's position. We have gone through it ourselves on many occasions. We have seen people go on strike, and we regretted it and felt sorry. And this is the first time that I have had a chance to publicly sympathize with NAPE for the position in which they find themselves.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Do I understand from the minister that there is no stand-off at the moment on the part of the union, that negotiations would still be continuing but for the strike at the NAPE offices, that the government have made a substantial offer to NAPE and that negotiations could continue but for this strike? Is that the position the minister is taking now?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

MR. DOODY: No. The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in his usual, inimitable and delightful fashion has built several assumptions and presumptions and allegations and statements of fact, which are in error, into his question, which was really a preamble to an argument. What he said was -

MR. NEARY: Turn around and talk to me and face me. I can lip read.

MR. DOODY: Can you not hear me? I address my remarks to the Speaker. I think that is in order, is it not?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SMALLWOOD: - directly to the Speaker.

MR. DOODY: I do. He is delightful. Have you not admired the Speaker?

MR. SMALLWOOD: You can address the Speaker without looking at him.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is the tradition.

MR. DOODY: I would prefer, Sir, with great respect -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: A long standing tradition.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, it is not.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Absolutely!

AN HON. MEMBER: Do not argue with him.

MR. DOODY: I would like to answer your question.

MR. NEARY: Well, is the minister ready to give the answer?

MR. DOODY: Yes, I will now try to answer the question having had the benefit of the advice from various other sections of the Assembly. I would prefer to look at Mr. Speaker than look at the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), and it is just a matter of choice.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Did you decide that rule over the long weekend?

MR. DOODY: No, no certainly not. If ever I get an opportunity to look at you, I certainly will. You - I am sorry, the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), P.C., ex-Premier of the Province.

The situation is that there is a position on the table. There is a negotiating position on the table, there is a negotiating position being discussed between the representatives of NAPE and the representatives of government, the Treasury Board negotiators. That position is sitting there. Whether it is substantial or not depends on the attitude of the two groups involved. What might mean something substantial to me may not be substantial to the people who are in other areas of society. So that is really a term that I would not want to quantify or argue. Now the offer that is

Mr. Doody.

on the table from Treasury Board and the counteroffer that is on the table from NAPE is certainly not something that I am going to discuss in this Chamber for public consumption because that would obviously negate the whole bargaining process. NAPE would not need an executive and Treasury Board would not need a negotiating section or a bargaining section; we could do the whole thing here publicly through the media. That would make

MR. DOODY: A great deal more controversy and I am sure it will sell a few more newspapers and create a great deal more interest in the consumption of the public as regards the media.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The thirty minutes has expired.

MR. DOODY: Has it already?

MR. SPEAKER: Already.

MR. DOODY: I was trying to answer the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: By leave the hon. gentleman may continue but -

MR. CROSBIE: A great speech.

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MR. SPEAKER: Before recognizing the hon. House Leader, if there are no further notices to be given to me with respect to the procedure at five-thirty, then I would announce the three now and then not have to interrupt the Committee and there being no indication to the contrary then I take it that there are no further notices to be given me and I will then -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker -

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

MR. ROBERTS: With all respect and while I do not have the standing order in front of me, 32, as I recall it we as members have until four-thirty and I wonder if perhaps Your Honour is not unwittingly foreclosing some options on us. It may well be that upon consultation one or two of my colleagues might wish upon mature reflection to submit to Your Honour a notice and perhaps then Your Honour might wish to wait. I suggest that only because otherwise Your Honour might find yourself in Your Honour's embarrassing position of having to rethink Your Honour's honourable decision.

MR. SPEAKER: Actually the reason I put it was to ask hon. members if in fact they wished to submit any further ones or to keep their

MR. SPEAKER: option open and, as the hon. Leader of the Opposition suggests that he or his colleagues wish to leave that option open until four-thirty and that of course is entirely their right.

ORDERS OF THE DAY:

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, when we adjourned Tuesday evening I was in the process of responding to some of the remarks made by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), and I was about to get into the discussion with regard to occupational health which was raised by the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout).

Before I turn to the occupational health side of the debate I would want to make some reference to another item touched on by the member for LaPoile and that was what is the government's position with regard to putting hospitals under boards of management, hospital boards. And I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that I think the record of this government is a most admirable one in that regard in that one of the first hospitals I think which we moved on in terms of taking it out of the Department of Health system in terms of direct operation and putting it under a board was the James Paton Memorial Hospital in Gander. And as a consequence of that, the Cottage Hospital - Gander, of course, was a cottage hospital prior to that - the cottage hospitals in Fogo and in Brookfield in Bonavista Bay, while we have not established boards for those, those two hospitals come under the board of management of the Gander Regional Hospital and of course there is representation on that board from all the communities normally served by the Fogo and Brookfield Cottage Hospitals. And indeed from the medical district of Eastport, Glovertown and that area.

We have

Mr. H. Collins:

continued to implement that policy. The most recent hospital to come under a board of management is the hospital at Springdale, which was a cottage hospital. It is now under a Board of Governors.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Springdale is now run by a Board of Governors?

MR. H. COLLINS: Yes, Mr. Chairman

MR. SMALLWOOD: Since how long?

MR. H. COLLINS: It is one of the first boards which I appointed, about four or five months ago.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Would the hon. minister allow me to ask, because I have my own personal recollection being that the children's hospital, the Janeway, was being run by a board appointed by the government, and I think perhaps the General to some limited extent, and the hospital at Baie Verte, run by the Salvation Army and the one at -

MR. H. COLLINS: United Church.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Pardon?

MR. H. COLLINS: Baie Verte - United Church.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Oh, United Church,

- and the one at Labrador City by the Salvation Army, these government hospitals, now the minister tells me that Springdale is run by a government appointed board - is it? And what about Twillingate? Is that not also? What others are there, if any, government hospitals?

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, Springdale, as I said, was put under a Board of Management and the members appointed by the government about four or five months ago. That is the most recent one, I think, that was put under a Board of Governors or an established hospital board. With regard to Twillingate, as the hon. Premier knows, or he might have forgotten it, but I will refresh his memory, that hospital was known as the Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes, yes.

MR. COLLINS: And they operated from an association point of view.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Yes.

MR. H. COLLINS: Now, of course, the people there made a great contribution towards the establishment of that hospital, both from a point of view of capital investment and certainly from the point of operating it; because I can remember, and I am sure the hon. member for Fogo (Capt. Winsor) can remember years ago when, prior to Confederation, the greatest amount of the funds which were collected to operate that hospital were in the form of donations of fish, of potatoes, sacks of potatoes or cabbages or anything which a person could give.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Did the hon. minister himself contribute at that time?

MR. H. COLLINS: I have often collected with my father for that particular endeavour.

Now the new hospital in Twillingate will, I hope, be operated under a board under the Hospital's Act. However, we are negotiating with the existing association at Twillingate. As I indicated to the hon. member from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) a few days ago, some officials from my department - I do not know if they are there now, but I think they might be there now - are convening meetings with the members of the Notre Dame Bay Memorial Hospital Association towards trying to find the best means to establish a board or whatever for that particular institution. I might also add, Mr. Chairman, that in the case of the new hospital at Carbonear that we have reached an agreement that that hospital will be put under a Board of Governors. There will be a Board of Governors established, and I am not sure if we have notified the people yet of the make-up of the board, but that is well in hand, and within a few days that board will be established. All the necessary preliminary work has been done. And it is certainly our policy, Mr. Chairman, to continue establishing boards where possible. It is not something which we want to push or do too quickly. It takes time because I think in the first place there is a lot to be said for having the input of the people at the local scene. On the other hand,

MR. H. COLLINS:

It is important also that we get the right people and I am sure that that remark will not be misinterpreted - that we do get the right people involved, the best people we can find, who will be able to provide the type of leadership which is necessary but in co-operation with government and do a better job than the government itself could do. That is the name of the game.

Now, Mr. Chairman, with regard to occupational health. My friend the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) raised the question, and I can appreciate why he raised it because, of course, he represents the town of Baie Verte or the town of Baie Verte is in his riding. He and I have had several discussions with regard to the dangers of asbestosis in Baie Verte. It is a very emotional issue, and it is one which we are not trying to hide anything from public view or anything like that, but I think it is something that has to be dealt with as carefully as we can. The hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) made some reference to that particular problem in reading some excerpts from various newspapers around the world which indicates, of course, that not only is occupational health a concern of the Newfoundland Government, but it is the concern of just about every jurisdiction throughout the world. I know at the most recent meeting of the federal health ministers which I attended in Ottawa about two weeks ago

Mr. H. COLLINS:

that was one of the major topics on the agenda. It is receiving a great deal of attention and it requires a great deal of attention. It requires a great deal of research and expertise and so on which sometimes it is difficult for a Province the size of Newfoundland to be able to do on its own. I think we have convinced the federal government now - I might say (we) do not mean Newfoundland only but all the provinces - that the federal government indeed has a role to play.

But, Mr. Chairman, perhaps I should indicate to the House or inform the House what we have been doing ourselves. Last Fall we established a Division of Occupational Health in the Department of Health. We appointed Dr. Colohan, who is very much an expert in this particular field, as a director of that division. Subsequent to his appointment Dr. Colohan was sent overseas to Great Britain, to London, where he underwent some three or four months of study in the field of occupational health. I might say that the doctor had many conversations with health people in the British ministry. And as I mentioned earlier, their problems are not too different from ours. But he did go there. He has returned and right now, I might say, he is attending another meeting which has been called on a national basis at Chalk River somewhere in Ontario, anyway not too far from Toronto. He is up there this week and should be returning towards the end of this week.

So we are trying to expose him to all of the information which is available and there is a wealth of it, there are mountains of it, and there are different opinions of course which is to be expected where medical or technical opinions are to be found. But what I am trying to say here is that this government has recognized the need for the establishment of some expertise in this particular direction.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we are certainly not satisfied with that. During the past three or four months the Minister of Mines and Energy, who has some jurisdiction and responsibilities in this particular

MR. H. COLLINS:

field, the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment, who also has by legislation some jurisdiction and responsibility in the field of occupational health and safety, the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations obviously would have some jurisdiction and certainly a great interest and responsibility in the field, not only because the Workmen's Compensation Board reports to government through him but also because of the very nature of that department. We decided some months ago that this was so important, especially in view of the fact that the unions feel quite strongly about it and rightly so; we certainly agree with the unions' thoughts on it - we agreed to establish a committee, a working committee of officials from the four departments, and after the officials had done their work then the four ministers of the departments to which I referred would sit down and see what is the best approach to take to this problem to deal with it quickly, to deal with it effectively and, please, goodness deal with the problem successfully. That committee is still functioning.

My friend and my seat-mate here, the hon. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations, only a couple of weeks ago went to Saskatchewan to see first-hand what had been happening there. We found that Manitoba had already taken some very bold steps in the directions to bring about the improvements to which I have referred. Saskatchewan was about to do the same thing. That is, Mr. Speaker, to try and find ways and means of bringing all of the responsibilities, all of the areas of jurisdiction with regard to occupational health and safety under one umbrella of a department, an agency or a commission or whatever.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In the Department of Health?

MR. H. COLLINS: Well that, Mr. Chairman, we have not decided yet.

MR. H. COLLINS:

One of the problems in dealing with occupational health and safety is that there is such a fragmentation of responsibility and jurisdiction by legislation, and by interest too, of course, where Mines and Energy, Manpower and Industrial Relations, Provincial Affairs and Environment and Health all have some responsibilities. There has not been so far any regulations issued to my knowledge by the Department of Health, although there are provisions in the Health Department's legislation for that. The regulations concerning standards and so on have always been issued to my knowledge by Mines and Energy. I believe Provincial Affairs and Environment might have issued some.

But the Department of Health has always acted in the capacity as a professional advisor to the other departments, the other ministers. In terms of establishing TLVs - I presume hon. members know what I mean by TLVs, that is, Threshold Limit Values - which establishes the amount of dust which can be tolerated in any particular mine or a mill or area. We have been doing that and we are not satisfied, of course, with the levels which have been established. I believe in the case of Bale Verte that the TLVs are being adhered to. I think it is fair to say there has been some improvement down there. I am still not satisfied in my own mind that the TLVs established are adequate and that is something which we are looking at now through Dr. Colohan.

So what I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that this government is very much aware of the consequences which might occur, you know, the consequences down the road, and we are moving as soon as we can. I can give this committee my word and the assurance of all of us that we are moving as quickly as we can, and I believe that in the not too distant future, in fact in a matter of months, we will be in a position to find the necessary staff which I think we are going to need as a backup to Dr. Colohan and to get the whole bit and piece put under some umbrella, whether, as I said, it is Health, or Manpower and Industrial Relations, or Mines and Energy, or a separate agency or a commission

MR. H. COLLINS:

or whatever. But put the whole thing to bed properly from an organizational point of view and then get on quickly with the job which is necessary to be done.

MR. SMALLWOOD: When that is done it will cover such places as St. Lawrence, Labrador City, the City of Wabush, Baie Verte and so on?

MR. H. COLLINS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, not only Baie Verte. I was referring to Baie Verte because that is the most recent problem which has been raised. But certainly the Iron Ore Company of Canada which is operating at Labrador City has been of some concern to us down through the years and they are doing a good job to bring about the improvements which are desirable. But all of the areas.

And I might say, Mr. Chairman, that today when one looks at occupational health we are not only thinking in terms of the mines and the mills where asbestos and iron ore and - St. Lawrence, what we we mine in St. Lawrence?

AN HON. MEMBER: Fluorspar.

MR. H. COLLINS: Fluorspar, the Fluorspar. Not only are we interested in those areas but the aerosol spraying devices today and the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) mentioned yesterday when he was talking about asbestos the exposure of mechanics, for instance, in garages where they are dealing with the brake line on the wheels of a car. Nobody knows for sure what the dangers are there. Certainly there is asbestos fiber, and asbestos fiber is the problem which we are talking about and that is not only present in the mine where it is mined but it is also present in any area where it is manufactured into other products or in any area where workmen are working on the manufactured product.

So it is a great wide field and something which all jurisdictions are concerned about and are doing what they can to find answers to. As I say, Mr. Chairman, it is a very emotional issue, or can be made a very emotional issue. Sometimes then the wrong

MR. H. COLLINS:

information might be made available to people and we prefer not to do too much of that.

In the meantime, the hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) mentioned also or made reference to the water supply, the condition of the water supply at Baie Verte. And there was some work done last Fall and last Winter. There is work being done now by my hon. colleague's department, Provincial Affairs and Environment, towards that end. This is an area where while there has been a lot of knowledge accumulated over the years and a lot of good advice available now in terms of establishing TLVs where asbestos fiber or whatever would have some effect on the respiratory system, there is no information available anywhere to indicate what the damages might be in terms of ingesting asbestos fibers in our water and in our food.

When Dr. Colohan was in England this Baie Verte situation came to light and we immediately got in touch with him by telephone to see what he could discover in England what people knew about asbestos in water supplies and what would be the tolerances, you know, what standards had been established. He could find no information over there at all. They were aware that there might be a problem but the British Ministry of Health could not give us any information any more than we had ourselves.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. gentleman will allow me: The information in the United Kingdom apparently is not to be gotten in the Department of Health. And if that is the only source tapped by the doctor who went over it is too bad. There are other departments that have specific responsibility and they are not the Department of Health. The very quotations I gave from these clippings here - when was it, yesterday, last night? - referred to quite other departments of the British government altogether. It would be well worth-while tapping those sources.

MR. H. COLLINS: Maybe, Mr. Chairman, I should have said that the British Government were of no help to us not the Department of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS:

That was slip of the tongue. The British Government have no information which is useful information. We have gone to the United States Government, we have gone to the World Health Organization, and of course we have gone to our own federal government. Now all of those organizations are now - and of course we did not bring it on, they were doing it before - but they are all doing research. But nobody can tell us at this particular time whether 1 million litres per pound of asbestos fibers in a water supply is really dangerous. Certainly from an aesthetic point of view or from any point of view one would be concerned about drinking water with a considerable amount of asbestos fiber in it. But nobody knows exactly what safe limits there might or might not be. But there is being work done on this, and we are in on the ground floor with the organizations which I just mentioned and as more information becomes available we will certainly be passing it along to the people.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The minister is actively and anxiously concerned?

MR. H. COLLINS: Yes, very much so.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And hunting whatever information he can get?

MR. H. COLLINS: Right. And the federal government have given us a commitment as well because -

MR. SMALLWOOD: The Government of Canada.

MR. H. COLLINS: - they can get information sometimes from a national point of view which is difficult from a little Province like Newfoundland.

So Mr. Lalonde has agreed and we have a working committee in fact -

MR. MURPHY: Even if there were no mining we have more areas containing asbestos. And still we find it in different parts all over the Peninsula.

MR. H. COLLINS: Yes. For the information of the House I might say that the testing which was done at Baie Verte-I think tests were also done at Fleur de Lys and Coachman's Cove and Seal Cove and down in Burlington and Middle Arm in Green Bay, in Badger and Grand Falls and came as far East as Gander Lake. In fact there is some work

MR. H. COLLINS:

being done now in Windsor Lake I believe just to try and see if there is any pattern. But since there is such a dearth of information available nobody knows whether the contamination is due to the - you know if it is natural contamination from the mineral in the soil or whether it is contamination by virtue of the movement around by winds of the fibers from the mine site and the mill.

At any rate I can assure the hon. member who represents that area that everything possible is being done, no stone left unturned to try and establish what the dangers are. If there are any inherent dangers, then measures will be taken to correct them. Mr. Speaker, I believe that just about covers the many remarks which were made. I might say that I appreciate very much the contribution which my friend, the member - the lawyers always say my learned friend, my

MR. COLLINS: doctor friend from St. John's South (Dr. Collins) -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Scholarly friend.

MR. COLLINS: My doctor friend from St. John's South and my doctor friend from Mount Scio (Dr. Windsor), two great contributions which were made by them on Tuesday night.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, since we are in Committee we of course can speak -

MR. NEARY: I stood up first.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, the minister has given us some honied words and we have listened to those with interest, but I think there are a number of points that bear us some further repetition and there are some new ones. Let me begin by saying to the minister now, or asking him now if he would arrange so that we can have them - he will need them in an hour or so when we get around to the point - to get the contracts between the government and the Scrivener firm for the Health Sciences Complex and the Carbonear Complex because he is responsible, the votes are in his estimates and there are a number of questions which my colleagues and I wish to ask, Sir, with respect to the matters. They relate in point or in part to the contracts, and while I do not know whether the contracts were entered into by the Minister of Health or in his behalf, or whether they were entered into by the Minister of Public Works and Services or on his behalf, I do not really care because they were entered into by the government on one hand and the Scrivener firm on the other hand.

And, Sir, there is evidence to suggest there is something very, very wrong with the whole proceedings over there. And I propose to ask some questions in Committee and depending upon the

MR. ROBERTS: minister's answers we will see where we go from there. So I merely mention that now in the hope that his officials whom I assume are within earshot, or perhaps the Acting Minister of Public Works who has nipped out for a cigarette, could arrange to have these documents brought up so they are here in the Committee. I do not want the minister to be unarmed for the debate. I do not want him to have to say that he is not aware or he does not have the information here, I serve notice now, Sir, that we will be raising questions and I serve notice that we expect to be given answers as to material in these contracts. And I say that very strongly, Sir, because again depending upon the answers to some questions there is evidence to suggest very grave impropriety and I hasten to say it does not involve the minister, nor does it involve the Minister of Public Works, nor does it involve any of the Minister of Health's predecessors but very, very serious matters which must be discussed and which I propose to discuss before I for one vote the minister's salary.

But before we come to that, Mr. Chairman, before we come to that I would like to say a few words about asbestosis and asbestos related hazards at the Baie Verte mine, and I would like to say those words because I listened to what the minister said now when he spoke at the beginning of the Committee study this afternoon and although I did not have the opportunity to hear my colleague and friend from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout), who I gather made a magnificent speech, a most admirable presentation the other night -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Hear! Hear!

MR. ROBERTS: - and I did not hear his speech but I have been briefed on it and told about it and the minister's reply is most unsatisfactory.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I could say a lot of things about asbestosis and the problems which I fear are arising at Baie Verte. Most of them have been said in this House before, most of them have been said in the Committee before although they have not been said this year.

MR. ROBERTS: The facts in essence, as I understand them, are that most people now concede quite readily that there is at least a potential hazard caused by asbestos. Some of us would go further than that, but it would be common ground, I believe, with anybody who is the least bit aware of the facts that there is certainly a potential hazard and the question then comes, what should be done about it? The obvious thing to do about it, Mr. Chairman, of course is to get some experts, some acknowledged experts to make a study of the Baie Verte project, the Baie Verte mine, to see exactly what the hazard is and when we know what it is then we seek expert advice as to what should be done.

Well I say, Sir, that this is what the minister has not done, and I say further, Sir, that the minister in my view has been negligent and uncaring, that he has not made any effort, indeed he is trying his best to hamper at least one effort that is under way to look into the asbestos related situation at Baie Verte and to get to the bottom of it. And I think, Sir, the minister should hang his head in shame with his conduct in this matter.

MR. MURPHY: Wrong.

MR. ROBERTS: The Minister of Provincial Affairs says, "Wrong," and I shall bring out the facts.

MR. MURPHY: Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong. Wrong.

MR. MURPHY: That is a criminal accusation.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, to begin with I would ask, Sir, if it is in order for the Minister of Provincial Affairs to say that anything is a criminal accusation I have made. Mr. Chairman I ask for a ruling on that point and then I shall proceed to submit the evidence which I would wish to lead in support of my contention that the Minister of Health, Sir, has behaved shamefully in this whole question of the asbestos hazards at Baie Verte.

MR. MURPHY: Wrong.

MR. ROBERTS: But first of all, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Provincial Affairs distinctly said that I had acted in a criminal fashion and I would ask Your Honour, Sir, to rule whether that is in order or

MR. ROBERTS: not, I submit that it is not in order, and if it is not in order I would ask that the gentleman from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy), the minister, be requested to withdraw the statement and I would further request, Mr. Chairman, that he be directed to observe the rules of the Committee and to listen in silence and when his turn comes to speak, Sir, if he wishes to speak of course he has exactly the same right as do I or any other member and I will gladly listen to whatever -

MR. MURPHY: There is a ruling -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, there he goes again.

AN HON. MEMBER: He is very touchy.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, he is very touchy today.

MR. MURPHY: There was a ruling that said -

MR. ROBERTS: He is very touchy today, Mr. Chairman, and I say to the minister - Mr. Chairman, I ask Your Honour to direct the minister's attention to the rules of the Committee which say that the member speaking has the right to be heard without interruption, subject only to the right to raise a point of order or a point of privilege or some other parliamentary procedure, and I further ask, Mr. Chairman, that we have a ruling on the question of whether the minister is in order to bring up this business about allegedly criminal statements. I have made no statement of any criminal matter. I have made a statement that I believe the minister has been gravely derelict in his ministerial responsibility and I believe that to be true. I know that to be true. But may I have a ruling, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I understand the hon. House Leader has raised a point of order and has spoken to the point of order and I am prepared to give a ruling unless there are other comments bearing on this that should be made. It is from Beauchesne page 130, heading 154, subheading (3), "The imputation of bad motives, the accusation of misrepresentation charging with falsehoods or

MR. CHAIRMAN: deceit' and also under 155, subheading (4) such phrases that a member has been detected in the grossest practice of corruption. These types of terms are considered to be unparliamentary and I would therefore ask the hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs if he would reconsider what I am sure are just hasty remarks and withdraw so that there will not be any suggestion that he was being unparliamentary in regard to the hon. Leader of the Opposition's remarks.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman if I may and in view of your ruling perhaps the word criminal is not the word that I should have used, perhaps it was malicious, nasty, and not at all fair or decent, Sir. And I withdraw the word criminal.

MR. NEARY: Do not forget 'rude.'

MR. MORGAN: It was indecent on the part of the Leader of the Opposition.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I submit the only thing that is indecent, Sir, is the way in which the minister and his colleagues are -

MR. NEARY: Do not be nasty.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will have to do his best to restrain himself as well. I realize that that is a struggle but let him try.

MR. NEARY: Rude, nasty, ignorant!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I was saying that the only indecent thing is the way in which the Minister of Health and the ministry as a whole, the government, have ignored this problem, have refused to help the one concrete effort that is underway.

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

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

MR. MURPHY: When a member here makes an allegation that

Mr. Murphy:

some one here makes an allegation that some one has ignored and being neglectful of his duties, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition should be asked to withdraw it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MURPHY: Just a moment! Let the Chairman decide, please!

MR. ROBERTS: I propose to let the Chairman decide. I merely ask to be allowed to make a remark or so which the Chairman inevitably does.

Mr. Chairman, to that point of order --

MR. CHAIRMAN: The point of order is under discussion.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you! To that point of order, Mr. Chairman, the remarks I made are so clearly in order that only the gentleman from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) could fail to appreciate that fact.

MR. MURPHY: I have only been here seventeen years so naturally I must not know anything about correct behaviour.

MR. ROBERTS: To say, Mr. Chairman, if the hon. gentleman knows about good behaviour he is failing to observe the first rule which is not to interrupt the gentleman who has the floor. Mr. Chairman, the remarks are perfectly in order, to say that the ministry is ignoring a problem, Sir, is, I mean, it is so in order that only the gentleman from St. John's Centre could think it was not. It is the essence of debate, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I understand that a true point of order has not being raised. That these are matters of different interpretation by hon. members. I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to continue his remarks.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

Now, Mr. Chairman, as I was saying the ministry in my view have ignored this problem, and having ignore it despite repeated warnings, and have ignored it despite public commitments made not by --

AN HON. MEMBER: Not by a member.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, by a member, by a minister. The gentleman was still a minister, I believe, at a time it was made. Now, Sir, the asbestosis problem has been discussed many times in this House. I do not have all of the references here, but it came up, I believe I raised it, some of my colleagues might have raised it as well on the Health Department estimates in 1973 and again in 1975, last year. Last year there was a fairly minor bill amending the Mines Safety Act. The gentleman from LaPoile made quite an eloquent and a very good speech about asbestosis then, and I made a speech then about the asbestosis problem, other hon. members did. We got some response from the then Minister of Health, Dr. Gus Rowe, who of course is no longer a member by his own choice, and by the then Minister of Mines and Energy, Mr. Leo Barry, who is no longer a member, but that is not his choice, that was the choice of the electors in the district of Burin-Placentia West.

And at that time we were assured that steps were being taken and we have had the same assurances now twelve months later, Mr. Chairman, and no more than that has been done by the minister or by any of his colleagues.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. Murphy: It is not true! It is not true!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman says "Not true", let him be quiet, let him be quiet, Sir, let him hear the facts, and then let the facts speak for themselves. Now, Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman from St. John's Centre is doing his very best, his very best, Sir, to try to provoke scenes and types of debate that are not in keeping with this House or what he professes to believe. I am making statements, I submit, that are in order. The hon. gentleman might not like them, but the way to handle that, Sir, is for him when his turn comes to stand in his place and speak his mind and put his points and then we will see what happens.

Now, Mr. Chairman, as I was saying the matter has been raised in this House, and we have had a response that I can only call lip service, no more than lip service. And we have had the same lip service now today although from a different set of lips than a year

Mr. Roberts:

past, because of course we now have a new Minister of Health. And he is saying the same tired cliches, the same excuses for inaction that we heard from his predecessor, Dr. Rowe, and it is not good enough. The problem continues to grow. And there is no doubt, Sir, that there is a significant risk to the health of the men at Baie Verte, that they are being exposed to that risk. And the government, Sir, are not doing anything at all to try and determine whether the risk is unavoidable, whether the risk can be reduced, or whether in fact the risk should be eliminated entirely.

Now let me just touch upon a number of points. First of all, Sir, let me show you how this ministry break their solemn word publicly. I have here, Sir, a transcript of the CTV programme W-5 and it was the show which was shown on the national network on September 21, 1975, I believe that is a Sunday night, is it? It comes on the national network, I do not believe it is shown live here, I think it comes in on videotape on a day or two later. One day later my friend from Lewisporte (Mr. White) who is expert in these matters and many others tells me that was shown here in this Province on the 21st. or the 22nd. day of September last Fall, Many people here saw it.

Now, Sir, part of the show, a great part of the programme had to do with the Baie Verte mine. And if we wish we could read the whole transcript, but I do not think that is particularly necessary. Well I would be happy to if the minister would like it, I went to some trouble to get it.

MR. DOODY: The same people who did the seal hunt?

MR. ROBERTS: No, it is a different people. It is the same people that the hon. gentleman referred to in a letter he sent my colleague as being very good people, and so they are. The study referred to had to do with one carried out by Dr. Robert Morgan, a gentleman whom I do not know, but who is from the University of Toronto Medical Faculty. He carried out a study at the request of the Steelworkers Union. The Not the government! The government have not lifted a hand to help those

MR. ROBERTS: men in Baie Verte.

MR. COLLINS: We have co-operated.

MR. ROBERTS: His co-operation, my foot!

MR. MURPHY: The hon. member -

MR. ROBERTS: My foot has done more for the people in Baie Verte on this asbestosis than all the hon. gentleman's co-operation. But in any event Dr. Robert Morgan, Mr. Chairman, - Dr. Robert Morgan agreed to do a study for the Steelworkers Union. I am not sure whether it was the - was it the International or the Local? But in any event the Steelworkers Union which is the bargaining agent certified in respect of the men who work in the mine at Baie Verte.

Dr. Morgan examined the medical records of more than thirty of the senior workers of the plant, and 'senior' in that context, Sir, does not mean management, 'senior' means seniority in terms of years of service. Dr. Morgan's -

MR. MURPHY: The hon. member went through the whole thing the other day.

MR. ROBERTS: It could be. We are going through it again because the minister apparently is not able to appreciate it, and certainly is not able to respond to it.

MR. MURPHY: The hon. the Leader of the Opposition did not hear the speech the other day, so he has to go through it again.

MR. ROBERTS: That is right! But I know what my colleague went through! And I feel we must go through it, and we shall go through it again, and again, and again until we get some indication of significant and substantial action.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: The transcript goes on, and this is Miss Carol Taylor or Ms. Carol Taylor speaking, she is moderator on that programme, goes on, "Dr. Morgan's assistant, Doug Snider, administered pulmonary function tests which measure the lungs capacity to take in and exhale air." Then apparently there was a scene of a miner exhaling and inhaling, and then the script goes on, "Dr. Morgan requested permission to examine conditions in the mill, but he was refused." In addition to his own expertise, Dr. Morgan arranged for Dr. John Patterson of Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto to fly to St. John's and

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to read the x-rays of the men. Dr. Morgan's preliminary report was sent to the United Steelworkers."

Now we have a commercial break then. And then it goes on, Ms. Taylor went on, that she and a colleague named Pat were going to be speaking to Mr. Leo Barry who at this stage was still a minister of the Crown. He had been unsuccessful in his bid for re-election, the people who knew him best had rejected him by a very large majority in his constituency, had elected my friend and colleague the gentleman from Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Canning), but Mr. Barry at that stage was just tidying up his affairs, resigned from the ministry in fact a few days after this, in the normal way.

In any event Mr. Leo Barry and Dr. Morgan right after the commercials - so we pause for the commercials. Then we go on, Mr. Chairman, Ms. Taylor goes on again, "Dr. Morgan was the gentleman who did the tests for us and became involved in it. It looks terrible to us now. Are we over reacting to the situation? How serious is it?"

And then it quotes Dr. Morgan, "There are no gross cause cases of asbestosis among the men that he saw - I saw, he says - but we do have men with symptoms. We have a report of some abnormal x-rays. There are some changes in pulmonary function tests, and the story is not optimistic!" So last September, publicly on the national television, a man who was acknowledged as being a great expert in this field - not as great as some others; but a great expert in the field - who had made a study of the request of the union, been refused co-operation by the company, and had been apparently offered none by the government to help him to get the facts, but that man, Dr. Morgan went on the national television and made that statement,

And then the questioner goes on: "What are you saying? The men who are already affected, is it something that can be cured?" Dr. Morgan, "No, there is no cure. The exposure to asbestos that will cause asbestosis later on or possible cancer has already occurred." The questioner, "so there is no hope for those men?" Dr. Morgan, "Well those men have to be watched and if they are developing any changes

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they certainly should not be in a dusty atmosphere." Question:

"Did you find any one person who should get immediate medical attention?"

Dr. Morgan: "Yes, but the people who are in need of attention are in fact getting it. Some of them are scheduled for a more complete work-up, probably in St. John's. They are known to the doctors."

Mr. Roberts.

Questioner: "The company has said to us" - the company is Advocate Mines Limited, owned partially by Johns-Manville and partially by a Belgian firm I believe. I think Johns-Manville are the managing agents, the managing partner. Questioner: "The company has said to us they have taken precautions, they have given warnings, Are you satisfied with that?" Answer, Dr. Morgan, "No, the only warning I have seen from the company is the one they issued the week I - Dr. Morgan - went to Baie Verte, and in that brochure of four pages there was nothing there that was not known at the time the mine opened. The workers tell me that the company had said nothing about the hazards for the twelve years of operation." It is now thirteen. And I might point out during those thirteen years the Liberals were in office for eight and the present government, the P.C.'s for five. I think my figures are correct. Now that is the end of the interview with Dr. Morgan as it was reproduced there.

Now we have an interview with Mr. Leo Barry who was still the Minister of Mines. He was about to resign his office. He did resign his office shortly thereafter, but at that point he was still a minister in the cabinet. Questioner named Pat, "Mr. Barry, you are the Minister of Mines. Have we given you enough information to call an investigation?" Mr. Barry, "Yes, you have. Unfortunately while I congratulate you for bringing this to the attention of the public, you have over-simplified a number of the issues. For example, you talk about an investigation." The interviewer Pat, "No, but I would like to. Are you going to call an investigation and call it tomorrow?" Mr. Barry, "If I find that the matters that Dr. Morgan has raised here tonight, which is the first time they have been raised to my attention, are not being investigated, there will be an investigation tomorrow, but there are three areas where when you talk about an investigation there has to be an investigation. First, with respect to standards, I think it should be pointed out that up until

Mr. Morgan.

two years ago and probably still today there was great conflict as to the proper standards to be applied in the asbestos mine, international standards that is." And Carol Taylor, "I am afraid we are running out of time. I think most people who saw that item would hope very much for your investigation." Mr. Barry, "There will be no question about that." That statement was made before that, but it was broadcast on September 21, 1975 from Toronto, and what I have read, Sir, is the verbatim transcript supplied to me, and I have read it in its entirety, in the relevant portions, as supplied to me by the producers of that W 5 show. So last September Mr. Barry made a flat commitment in the words and in the terms that I have outlined and expressed here in the Committee. Well, Sir, I will not say that nothing was done by Mr. Barry and by the government, but I will say that to the best of my knowledge and ability, I have been unable to discover anything that was done by Mr. Barry or by the government. Mr. Barry may not have reported it to his colleagues. He resigned from the cabinet a day or so after this, re-entered the practice of law, and is now having a very successful and very good career at the bar here in St. John's. But that does not matter. What does matter, Sir, is that apparently nothing was done. Oh, we will hear some talk about Dr. Austin Colohan, a fine man. He became assistant deputy minister of Health. The appointment was made by the then Premier, the present member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood), but I am not breaching any confidence or any constitutional prohibitions when I say the appointment was made at my recommendation. I was the minister, and the assistant deputy ministership became vacant, and Dr. Cant became the deputy, at the retirement of Dr. Leonard Miller and after some considerable consideration and discussion and thought I went to the then Premier, and recommended Dr. Colohan and that was the appointment as was made by the Premier or made by the Cabinet at the request and recommendation of the Premier, and that is proper. The appointment of deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers is the prerogative of the Prime Minister or the Premier.

Mr. Roberts.

So Mr. Barry made a commitment, but nothing has been done. We may hear about Dr. Colohan going off to England and going off to Chalk River, which is quite near Ottawa, not Toronto, going off to one place and another place, and I have no doubt that Dr. Colohan has probably amassed a vast amount of information, a vast amount of knowledge. He had a great deal of it before. His career has been very distinguished, and he has served well in a number of important public health positions.

But I do not know of anything that has been done at Baie Verte or in respect to the Baie Verte mines. And what I say to the minister is tell us and if something has been done then we shall judge accordingly. But if nothing has been done, as I believe to be the case, then I say, Sir, the minister has ignored that problem, has been negligent, has been heartlessly and cruelly so.

Now, Sir, subsequently, my friend and colleague, the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) - who is making a fine mark in this House of Assembly - the gentleman from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) became very involved in the problem, because his constituents are involved, and because he has the responsibility of acting as our spokesman in health matters. And over the Winter months he has on occasion, as have I, been in touch with one of the great world authorities, perhaps the greatest world authority, Dr. Irving J. Sellikof.

MR. H. COLLINS: Who else has?

MR. ROBERTS: My friend has, I have. The minister has not.

MR. H. COLLINS: That was mentioned, I think, last year.

MR. ROBERTS: It may have been. The minister has not. I had a conversation with Dr. Sellikof as recent ago as Friday evening past. There is nothing unusual or secret about that. He was in New York, and we had fifteen or twenty minutes on the telephone, and I will relate what went on in the conversation. If only the minister had had enough interest to pick up the phone and call Dr. Sellikof, it might be a little different.

Mr. Roberts.

But Dr. Sellikof, Sir, for the benefit of the Committee, is accepted and acknowledged as one of the world authorities, perhaps the leading authority in the world, on these problems of asbestosis. I do not think there is a man or woman anywhere in the world who knows more than Dr. Sellikof does about this, and I do not think there are very many at all who even know as much. And Dr. Sellikof and his research people at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City have become very deeply interested in the Baie Verte situation. And some time ago they decided, not at my request or at anybody's request - they decided to make an investigation into the Baie Verte situation, the sort of thing that Mr. Barry had promised, that the minister, if he had not been heartlessly negligent, would have done months ago, if he had given a hoot for the health of the men there, he would have done. After all the evidence has been presented here in the House and outside. Dr. Sellikof and his research associates decided to make a study. They did not ask for money. What they did they first of all went to the company and to the union. And remember they are not making this study for the union, Mr. Chairman. They are not making it for the company. They are completely neutral. They are not the company's men. They are not the union's men. They are dedicated to scientific impartiality, and to a dedication to letting the truth rule without any regard to whether it hurts or helps the company or hurts or helps the union. They are exactly the people we need. They are impartial, and they are expert. So they were in approach Dr. Sellikof has told me, they approached the company, and they approached the union. The union promised their enthusiastic co-operation. The company had promised their co-operation, and I am not sure they are quite as enthusiastic as the union are, but they have certainly, Dr. Sellikof tells me, assured him of their full and complete support. They are willing to co-operate in the investigation, and make available any information they may have and make available any information or facilities

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which they can put at the disposal of the research team. And that is admirable, and I think the Advocate Mines Limited should be congratulated and the United Steel Workers of America should be congratulated. Unfortunately there is nothing on which I can congratulate the minister, because he has done nothing to help these people. But, Sir, despite the minister's appalling dereliction of duty, the fact remains we are now going to get an impartial assessment by world-acknowledged experts of the asbestosis situation at Baie Verte. If there is a problem, as Dr. Morgan says, we will have some idea of what the dimensions of that problem are. If there is no problem, if Dr. Morgan's view is wrong, then we will be assured of that. But in any event we will know. How will we know? We will know because Dr. Sellikof is going to make his report public. He is going to make it public to the union. He is going to make it public to the company, and he has undertaken to make it public to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, and to anybody else who is interested. He is coming as a seeker after truth. He is not coming as the company's man or the union's man. He is coming as a seeker after scientific and medical truth. And he is coming armed

MR. ROBERTS:

with all of the knowledge and skill that a man could possibly have in this branch of medicine and occupational health matters. Now Dr. Sellikof did not ask for any money. He had arranged funding. But when I spoke to him quite early on after it had been decided to do this I said to him, "Well, Doctor, it is going to cost you a lot of money. Are you getting any money from the union?" "No, no", he said, "we would not take any money from the union." "Well," I said, "what about the company?" "No", he said, "we would not take any from the company either." "Well", I said, "where are you going to get your money?" "Well", he said, "we have limited research funds and, you know, we will finance it ourselves before we take money from the union or company." "Well", I said, "what about the government, what about public money?" He said, "Well, we are not looking for it but our funds are scarce and if need be we would take it because they are not union, they are not company, they are supposedly impartial, supposedly on the side of right."

I said, "Well fine doctor. I cannot talk to you about government money because I am not in the government." And he said that he understood our political system and how there were governments and oppositions, and he realized that I was not in the government, that I was in opposition. "Well", I said, "I will ask my colleague, the member concerned who represents that district, to write to the Minister of Health to ask." So the Minister of Health received a letter dated March 25 addressed to him by my colleague. Let me read it to the Committee, Sir, because I think it is very much in point.

It is addressed to the minister. "Dear Mr. Collins" -

MR. NEARY: What year?

MR. ROBERTS: Last month, March 25, 1976. This is May 6, six weeks ago. It was only the study - for the benefit of the gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) - Dr. Sellikof only decided to make the study to my knowledge in early March or late February. That is when I was told that Dr. Sellikof had agreed to make the study. What he had

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been waiting for was word, for enquiry from the company. The matter had been debated here long before but it was only in February or March - I do not have a note of the exact date - but in February or March that Dr. Sellikof was able to get the clearance, the green light from the company and the union.

Anyway, "Dear Mr. Collins, March 25, 1976. Dear Mr. Collins, As you know I - the gentleman from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) - am very concerned about the potential hazards that might exist at Advocate Mines in Baie Verte. My main concern at the immediate moment is that the workers at the mine may be exposed to dangerously high levels of asbestos dust. It is well known that over-exposure to asbestos dust can be extremely dangerous to the health of human beings. It is with this in mind that I seek your support at the present time.

"During the Summer of 1975 the United Steel Workers of America Union had a Dr. Morgan carry out a survey of a selected group of men working at Advocate Mines." Although the gentleman from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) does not say so, that is the study to which Dr. Morgan gave testimony on the W 5 programme. Anyway the letter goes on: "Dr. Morgan's study revealed that a number of the men showed lung abnormalities but he could not say conclusively whether or not these abnormalities were caused by over-exposure to asbestos dust. Since Advocate Mines has only been in operation for twelve to thirteen years, and since the gestation period for asbestos related diseases is much longer than that, Dr. Morgan found it impossible to make a positive conclusion re the abnormalities referred to.

"However two things are clear. One, we know that asbestos dust can be extremely harmful to the health. Two, we know that workers at Advocate Mines have been subjected to a very high dust level for a number of years. The conclusion then is obvious. A potential health hazard exists at Advocate Mines and the workers have been

MR. ROBERTS:

exposed to it for many years, long enough to have contracted asbestos related diseases. I feel that we have an immediate responsibility to determine precisely the medical state of all the workers now employed at Advocate Mines. To do any less would, in my opinion, mean that we are failing in our responsibility to those people."

It goes on, Mr. Chairman, "As you might be aware, Dr. Irving J. Sellikof of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York is a world recognized authority on asbestos related diseases. Dr. Sellikof through an agreement with Johns-Manville, the operators at Advocate Mines, and the United Steel Workers Union has agreed to go to Baie Verte and to carry out a complete medical study of all the workers at Advocate Mines. Johns-Manville will pay for the cost of X-rays, but in no other way will Dr. Sellikof accept any contribution from the company or the union. His desire - and I agree with him - is that the survey will be completely impartial and independent. He will not be indebted to company or union so that the results of the survey will in no way be subject to censorship by either party mentioned."

I might add of my own knowledge, Mr. Chairman, that in my conversation with Dr. Sellikof he has been adamant on that point, I think rightly so. The letter goes on. "Since Dr. Sellikof will not accept any financial help from the company or the union, and since this survey in my opinion is absolutely necessary and should be carried out, I feel that the government of this Province should support it in a financial manner. For Dr. Sellikof and his aids to travel to Baie Verte will be expensive. I feel that the Province should provide travel and maintenance for Dr. Sellikof to carry out this survey."

My colleague and friend goes on: "I feel that a maximum of \$5,000 would adequately provide Dr. Sellikof with travel and maintenance funds. When you remember that there are 500 men working at Advocate Mines and that \$5,000 is only ten dollars per worker, I feel that it is very little to ask. The workers and people of that

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area have a right to know exactly what the situation is. The government have an opportunity to help make that possible. I beg your support so that it might be determined once and for all what is exactly the situation at Baie Verte. I am anxiously awaiting your reply to this request. Should you require further information I shall do all I can to provide it. I know you are concerned about conditions at Baie Verte and I present this proposal as a positive way to carefully and accurately assess, and hopefully avert before it is too late, what could be a tragic situation. With every best wish, Sincerely yours, signed Tom Rideout, MHA, Baie Verte-White Bay."

A very good letter, a very reasonable request and one which any member for any district should be complimented for writing.

MR. NEARY: Did they reply?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, I will read the reply in a moment. There was no public reference made to it. We did not attack the minister. We did not make a press statement. We did not raise the matter in the House. It was done obviously openly and responsibly and with every effort genuinely to try to get some help from the government. And I may say, Sir, my colleague consulted me on the wording of the letter and the idea of it and I told him I thought it was an excellent letter and I thought it was an eminently reasonable request and I would be extremely surprised if it was not granted. The amount of money involved is not very large viewed with whatever the Health Department is spending, \$120 million, \$130 million this year?

AN HON. MEMBER: \$194 million.

MR. ROBERTS: \$194 million, \$200 million. It is not even the interest on a tenth of one per cent. I thought that there would be no question, that the letter would come back saying, "Delighted to." I mean, the survey will cost \$40,000 or \$50,000 or \$60,000. "Delighted to get it for \$5,000. Tell Dr. Sellikof to get in touch with us and we will be happy to receive a request from him for money and we would be happy to grant it."

MR. ROBERTS:

Well, what was the minister's response? What concern and care did he show? Well a letter came back dated March 30. "Dear Mr. Rideout, Thank you for your letter dated March 25, 1976 advising of the proposal of Dr. Irving J. Sellikof's survey of the Baie Verte miners and requesting funding to a maximum of \$5,000 to support this survey. As I know you have heard me say on several occasions the situation at Baie Verte is of course that the presence of asbestos dust does constitute a very real health hazard. My department, along with the Departments of Mines and Energy and Provincial Affairs and Environment has been closely involved with monitoring, not only of the environmental conditions but of the miners concerned. In this regard I must pay tribute particularly to Dr. Douglas Black and his survey at the M.J. Boylen Hospital in Baie Verte.

"As a result of our interest in obtaining an independent view my department did co-operate with the recent visit of Dr. Morgan, a well-known Canadian expert, in surveying the miners. You are correct that Dr. Morgan could not positively identify asbestos related diseases. This was however a significant report in that it did lend support to our actions in surveying techniques, etc. as they have been and are continuing to be conducted. My department certainly would again support and co-operate with another survey if it was the request of the miners and the company. As you probably know, Dr. Black has had ongoing discussions with Dr. Sellikof in terms of detailed preparations for the survey. Similarly Dr. Austin Colohan director, Occupational Health Division has expressed his support for the project.

" It was my understanding that the arrangements for Dr. Sellikof including funding had been finalized. My department has received no other requests for funding. To be frank with you, I am not prepared at this time in this year of significant cost restraints to recommend public funding for this venture primarily because it duplicates the work of a very recent study. I would certainly be prepared to discuss this further with officials organizing the project

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should this decision jeopardize the proposal. Thank you for your continuing interest. Yours sincerely, Harold A. Collins, Minister."

Yes, yes! "Thank you for your continuing interest."

MR. H. COLLINS: No, the one before that.

MR. ROBERTS: The one that said, "I would certainly be prepared to discuss this further with officials organizing the project should this decision jeopardize the proposal." That is not the last. It is the second last sentence.

MR. H. COLLINS: You have a better copy than I have.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, that is right, but I did not write it nor did I sign it.

Mr. Chairman, let me begin by saying that Dr. Sellikof tells me the survey is going ahead with or without the Minister of Health's help, Let me say that clearly and explicitly, and it is going ahead with the full and enthusiastic co-operation of the Steel Workers Union on both the national or international level and the company, both the Johns Manville Company and the Belgian firm.

MR. NEARY: Well the company should pay the full shot.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Dr. Sellikof is reluctant to accept it from the company because he would feel then that his survey could be attacked on the ground it might be - you know, he wants to be like Caesar's wife, not only be above suspicion, but seem to be above suspicion.

MR. NEARY: Would he not be?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, I think he would be, but I merely relay his feeling, his position as he has expressed it to me, because I put exactly that point to him.

But I feel, Sir, the government should do something on this. The sum of money involved is not terribly large, \$5,000. The minister is talking of saving \$5 million, \$2 million net. The government can spend \$250,000 on sending the Norma and Gladys around the world or wherever she is at and going to. I could list of any number. We can spend \$20,000 on a new car for the Premier. We can

Mr. Roberts.

spend \$30 or \$40, I will bet, having dinner with the minister and two or three of his colleagues over in Act III the other night. You know, we could do any number of things.

MR. MURPHY: One hundred thousand dollars for the Opposition office.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, and money well spent getting far better value for it than we ever got before.

MR. NEARY: And \$250,000 on the MacPherson property.

MR. ROBERTS: And \$250,000 whatever it is on whatever property the hon. gentleman - the MacPherson that is over here.

Ah, we could go through the estimates if we were allowed to, but, of course, we are not to be allowed to debate the estimates. We can waste \$3 million on Fisheries, with ministerial maladministration and - well, that is not parliamentary so I will not say it.

MR. MURPHY: Why not?

MR. ROBERTS: But let me say, Mr. Chairman -

MR. PATTERSON: You do not know a thing about the fisheries.

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman from Placentia East (Mr. Patterson) thinks I do not know a thing about the fisheries.

MR. PATTERSON: You do not know a thing.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Sir, that may be. Let me say simply, Sir, that let us have the debate here in the Committee. Let him press his colleagues who are trying to cover up the Fisheries scandals, and let us have the debate here in the Committee, and let him say what he wants, Mr. Chairman. I have the floor, Mr. Chairman. Let the hon. gentleman be quiet.

MR. PATTERSON: What rubbish!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, let the hon. gentleman be quiet, Sir.

MR. ROWE: Sit down!

MR. ROBERTS: He does not have the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, let him observe the rules.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. PATTERSON: What a red herring!

MR. ROWE: Sit down, boy!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please!

Whilst the hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor, and he does not wish to yield, other members are forbidden to comment except in a fashion that is acceptable and taken by the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The only red herrings involved here are the ones which the gentleman from Placentia East district (Mr. Patterson) tries to drag in.

MR. PATTERSON: Shut up and sit down!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, there he is again.

MR. ROWE: Sit down! Sit down!

MR. DOODY: You are not allowed to stand up.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, to a point of order, Sir.

MR. ROWE: Name him!

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. gentleman is defying a ruling Your Honour made. Your Honour directed him to sit down, and the hon. gentleman is then on his feet grabbing his microphone and saying he will not sit down. Well, Sir, surely he does not mean to defy the Chairman's ruling. Well in that case let him observe the Chairman's ruling. Let him be seated. Let him stay seated, and let him stay quiet until his time comes to speak in this debate and then, Sir, we will gladly hear him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

A point of order has been raised, and the hon. Leader of the Opposition has commented on it. He is, of course, correct in saying that if an hon. member has the floor no other member may rise and speak unless the hon. member having the floor wishes to yield and indicates his willingness to do so. So I would ask the hon. member for Placentia East (Mr. Patterson) if he would observe this ruling.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Now I am deadly serious about this. I think the minister's refusal, Sir, is one of the most despicable acts I have ever heard of, and it has nothing to do with politics. It has everything to do with what I believe to be the proper administration of the high office of the Minister of Health. The fact remains, Sir, that this minister will not even give \$10 a head to help one of the great experts in the world to look into a problem that we all admit, that the minister will admit, is a problem. He will not do that despite the fact that one of his former colleagues, at a time he was still a cabinet colleague, Mr. Barry, made a commitment in the terms I have expressed it. He will not help in any way. Well, Dr. Sellikof is coming anyway. I believe it is the 14th or 15th of June he is due to arrive. He is bringing fifteen or sixteen technicians and doctors with him. He has got the enthusiastic co-operation of the Medical School at the University and of the Boylen Hospital. He has got the help of everybody except the Minister of Health who obviously does not give - I was going to say, does not give two cents - does not give \$5,000 to help to find out what is happening at Baie Verte. Mr. Chairman, I think it is despicable. I think it is an abdication of the high responsibilities which the Minister of Health should take on, and I am only speaking of Baie Verte. I could speak of my friend's district, the gentleman from Menihek (Mr. Rousseau) and the situation in the iron ore operations in Western Labrador where we are beginning to get the cases now of silicosis of the men who worked in that plant. I am told there are twenty-seven in all of men who have been crippled in the chest, crippled in their pulmonary functions, their breathing functions. I have run into a number of them recently in the hospital in St. Anthony, men in their thirties who are condemned to a living death.

MR. ROUSSEAU: The first time Bill Parsons had the Minister of Health down here was in 1967.

MR. ROBERTS: That could well be. I was not the Minister of Health in 1967. It was probably the gentleman from St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie). He

Mr. Roberts.

became Minister of Health at some point in 1967, and then subsequently when the gentleman from St. John's West (Mr. Crosbie) left the cabinet then the present member for the district of Grand Bank (Mr. Hickman) became Minister of Health. I became minister in June 1969. If we want to go back through it, I carried on a continuing war with a number of officials and colleagues in other departments as to whose responsibility this was, and we have talked about that here in this House many times, because I think it is the Health Department that should take the responsibility, not Mines and Energy, and not Workmen's Compensation or Industrial Relations. It is the Department of Health that must take the lead in this matter, and that is why debating it on the Minister of Health's -

MR. COLLINS: That is your opinion.

MR. ROBERTS: It certainly is my opinion, Sir. Of course, it is my opinion. It is the opinion shared by anybody who has the least concern for it. It is not the Minister of Health's opinion, because he does not give a hoot. He could not care less, on the evidence he is putting out here, whether the men in Baie Verte are poisoned or not. It is of no concern to him on his acts, judging on his actions. He will not even give \$5,000. We can build a theatre in Gander, a lovely thing to have. We cannot find \$10 a man for 500 men to put down in Baie Verte, to help. It is only the least part of the study, and the minister hides behind the refuge. He can explode me by standing up and saying now, I am concerned, I will go to cabinet, and I will get the \$5,000. And let him do that instead of hiding behind this business, I have not heard directly from Dr. Sellikof. Of course, he has not. He has not been in touch with him. He has not done anything to help Dr. Sellikof. He has done everything he can to hinder this investigation. The minister wishes it would never come up, and that is why he is trying to hurt it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I have to remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition that his forty-five minutes has expired.

MR. ROBERTS: No, Mr. Chairman, I have ninety minutes, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, I have ninety minutes.

MR. NEARY: No!

MR. ROBERTS: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Not in Committee though.

MR. ROBERTS: Standing Order - yes, in Committee, I believe that to be correct, or Your Honour rules other - Standing Order 49 (a), "No member, except the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition shall speak for more than forty-five minutes at a time in any debate." And is it Standing Order 44, Your Honour reads it? From day to day that the rules of the Committee are those in the rules of the House. I have ninety minutes as of right on any matter when I am recognized by the Chair and so does the Premier. I think that is correct Your Honour, but if Your Honour wishes to rule on it - 49 (a) is the relevant order and then 44 (a) in turn. Does Your Honour wish to rule?

MR. NEARY: Not in Committee.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, yes on Committee. The rules of the House apply in Committee.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Perhaps I could read 49 (a) for the information of all members, 49 (a) and (b); 49(a) reads: "No member, except the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition or a Minister moving a government order and the member speaking in reply immediately after such Minister, or a member making a motion of "Non Confidence" in the government and a Minister replying thereto shall speak for more than forty-five minutes at any time in any debate." And 49(b): "The Premier and the Leader of the Opposition shall not be entitled to speak for more than ninety minutes at any time in any debate except where the Premier moves a government order or is replying to a motion of "Non Confidence" in the government or where the Leader of the Opposition speaks in reply immediately after a Minister has moved a government order or makes a motion of "Non Confidence" in the government. The interpretation

MR. CHAIRMAN:

that I would place on that order, that is 49 (b), is that the Leader of the Opposition is not entitled to speak for more than ninety minutes at any time in any debate.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is set forth with the exceptions as noted in that rule as Your Honour read it. Well, thank you, Sir. The point I was making is that the minister in my view has shown not just a lack of compassion or a lack of understanding or a lack of concern. I think, Sir, he has shown a positive wish to try to hide this problem, to try to sweep it under with pious platitudes. We heard him. I did not speak, Sir, until the minister had the opportunity to reply to what my friend and colleague said the other evening, Tuesday evening here in the Committee, and the minister replied and we had the same mouthwash, service from the lips out, lip service only that we had in the Committee last year when the gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) then representing Bell Island raised the matter.

MR. NEARY: The year before last.

MR. ROBERTS: Was it the year before last as well? I raised it, I know, on a number of occasions here in the health estimates in the Committee in years past. You know, always the same, "Oh well, we are setting up this and we setting up that." And now it turns out we have set up Dr. Colohan, an estimable civil servant and we have sent him around. We have probably spent \$5,000 or \$10,000 in furthering Dr. Colohan's professional knowledge and that is money well spent. Well let us spend \$5,000 now helping Dr. Sellikof's study because we will get an expert study then and cheap at the price.

I mean if it turns out that it is as Dr. Morgan suspected and as the Minister of Health says, if it turns out that there is this serious problem, Sir, you know, it is potentially a very, very grave situation. Any money we could spend now would be money well spent if it resulted in any degree in the mitigation of this potential

MR. ROBERTS:

threat to the health of the men in Baie Verte. Well, Sir, I am disgusted with the minister's conduct as a minister. The only way I am able to express it in the parliamentary sense is to move his salary be reduced. I do not think that has been done so far in the Committee this year but it is possible, as Your Honour knows, to move that a minister's salary be reduced. The minister's salaries as provided in the estimates are \$14,000 - is it \$14,487 the ministers are supposed to be getting? I will just look it up, Your Honour; \$14,784. Well accordingly, Sir, I move that subhead 1001-01 which is the one we are now debating be reduced by the amount of \$14,783 and that has the effect of reducing the minister's salary, Sir, from the amount which the minister requests for his own salary, \$14,784 to \$1.00. I have not worked out the totals but it would bring the total down to around \$40,000 for that subhead. But, you know, Your Honour has able and industrious clerks who are mathematical wizards and I am sure that they could work that out for you. If not I would get out my pencil and try to figure it out. So I move, Mr. Chairman, that the minister's salary be reduced to \$1.00. I do that not because -

MR. SIMMONS: You should make it fifty cents.

MR. ROBERTS: Oh no, \$1.00 is the traditional farthings damages. I do not do it because I desire to deprive the minister of his money or of his pay. I do it because it is the only effective way really that I can express the disgust and the feelings I have for the minister's performance on this question of the Baie Verte asbestosis and the miners at Baie Verte.

Now, Sir, I have said what I wish to say at this stage. If the motion is in order, and I believe it is, then it is debatable. No you do not need a seconder for a motion in Committee. But I move it and we can debate it and in due course it will be voted upon and the whip, I have no doubt, will have all of the government members here and it may well be that the minister will get his salary after all. But it will be only after he has defended his conduct to this Committee. And I hope he will defend it. The minister has a very

MR. ROBERTS:

weak-kneed habit of refusing to answer questions, of sitting hunched in his chair and just letting questions go over his head and ignoring them. Of course we cannot in Question Period insist that a question be answered. A minister, according to our rules, has the right to answer or the right not to answer and the Minister of Health often obtains or makes use of his right not to answer. Well, Sir, here in the Committee he does not have to answer.

MR. SIMMONS: It is not his fault they go over his head.

MR. ROBERTS: Well my colleague and friend from Burgeo-Bay D'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) says it is not his fault, the minister's fault that matters go over his head. I agree with that. I think that is a very apt comment. But, Sir, the minister, if he does not defend himself here in the Committee, will have to answer to any of us who wish to speak because of course we are all entitled to speak because there is no limit on a debate in the Committee.

Let me also say, Mr. Chairman, again that when we finish with this I propose to raise certain matters in connection with the Health Sciences Complex. There is a sum of \$8 million, \$9 million or \$10 million requested down below in the estimates on this and I would urge the minister to have the contracts here, because if he has not got them here then I will have to draw certain conclusions to the effect that he does not want them here and certain conclusions will flow from that. I am talking, Sir, of matters that are of the utmost seriousness and matters that go far beyond much of the stuff which is talked of in this Committee or in the House as a whole. I am talking of a very serious matter and I want to go at it because I believe I should go at it, but I intend to go at it responsibly and without trying to raise any matters other than the ones immediately in point, because the material which I have in my possession is very wide-ranging and touches upon many people and I do not want to do that. I want to touch only upon the matters that fall within the administration of the Health Minister.

MR. ROBERTS:

Sir, let me conclude by saying simply that I shall vote to reduce the minister's salary. I will do so regretably because I have no quarrel with the minister but I have every quarrel with his performance of office in this way. I think that the situation at Baie Verte, Sir, the government have ignored it time and time again and now the final insult, Sir, we have succeeded in getting an independent expert, a man of worldwide authority, and the minister has made no effort to get in touch with him despite the fact Dr. Sellikof's name was raised here in the Committee by me. Two or three years ago I read to the Committee a long letter which I had from Dr. Sellikof. I made copies of it available to the minister or to his predecessor and officials. The minister made no effort to do anything at all on it. He is trying to hush it up, sweep it under the rug, cover it up and wish that it goes away. I say, Sir, that is not good enough and that is why I remove the reduction of the minister's salary so that we can debate this issue and so that members of the Committee can express their opinion. In my opinion, Sir, the minister's actions have been far below that which we expect of a minister and I for one will vote to reduce his salary to show my displeasure and my disgust at his dereliction of duty.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please!

It has been moved that subhead 1001-01 be reduced by the amount of \$14,783. Is it the pleasure of the House that the said motion be adopted?

MR. WELLS: No, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. House Leader.

MR. WELLS: A point of order. There are members who wish to speak on the amendment.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. House Leader request the floor?

MR. WELLS: I was merely indicating to the Chairman that there are

MR. WELLS:

other members who wish to speak on this amendment.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, while I agree -

MR. LINDPICKAN: On a point of order.

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

MR. LINDPICKAN: Mr. Chairman, not to challenge Your Honour's decision to recognize the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) but is it not customary back through history that when dealing with the estimates if there is a substantial speech or sort of an enquiry or a question or something of that nature made and the minister stands in his place, he stands to respond, not because he stands to make a speech. But certainly a minister is not going to stand if he is intending that he wants to wait until other speeches have been made. I think this is a common thrust and I would like Your Honour to be cognizant of it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, to that point of order. Usually what happens in this hon. House is that members of the Opposition are allowed to make all the points so the minister can respond instead of having to pop up and down like a jack-in-the-box, respond to all the points that are made. That has been tradition.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He can if he wishes.

MR. NEARY: He can if he wishes but the Chairman will recognize the first speaker who stands in his place.

MR. BOODY: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman. The minister is the gentleman under assault at the particular time in the particular point and he has risen and indicated his desire to respond. My experience in this House has been that when a minister wants to respond to enquiries or to questions by the Opposition during the course of his estimates he is given that courtesy and he is recognized. That has been my experience here, Sir, and that has been what I have seen in the past. I think perhaps that is the tradition.

MR. LINDPICKAN: It is a custom if not a rule.

MR. F. POWE: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman. You know, there is nothing in the Standing Orders. They are obviously silent

MR. F. POWE:

on this. I have not come across anything in Beauchesne on it. The member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) did get to his feet first, and the minister got to his feet secondly and then I think another minister got to his feet. Now it just so happens that the Chairman recognized the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and it is as simple as that. There is no point of order at all before the floor,

Mr. P. Rowe:

and certainly there is no such thing as a point of courtesy. There is courtesy, but there is no such thing as a point of courtesy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. W. ROWE: There is courtesy, but there is no such thing as a parliamentary point of courtesy. And if the hon. member for LaPoile has been recognized, so be it.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. House Leader.

MR. WELLS: The Standing Orders are obviously silent on it. I think as hon. members on this side have pointed out as a matter of courtesy, especially when the minister is under fire in his estimates, other members at least allow the minister to stand up and speak. I think in Committee obviously the rule is that it is whomever Your Honour recognizes, and Your Honour has recognized the hon. member for LaPoile. On the other hand I would, as the minister is anxious to respond to the criticism that was levelled at him by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I would ask the member for LaPoile if he would perhaps give the minister an opportunity to speak.

MR. NEARY: Something could be worked out.

MR. WELLS: Well it is entirely between the Chair and the member for LaPoile.

MR. ROWE: I think what the hon. House Leader is asking for now is for the hon. member to yield.

MR. WELLS: In the circumstances I would ask the member to yield.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In that regard the point of order has been fully discussed. I believe the hon. House Leader is bringing up another point, which is his right, but I think that this indicates that we have gone beyond the point when we are discussing the point of order. The Chair can only go by the Standing Rules, of course, and I might read Rule 47 and 48, "Every member desiring to speak is to rise in his place, uncovered, and address himself to Mr. Speaker." And Rule 48: "When two or more members rise to speak, Mr. Speaker calls upon the member who first rose in his place!" and it continues on

MR. CHAIRMAN: with the rest of that ruling which does not particularly apply here. And of course in 44(a), "The Standing Rules of the House shall be observed in the Committee of the Whole House as far as may be applicable," and so on. So the Chair has recognized the hon. the member for LaPoile, and the hon. the Leader has the floor unless some other new point is raised.

MR. NEARY: I thank Your Honour for the ruling and I also thank -

MR. J. LUNDRIGAN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Perhaps it will help to clear up one thing in my mind. In the event, Your Honour, that there is a situation where a point of order has been raised and a decision like Your Honour has just rendered based on the small, little book of rules, that has been the practice here for a number of years, if that is the decision, is it traditional that we go back through precedent and custom and other kinds of bodies of rules in making a decision? I just wonder for my own guidance because being a new member in the Legislature I sort of find it very difficult sometimes to accommodate the very little, narrow, specific rule that is in the book here, and a broad body of custom and tradition and so on which we have. In other words if -

MR. SMALISWOOD: That is not covered in our rules.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Right! Well let me just go on, Your Honour. Certainly the last thing I would ever want to do would be challenge Your Honour's ruling which I know is the most out of order comment you could make. But let me just go on to say, for example, a custom which is a traditional custom, Your Honour, in every legislature, if Your Honour would be listening to me -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Questions cannot be asked of the Chair this is outside the practices of parliamentary procedure. The Chair is not in a position to answer questions. The Chair can

Mr. Chairman:

give rulings, of course, and the ruling that I have just given is clearly and unequivocally based upon the written Standing Orders and the rule applies and the hon. member has the floor unless some legitimate point of order or other point of order is raised.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am quite prepared to yield to my hon. friend, if my hon. friend wishes to defend himself against the serious charges that were made providing it is the understanding of the House that I can have the floor following the minister's remarks. I mean is that a generous - can that generally be understood?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: You are a gentleman, 'Steve'.

MR. NEARY: I am quite prepared to do it if we can have sort of an understanding that I will get the floor after, you know. Will that be all right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Okay, go ahead.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it agreeable to the House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, certainly I would wish to extend my thanks to the hon. member from LaPoile. I did not think I would have to be that quick on my feet to get the attention of the Chair and the attention of the House, because, Mr. Chairman, we just witnessed, in my opinion, one of the lowest, most politically partisan speech dealing with a most emotional and sensitive issue that ever was witnessed in this House or any other House in any other jurisdiction. I never thought, Mr. Chairman, that the Leader of the Opposition could get down to that level, granted it is a very important subject and it requires a lot of sane, knowledgeable, sensible discussion and debate. But after listening to what we just heard, Mr. Chairman, certainly goodness, you know, where are we going in this particular Legislature?

MR. COLLINS:

Now I will try and control myself, you know, not to fall into the same trend. The hon. Premier of this Province stood in his place in this House on Tuesday in response to questions about the Health Science Complex. I do not know if it was in response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition, but it was certainly in response to a question from the Opposition side of this House, and said that with regard to the Health Sciences Complex and the allegations which have been made, he said that this government had engaged the services of John R. Parsons Company, accountants, to monitor the financing periodically of the Health Sciences Complex. I am not sure he mentioned the Carbonear Complex or not, but certainly the same monitoring group were employed to do the same thing on the Carbonear Hospital. Numerous reports, Mr. Chairman, have been submitted to the government. In fact I believe they have been submitted to the Treasury Board on the basis of a report every three months. And the most recent report which summed the whole thing up was submitted to government some time ago. The Premier said that those reports are now being reviewed. And he also indicated, I believe, that they were being reviewed by officials of the Department of Finance - maybe it should be Treasury Board, but I think he used the word Finance - by the officials of the Department of Public Works and by officials of the Department of Health. And I will try and quote him. If I do not quote him properly it is because I have forgotten. But in essence of what he said or what he was trying to say was that those officials will get those reports together, and if in their view they think there is anything which should be looked into further, John R. Parsons will be requested to, you know, conduct his own study, his own inquiry into his own reports if he wants to, and be permitted to engage technicians or engineers or whatever to give government a good report, you know, over the years on those two -

MR. NEARY: Who is John R. Parsons?

MR. COLLINS: John R. Parsons is a Chartered Accountant firm.

MR. DOODY: A Chartered Accountant firm.

MR. H. COLLINS: A Chartered Accountant firm, a local -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Did you say, Chartered Accountant?

MR. DOODY: Yes, he is.

MR. H. COLLINS: I could not answer that, but my hon. colleague says he is.

And then if there appears to be any wrongdoing of any sort then appropriate measures will be taken. Mr. Chairman, that was my understanding of what the Premier said yesterday. And that is a commitment which the Premier of the Province made to this hon. House. And for the Leader of the Opposition to get up and infer that, you know, we are trying to hide something about the Health Sciences Complex, or indeed the Carbonear Hospital, is a little bit much when this statement was given and this commitment was given only a couple of days ago.

The Leader of the Opposition has been in government in this Province long enough, and supposedly he is knowledgeable enough of the governmental process to know, and I am not trying to evade the issue, to know that the Department of Public Works in any government is the department which goes out and gets work done. They enter into contracts, they monitor the contracts and so on and so forth. The fact that the cash or the money for any particular project appears in the Department of Health - it could appear in the Red Cross, it could appear in a school board - the fact that it appears in the Department of Health does not mean that I have got to have all of the contracts, that I have got to table it all, I have got to be knowledgeable to the extent of a carpenter and an engineer and a planner and an architect and all the others. The Leader of the Opposition knows this. And he also knows that if the Opposition are realistic and sensible, and really care about what they profess to care about, that the estimates of my colleague in Public Works will come up and they will have a chance to ask to have it all hang out as it were.

Mr. Chairman, what we have witnessed, as I said, is nothing but a cheap, political, partisan attack.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLINS: - playing on the emotions of the poorer people
in Baie Verte and St. Lawrence and Labrador City.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me deal with some of the other
allegations which the Leader of the Opposition has made.

MR. COLLINS:

He accuses me and the ministry and the government of callousness, of unawareness, of lack of thought or care or could not give two hoots - that is what he said- I could not give two hoots about the people in Baie Verte. Doctor Morgan, the hon. member read his report and I am glad he did, Doctor Morgan was engaged by the Steel Workers' Union. I am not sure if he was engaged at the international level or at the local level of Baie Verte. That is not important. He was engaged by the union to come to Baie Verte and do some work with regard to asbestosis and the dangers to the miners, and if asbestosis, in fact, if they could find any evidence that men's lungs would show that they were affected. Doctor Morgan's report was analyzed by my department, by my officials, and when I say by my officials I mean doctors, medical men. Doctor Colohan is, as I have said before, is a very knowledgeable man. We were not, Mr. Chairman, - without going into the report, I do not want to reflect on Doctor Morgan here today. I do not intend to fall into a trap which the Leader of the Opposition might have been setting. But Doctor Morgan is a human being the same as any other doctor. I might say and I will say that we were not too impressed with the report which was made by Doctor Morgan. A lot of the conclusions which were reached were based on interpretation of X-rays. One person, one doctor can interpret an X-ray. Another doctor can interpret the same X-ray and possibly come up with a different conclusion. One of the things which I think everybody might have agreed upon is the fact that the quality of the X-rays left something to be desired. If the quality of the X-rays left something to be desired, then it is very difficult for one to be sure that the interpretation placed on them might have been an accurate one.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Why -

MR. COLLINS: I would appreciate now if the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) would let me continue because I do not want -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Why is the quality poor?

MR. COLLINS: Whether it is the film or the machine or the person who took the X-rays, I am not sure. It could be either one of those three. But it was generally agreed by everybody that the quality of the X-rays left something to be desired.

Anyway, so much for Doctor Morgan's report. He made some very complimentary remarks, Mr. Chairman, with regard to what has been done in terms of miners' records and miners' X-rays and other types of medical records, made some very complimentary remarks about this government, complimentary remarks to which the Leader of the Opposition very conveniently did not allude. It is obvious he was trying to find the worst of everything to bring out to this Committee. If you are going to read a report, if any hon. member is going to read a report, Mr. Chairman, I do not know what the rules say but I believe that it is essential, if a report is going to be read, that the report be read and not sections of the report which are the ones which you make bonus points on in a debate. I think that is most unfair. But as I said, it is a report which was written by a doctor, a medical man who was engaged by a union. I do not intend at this time anyway to read that report or read the comments on it in this House.

With regard to Doctor Sellikof from New York, that great research university, Doctor Sellikof as far as we know is one of the most knowledgeable men on this sort of thing that we could find anywhere in the world. One thing should be made clear though, Mr. Chairman, and that is that Doctor Sellikof is a researcher. He is doing a job in Baie Verte on a research basis. I would not go so far as to say he has got no interest in the people of Baie Verte. I say I would not go so far as to say that. I am sure that he does have some interest in human beings everywhere. Otherwise he would not be doing research. But I think the main thrust, the main thrust of his work, the main reason for his work is in the research field.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Does he do diagnostic work in Baie Verte?

MR. COLLINS: Well, Doctor Sellikof is working on grants, research grants from foundations in the States, maybe from some of the State governments, maybe from the federal government in the States, I do not know. But he is doing research work based on research grants. Now we knew about this before my friend, the hon. member from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. T. Rideout), before he wrote me - the date I forget now; the Leader of the Opposition read the letter - he wrote us this letter suggesting that the government should consider making a financial contribution towards Doctor Sillikof's work in Baie Verte. I did not sit down and respond to that letter right away and say, "No!" That was discussed at several meetings of the people in the department, in Mines and Energy and others. I might say that I discussed it with my hon. friend from Baie Verte-White Bay prior to responding to it. We took the position, after talking with the company in Baie Verte and after discussing it with the unions in Baie Verte, since the unions had had their study and nobody wanted the government to get involved for fear of some type of influence - it is generally said when governments spend a few dollars that they want some input into what is going to be done with it and maybe influence the outcome of the report. So we kept away from that - when we found out that the company was or it appeared to us to be the main ones involved in this, well let the company bloody well pay the shot.

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLINS: Let the company pay the shot in Baie Verte. If they owe to miners in Baie Verte nothing else, they certainly owe them and can well afford to pay Doctor Sellikof whatever it takes for him to come here and do this job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLINS: We considered that. Certainly we will put money in it. But we looked at the other side of the coin and we said, "If we do put money in it and the report comes out and it is not what the people in Baie Verte want,

MR. COLLINS:

it is not what the unions would expect, it is not what the Leader of the Opposition might like to see, then, well, what could you expect? The government funded this report and you know government reports are always sort of biased towards the government's position." So we decided, Mr. Chairman, to stay away from it. But at the same time we have told the company in Baie Verte, we have had numerous consultations with Doctor Black at the Boylen Hospital in Baie Verte, that every co-operation in this world which we can provide we will provide, everything. We will send Doctor Colohan down. We will send down Doctor Knowling. We will bring them in here and let them go over all the X-rays down on Harvey Road - anything we can do, the limit. For God's sake let us get this out and see what it is all about. We would hope that when Doctor Sellikof comes in that he will do a good report and be able to show us once and for all if there is problem in Baie Verte; if there is, this is what has got to be done about it. But we stayed away from it deliberately because we do not want it to appear as if he might be trying to influence the final outcome or recommendations of the report. I think, Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, that is a very valid reason.

Now after I wrote the letter to the member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) I talked with him I would say two or three times - it might have been more than that - two or three times. I would hope that what has happened here today will not influence his and my relationship. It certainly will not as far as I am concerned, there is no doubt about that. But I did talk with him on two or three occasions and I said, "Look while we have turned this down it does not mean that we will not continue to consider it and reconsider it." When Doctor Sellikof and his staff - I understand he is bringing a research staff with him - when they come in here and they see what we are offering them, if it is the considered opinion of people then that he might have bitten off a little bit more than he can chew, his research funds have run out and the company will not give him anymore and the unions, and we think that he might need a bit more.

MR. COLLIER:

We will reconsider it, which we will do. But we do not rush madly in supporting a researcher and a research team from a rich university in the United States who are coming down here to do some research work. Even though it is for the benefit of the people down there, I know that, but we think that the company, and the company have had a lot of input here, should reach down and find a few dollars. I would say that the company in Baie Verte can find a few dollars probably a little bit easier than the poor, old Minister of Health in the Province of Newfoundland today can find.

Mr. Chairman, once again I think it is a terrible display, a pitiful display on the part of the Leader of the Opposition, a man whom the people of Newfoundland look at as the alternative as long as he is the Leader of the Opposition, to be so partisan and to be so spiteful almost. If that is unparliamentary I will take it back. But certainly it was a terrible display and one which I am disgusted with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, it is rather unfortunate indeed that the matter, the serious matter of the threat of asbestosis among the miners at Baie Verte has become the subject of a political controversy. This, Mr. Chairman, is unfortunate and tragic indeed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Sir, no matter how much you want to criticize a minister of the Crown, Sir, whether you think that minister is stupid, lazy, incompetent, inept, careless, the minister, no matter how much you want to attack him, I think the minister deserves a little courtesy from all members of the House no matter how much you want to zero in on his incompetence.

MR. NEARY:

And in this particular instance, Sir, I was rather taken aback, although I agree with many of the statements that were made by the Leader of the Opposition. I thought that his approach in this particular matter should have and could have been more statesmanlike. Because, Sir, this is a matter that should be held above partisan politics. It is a serious matter. It is a matter that the government—not only the government—that this House has to come to grips with. It is a matter that has been raised in this House, Sir, as far back as two and a half years ago.

Having originated from a mining community myself, I am supersensitive to the things that go on in mining communities. I worked for a mining company myself for twenty-one years and I am always anxious to learn and to hear about things that go on in other mining communities, disasters of any kind, close downs and what have you. I suppose the community that I was born and raised in, we had it all. I suspected for years on Bell Island that we had cases of silicosis, but it could never be proven. The X-rays will not show up silicosis. Unless you are an expert in that particular field and do a study of it, it is very, very difficult to detect a case of silicosis. They can do it today with the new technology and the new techniques and so forth that they have.

But, Sir, the Baie Verte situation has been raised as far back as I would say over two years ago, almost two and a half years ago. I think I was one of the first members to bring that matter before the attention of this hon. House. I must confess that I am as disappointed as the Leader of the Opposition that more attention has not been paid to this problem. I am amazed and surprised that the member for the district, the newly elected member for that district, waited for five months after he was elected before the hon. member wrote a letter to the Minister of Health. The hon. member was elected back in September—when was it? —

MR. DOODY: September 16.

MR. NEARY: — September 16 and did not see fit to write the minister

MR. NEARY:

until March 25, 1976. That is September, October, November, December, January, February, March, over six months.

MR. SIMMONS: Just in time for the estimates.

MR. NEARY: Just in time for the estimates, over six months. Because, Mr. Chairman, I had brought the matter to the attention of the hon. whip of the hon. member's party because I had people in Baie Verte approaching me and asking me if I could intervene in this matter. I said, "Well, I do not want to become involved in a matter concerning another member's district but if I have to I will." I told the party whip on at least three occasions to tell the member for Baie Verte to either move or get off the pot, that if he did not do it that I intended to do something about it because I realized how serious this matter was. These people who approached me were not just the ordinary rank and file either, Mr. Chairman. They were people in very high positions in Baie Verte who were very frustrated because of the lack of activity on the part of the various government departments that were involved.

So, Sir, I hope, I sincerely hope, that the result of the Leader of the Opposition's attack, vicious attack on the Minister of Health will not mean now that there is going to be a stand-off, that both sides are going to dig in their heels and that one side or the other is going to get stubborn and it is going to slow down the intensity of the investigation that has to be done in the community of Baie Verte.

Mr. Chairman, in my opinion the Minister of Health was very, very weak in his argument, was very weak in his response to the accusations and the charges that were made by the Leader of the Opposition. With all due respect to the hon. gentleman, Sir, as a member of this House I was not thoroughly convinced, I do not think any member of the House was convinced, that the minister and the government are doing everything in their power to try to resolve this most serious problem that involves so many lives of so many Newfoundlanders.

One thing I do agree with the minister on, though, is the fact that that company down there in Baie Verte should be the one to

MR. NEARY:

foot the bill. If Dr. Sellikof thinks he is going to get his hands dirtied by accepting money from that company, then let the government collect the money and pass it over to Dr. Sellikof, if he does not want to take it directly from the company. As long as the job is done, that is the main thing. It does not make any difference how it is done as long as the expenses are paid. I presume that is all the gentleman is interested in; he is a researcher and he cannot afford to come in here and set up laboratories and employ all the backup staff that he needs and pay for all the X-rays and so forth and transportation and what have you. Obviously the gentleman does not have the money to do that.

I think myself, Sir, that it is the company that should foot the bill. If they refuse to do it then the government should grab them by the throat. We in this House should have the courage to pass legislation to compel the company to put money into the public treasury for research purposes. They are the ones who are ripping off. They are making the profit down there. Keep the thing above politics, not attack the minister or the government because they refuse to put a paltry \$5,000 into this research project. I do not think that is the point at all. It is a good point to attack the government on if you are inclined that way, but I am more inclined to see the project get underway.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that if Dr. Sellikof is not the best in the world, if he is not the best that can be had in the world, then the government should look for the best in the world and bring the research team to Newfoundland if he is not the best. If he is the best, good. If he is not the best, get the best. The people of Baie Verte, the workers down there deserve the best. Get the best. If the government has to lash out a few thousand dollars at this moment, recover it from the mining company. Do not let them get off scot-free. They are laughing all the way to the bank while the men down there, their lives may be in danger. Do not turn around and start attacking the politicians!

MR. SMALLWOOD: Lives are in danger.

MR. NEARY: Are in danger! Attacking the politicians and making partisan politics out of it! It is not a partisan political issue.

I am just as strong in my condemnation of the government for dragging its feet in this particular matter. I have been at it for two and a half years. I have raised it periodically. I have raised it every year during the estimates.

MR. DOODY: It was raised in 1967.

MR. NEARY: 1967 the minister says? No!

MR. DOODY: Not according to Bill Parsons. The problem was first raised according to Parsons, in -

MR. ROUSSEAU: Labrador City.

MR. NEARY: That is right. I am not claiming the credit that I was the one who originated the movement to have something done about the asbestosis and the silicosis, but I was one of the first ones to raise it in this House. I had visits from Mr. Parsons, by the way, in connection with this matter years ago. Mr. Parsons and I are very close friends and old ex-union - I am an ex-union man - so I had many a discussion with Mr. Parsons about this.

But, Sir, the fact remains that something has to be done about it. Not enough is being done. Something is being done. I realize something is being done. I cannot say that the minister does not give a hoot because that would not be true. The minister is a Newfoundlander. I am sure he is a compassionate gentleman. He is a red-blooded Newfoundlander like myself and I am sure that the minister may think that he is doing everything possible to try to resolve this problem. But in my opinion, Sir, the government is not moving as swiftly as I would like to see them move.

MR. MURPHY: What can we do?

MR. NEARY: Go out. Hire -

MR. MURPHY: We have got more reports on environment --

MR. NEARY: Forget the reports. We had reports on St. Lawrence. Forget reports. Go out and hire the best team in the world that the government can find. Do not delay another day. Start looking tonight. Find the best team of experts on asbestosis in the world and invite them to come to Newfoundland, and pay them if necessary. If you have to get it out of the company, get it out of them. That is the thing to do. Let us just not slouch and sit back and hope that this little programme that is underway now is going to solve the problem because I do not think it is.

That is probably what the Leader of the Opposition, that was the main thrust of his criticism. I am inclined to agree with him. I am strong in my condemnation of the fact that not enough is being done. I would like to see more done. The minister did not convince me in his argument when he was replying to the Leader of the Opposition that the government is doing enough. But I am not going to turn it into a political issue. I hope that every member of this House will look upon it as a humanitarian issue, as an issue that involves the lives of a large number of our fellow Newfoundlanders. Let us as a House, not as a political party, as a House -- look, Mr. Chairman, we have the authority, we have the power in this House that if that company does not fork over the money that is necessary to carry out the research then let the House force the company to put so much money in the public treasury for research purposes to try to save the lives of these people who are working in Baie Verte.

You know, it is a funny thing, Mr. Chairman, I hear all kinds of arguments, I have over the years, about Newfoundlanders being lazy. Well, Sir, I hope nobody else in this world will ever say that to me when I look at the men who work down in the mine in St. Lawrence whose lives are endangered, the men who work in Baie Verte. They know they are exposed to asbestosis which is a killer, a disease that could kill them. You have the men working in the mill in Labrador City in dust and dirt. We already have evidence of silicosis. We have

MR. NEAPY:

men working in the mine in Buchans where there is evidence of silicosis. Yet you hear people say, "Oh, Newfoundlanders are too lazy to work." They are kind of lazy to work alright when they will go out and work and risk their lives. Does that make them too lazy to work? But anyway, Sir, I hope that this will not be a knock-them-down, drag-them-out political fight, that I hope that the government now has gotten the message. If we have to go public on it, Sir, well let us go public.

I would say to the member for Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout) if he wants my advice - and maybe he does not - I think he owes it to the people in the community of Baie Verte, which is probably the largest community in his district, he owes it to these people to go public if he has to. It is not the first time that I have had to resort to the court of public opinion, and I will do it again if I have to, and I will do it in the case of Baie Verte if I have to. Sometimes you have to resort to the court of public opinion in order to get government, to get ministers to move.

This House is bogged down in legalistic wrangling and red tape and infighting and very, very, very seldom is there anything of any substantial nature done in the interests of the ordinary people of this Province, and in this case the people of Baie Verte. Let the government bring in some proposals involving that company if they have to. And J.C.C., I would not have any hesitation at all to wack a few dollars out of them to put into a fund to do some research.

MR. ROUSSEAU: They have given \$4.5 million this year.

MR. NEAPY: \$4.5 million this year for research purposes?

MR. ROUSSEAU: Dust control and everything else.

MR. NEAPY: Dust control. I am talking about research on the people to see if the dust is affecting their lungs and their respiratory tracts and their chests.

MR. ROUSSEAU: They have a full-time technician up there to check dust levels and things like that.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe they have. Maybe they are doing everything they can.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to get off that -

MR. DOODY: How long did the hon. member work underground?

MR. NEARY: Not very long. I did not actually work digging out ore but I was underground a good many times.

MR. HICKMAN: Never in your life, probably.

MR. NEARY: Oh, Mr. Chairman I was down underground.

MR. DOODY: I must say it did not affect your lungs at all.

MR. NEARY: Well I do not know because it is something you never know until you start to get older. How many people on Bell Island today have emphysema?

MR. DOODY: A lot of them.

MR. NEARY: A lot of them.

MR. DOODY: Yes, but that is not down underground.

MR. NEARY: You know, Mr. Chairman, you can get silicosis on the surface from the stock piles. You do not have to work underground at Baie Verte to get asbestosis.

MR. DOODY: You could not have worked long underground in the mines.

MR. NEARY: There are times when the minister can be funny and there are times not to be funny. This is one of these occasions when it is a serious subject and not a time to be witty or funny. So I hope, Sir, that the government has now gotten the message. No doubt we will hear from the member for Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout), because now by bringing it up in this House we are now going public. I would suggest to the member that he continue, keep the pressure on outside and inside the House and go public if you have to. Do not apologize for having to go public on an issue where there are so many lives involved.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to get around to the matter of the Health Science Complex and Scrivener. Well, Sir, I must say that I nearly fell off my seat today when I heard the Leader of the Opposition mention Scrivener and the Health Sciences Complex. I have only been at that now for over two years, when I was in the caucus,

MR. NEARY:

when I was outside the caucus and I could not get a rise out of him, he could not care less. So today, Sir, I welcome the Leader of the Opposition aboard for the first time. That is his first mention I believe of the Health Sciences Complex and Scrivener. I am only two years now in this House, a voice crying in the wilderness, two and a half years I believe trying to get an investigation into the reports of skulduggery, kickbacks and under the table deals that we have heard so much about over at the Health Science Complex and that we have been hearing about for over two years, almost two and a half years. So I welcome the Leader of the Opposition's support for the first time. Now if I could only get his support, if I would only be lucky enough to get his support to have Andy Crosbie and his crowd investigated, then I will have the hon. member converted in connection with the Summer Games and the awarding of contracts and the purchase of the MacPherson land. If I could once convert the Leader of the Opposition around to that way of thinking, then I would say, Sir, that my track record would be almost perfect. But I have finally got the Leader of the Opposition to come around to my way of thinking on the Health Science Complex after two and a half years belting away, question after question, statement after statement outside of the House, inside of the House when the leader was there like a dummy. I finally got him around and I suppose if we ever get an enquiry you would be able to call it the Neary Enquiry.

I am not quite satisfied, Sir, with the statement that was made in the House the other day by the hon. the Premier. The hon. the Premier said he was going to set up a team of officials to look into various and sundry matters in connection with the Health Science Complex. I would say this is only a source of embarrassment to the officials of the various departments, that the terms of reference will not be wide-ranging enough for them to look for the things that need to be looked for, that they will not hold public hearings so that people can make representation, that their work will be rather restricted and

MR. NEARY:

limited indeed, Sir. I would have felt much more happy about it had the hon. the Premier told the House that the Auditor General's department was involved.

PREMIER MOORES: He is always involved.

MR. NEARY: No, the Auditor General's department is not always involved. But if the Auditor General's department had been involved I would have felt much more happy about it. I do not suppose at the moment there is very much we can do about it because the minister, although the money for the Health Science Complex is in the estimates actually it is the Minister of Public Works who calls the tenders and awards the contracts. In this

Mr. Neary:

particular case, there were very few tenders called. And that was one of my big complaints right from the beginning. A lot of the work was a continuation of contracts that had already been awarded.

And so, Mr. Chairman, we are going to have this investigation done by a group of officials of the three departments that are involved, but, in my opinion, Sir, that is not sufficient. In my opinion, it is not sufficient even though the Premier went as far the other day I believe to assure the House that if the officials uncovered anything of an unsavoury nature of anything that was suspect that the hon. Premier would immediately call in the police. Well that was somewhat reassuring, but I doubt very much if a group of civil servants, Sir, who can be dictated to by the ministers and by the government, I doubt if they can, if their terms of reference will allow them to uncover anything of a suspicious nature that needs to be investigated by the police. Maybe they will - I do not know - maybe they will. I am not interested, Sir, in a with hunt at the present time, at this particular point in time. I am not interested in going on a muckraking spree. But I have in my possession probably the same document that the Leader of the Opposition has in his possession that raises a lot of questions that need to be answered. I have already myself - I did not wait for the moment to come into this hon. House to wait for the estimates to be brought up. And I was not looking for any headlines, I did not try to steal any headlines, I was acting in a responsible way - I have already taken this matter up with various members of the government including the hon. Premier, and the hon. Minister of Finance can verify this, and the hon. Minister of Public Works and Services, and the Acting Minister of Public Works and Services. And I have held a good many discussions. At the moment I am satisfied; at this point in time I am satisfied that the various ministers concerned and the hon. Premier and the Cabinet will take whatever appropriate action is necessary to clear up all these reports and all these accusations and all these charges that have been made. I think I would be most irresponsible if I had come out with the whole thing and named names, and had people's characters

Mr. Neary:

assassinated without making the administration, and the various people in the administration aware of the fact that, in my opinion, some action, for their own sake, and for their own protection, because there are some serious charges made against various members of the administration, and against people outside of the House who would not be here to defend themselves.

So the first step, as far as I can see, the first step in dealing with my recommendations, with my request has already been taken. And rather than - what shall I say? - rather than get into a full-scale muckraking spree at the moment I will just wait and see just how sincere the government are in trying to get to the bottom of these serious charges, allegations, accusations, and reports of skulduggery, kickbacks and extortion - that is a pretty strong word - just how sincere and how serious the government are in getting to the root of these matters. Because they are, Mr. Chairman, very, very serious matters.

Sir, maybe all of the reports that we hear, maybe they are not all true, and I have no doubt but they are not all true. But there may be an element of truth in some of the statements, in some of the charges and some of the allegations that have been made. There may be some truth into some of these statements. So therefore we have to get the truth. We have to get the truth about this matter out into the open. I do not think the government, I do not think the ministers want to live under this. They have existed under it now for a year and a half, a couple of years, and I do not think they want to continue to have this hanging over their head any longer.

And as I say, Sir, I have taken the appropriate steps as a responsible Newfoundlander, as an elected representative of the House I have taken appropriated measures to deal with this matter. And I am quite prepared to wait for a week or a couple of weeks or if necessary longer just to see how the administration will deal with this most serious matter. And if they deal with it in a way to my satisfaction, and to the satisfaction I imagine of the other members of

Mr. Neary:

the House, the members of their own caucus, then I would say that it will be job well done. But there are a number of these documents floating around, there are so many floating around they are almost a bestseller. And I do know, and I have had conversations with some of the principals who are named in that document, and I can tell this hon. House that the other side of the coin in a lot of cases is much different than some of the statements that are made in this particular document. And I have had a three hour discussion with one of the principals named in the document who gave me his side of the story that sounded very plausible indeed. Whether or not it is true I cannot say, I cannot say for sure. But I am quite prepared to wait and see. I am not going to today in this hon. House, the House will be sitting for another month or so, and maybe the time will come when we will have to get the whole thing on the table of the House, but I do not think it is the proper thing to do today, because I have taken four steps myself, I have taken four steps to deal with these very serious charges. And I think that I have done my duty as an elected representative of the people. And I have met with the head of the administration and at least three of his ministers in this particular matter, and I know they are very concerned and they realize how serious the situation is, and I hope that they will deal with it and take the appropriate action and see that justice is done in this particular case.

Now, Mr. Chairman, before I finish my remarks there are a couple of questions that I want to put to the Minister of Health myself. And one has to do, Sir, with -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker has to come back to the Chair by 5:00 o'clock to announce the late show and I move that the Committee rise and report.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is moved that the Committee rise and report progress; all in favour "Aye", contrary "Nay", carried.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Chairman of the Committee of Supply reports that they have considered the matters to them referred, have made some progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted.

On motion Committee report to sit again presently.

Now I shall inform hon. members of the three matters which will be debated commencing at 5:30, I have notice of three, and they were submitted to me in the order in which I read them, and in the order in which they will be called at 5:30. The first one from the hon. member from LaPoile arises from a question to the hon. Minister without Portfolio, and it is on the subject matter of the purchase of property for the use of the Summer Games in the construction of an aquarena. The second matter is from the hon. member for St. John's East arising from a question asked the hon. Minister of Finance and deals with the subject matter the responsibility of the Provincial Government for pensionable service of World War II veterans who transferred to the service of the Government of Canada in 1949. And the third is from the hon. member for Buchans-Windsor (Mr. Flight) arising from a question asked to the hon. Minister for Transportation and Communications with respect to the fatal accident on the Trans-Canada Highway in the Grand Falls area.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Your Honour, I believe I now have forty-five minutes again according to the rules.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

MR. NEARY: Yes, that is so. That is so.

AN HON. MEMBER: Well I think we should have a ruling on it.

MR. NEARY: Well we had a ruling the other day and the ruling was that -

MR. DOODY: That ruling upheld the member's stand.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. MURPHY: New order of business.

MR. NEARY: New order of business.

MR. ROBERTS: We have only got thirty.

MR. NEARY: Well, thirty minutes. So, Your Honour, I want to thank Your Honour's predecessor for a remark that he made earlier when he referred to me as the leader, the leader from LaPoile, Your Honour's predecessor. So I wish Your Honour would send me along the salary that goes with that. But, Sir, before I get off the Health Sciences Complex and Schivener and so forth, I do hope that the government and the ministers will table the contracts because I have been two and a half years now trying to get the contracts tabled, table the contracts, tell us if public tenders were called and if the contracts were awarded to the lowest bidder in all cases and so forth and so on. Just tell the House everything in connection with these public tenders and with the contracts involved in the Health Science Complex.

MR. DOODY: Let it all hang out.

MR. NEARY: Let it all hang out and let the chips fall where they may. So I look forward, Mr. Chairman, whether it is in this debate, whether it is under the Minister of Health estimates or the acting Minister of Public Works and Services, wherever we get it I hope that the contracts will be tabled. But, Sir, I want to remind the House that when the Health Science

MR. NEARY:

Complex started, when the construction started, it was started under the former administration. Scrivener came into Newfoundland much to my chagrin and started to put up the steel and started to construct that Health Science Complex without an agreement, without an agreement with the Province.

MR. DOODY: You were a minister.

MR. NEARY: I was a minister and I was disgusted and -

MR. DOODY: And you resigned?

MR. NEARY: No, I did not resign but I was browned off. Here they were over there. I think it is the first time in Newfoundland's history that an outside independent firm was brought into manage a project. That was the first time. I remember the minister of the day boasting about the fact that this - and the Deputy Minister who later ran himself in politics - boasting about the fact that this was going to save the Province hundreds upon hundreds of thousands of dollars. They were over there, I suppose, for almost a year without a contract erecting steel. I remember one day -

MR. DOODY: They had to do it several times.

MR. NEARY: Yes, I remember one day I went out front of this building here and there was a gentleman down there with a brief case waiting for a lift to the airport. I came along and I said, "You seem to be anxious, in a hurry," I said, "Could I give you a lift somewhere?" He said, "Well, I have to catch a plane in about ten minutes, no taxis and I want to get to the airport." Well I said, "Get in and I will take you down." This happened to be the project manager, Mr. H. Harvey Self -

MR. DOODY: One of your reliable sources.

MR. NEARY: - happened to be the gentleman's name, H. Harvey Self - yes, one of my usual reliable sources of information. But I never had a word with the gentleman after. I drove him to the airport. He sent me a note of thanks.

MR. DOODY: Once was all he could stand with you.

MR. NEARY: No, he did not know who I was, as a matter of fact. Mr. H.

MR. NEARY:

Harvey Self, who was the head of Scrivener Newfoundland Limited, did not know who I was.

AN HON. MEMBER: Was he new to the game?

MR. NEARY: Well probably that had only been his first or second visit to Newfoundland. But he was ever grateful to me for taking him to the airport. When I got him down I gave him my name and -

MR. DOODY: The whole population was grateful.

MR. NEARY: Well it is too bad he did not stay up there, that is all I can say. I had a note from the gentleman telling me how much he appreciated the lift to the airport. Of course I have heard the name of the hon. gentleman several times since then in his capacity as the Chairman, I believe, of Scrivener Newfoundland Limited. But there are a lot of questions, Sir, that need to be answered about this project and probably that is one of them. How long did they go on over there without a contract? It was partially our fault. I do not know why we did not sign a contract with them, whether we were so anxious to get the project off the ground or not. I do not know the reason for it. Perhaps my hon. friend, the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) knows the reason. But they were there for how long?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Indeed, I have forgotten.

MR. NEARY: Yes, well maybe the member has forgotten. But how long were they there without a contract? Were they there a year, a year and a half?

MR. ROUSSEAU: The contract was changed in 1974.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I know who their local sponsor was?

MR. NEARY: Who was the local sponsor? I beg your pardon?

MR. ROUSSEAU: A year, a year and a half without one.

MR. NEARY: They were there over a year. I understand that -

MR. ROUSSEAU: That was changed in early 1974.

MR. NEARY: Yes, and I understand that they were recommended highly, recommended by a gentleman in this Province by the name of Mr. Andrew Crosbie. I do not know whether he sponsored them but he certainly highly recommended

MR. NEARY:

the outfit as the project managers. But that was rather tragic and unfortunate that they got off to a bad start. Of course, we have been hearing reports about the thing ever since. I beg your pardon?

MR. MURPHY: We have been trying to correct it.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe. That is what I want to find out. Maybe the hon. ministers and the hon. members have been trying to correct it. We went out in 1972. I do not think there was an agreement with them then. I think the agreement was probably negotiated sometime in 1972 or 1973. There was an agreement when the administration - I beg your pardon?

MR. DOODY: There was no formal agreement.

MR. NEARY: No, there was no formal agreement when the administration took over.

MR. DOODY: They had the big one underway.

MR. NEARY: That is right. So the agreement had to be then negotiated. It is almost like the member for St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) says about Quebec, about negotiating with Quebec, that the administration was then delivered into the hands of Scrivener. They were at the mercy of Scrivener.

AN HON. MEMBER: Something like trying to storm the gates.

MR. NEARY: Well that is right. Here was this thing going up and no contract. I do not know, as I say, Mr. Speaker, why there was not a contract. Perhaps the acting Minister of Public Works and Services or the Minister of Health can tell us. But anyway there have been all kinds of reports since then of kickbacks and skulduggery and under the table deals, and God only knows what, people building houses. You know they are so outrageous. Some of the statements are so outrageous, Sir, that even I do not believe them. I do not believe - no, Sir, I do not! - some of the things that I have heard are absolutely outrageous. I find it very difficult to believe many of the things that I have heard and seen and read. So in one way I am glad that the administration is going to have it looked into. But that is not the kind of an investigation that I would like to see. I hope that these civil servants will not be restricted in any way, shape or form, that the -

MR. DOODY: We are hiring outside firms too.

MR. NEARY: Well I did not know that.

MR. DOODY: The hon. minister mentioned that.

MR. NEARY: Oh yes, that is Parsons, the accountants. But then, of course, it all depends on what their terms of reference are. No doubt they will be able to tell the House, the committee why the cost escalated so greatly over there. It only involves the Health Science Complex. I was hoping, Sir, that the Carbonear Hospital would also be included.

MR. DOODY: Maybe it will be. Maybe it will be.

MR. NEARY: Well can the minister give us some assurance. I know the minister cannot speak for the administration. But will the minister indicate some way, shape or form that Carbonear may be included in the -

MR. DOODY: Let us say, "It is consumation devoutly to be wished."

MR. NEARY: I see. Very good. Well I am certainly glad -

MR. SMALLWOOD: For a hospital to go \$6 million to \$14 million or \$15 million?

MR. NEARY: That is right. So there are a lot of questions that have to be answered. Now, Sir, I want to get back to Health itself for a while. I want to find out from the minister, although we did a little prying and probing the other day, to try to find out how many hospital beds are going to be closed, where the hospital beds are going to be closed. I do not recall the minister giving the House an answer, at least that satisfied me. The minister, I believe, indicated there are going to be no hospital beds closed. I beg your pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Why can we not find out?

MR. NEARY: The minister cannot give it. The minister is still consulting. Well, Sir, how come that I hear out in the street that St. Clare's are going to close ten beds, the Grace are going to close ten beds? The Central Newfoundland Hospital, the workers out there are uptight because they are going to close twenty-odd beds.

MR. DOODY: How can the minister tell you what you hear on the street.

MR. NEARY: What? Mr. Chairman, obviously St. Clare's and the Grace have been told how many beds they are going to have to close.

MR. H. COLLINS: Nobody has been told.

MR. NEARY: Nobody has been told?

MR. DOODY: No!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, is the minister telling me and telling the Committee at this moment that St. Clare's Hospital do not know how many beds they are going to have to close?

MR. DOODY: No, they have not been told.

MR. NEARY: They have not been told! Well, their staff has certainly been told if they have not been told.

MR. H. COLLINS: I do not think the hon. member was listening in so I will repeat it.

MR. NEARY: I heard what the hon. minister said the other day. He is meeting with this one and he is meeting with that organization and this. But, Sir, the Grace Hospital at this moment is in the process of closing beds I am told.

MR. H. COLLINS: That is wrong.

MR. NEARY: Wrong? Well, okay, let the minister tell me I am wrong. St. Clare's Hospital is in the process of closing beds I am told by my usual reliable source of information. Central Newfoundland Hospital, workers say there are going to be layoffs because beds are going to be closed.

MR. DOODY: It will certainly help the budgetary position, but I do not think -

MR. NEARY: Well will somebody tell me if it is true or false? All I want is a simple true or false. Is it true or false that there are going to be beds closed in St. Clare's, the Grace, the General and in Central Newfoundland, true or false? And in Western Memorial? Is it true or false? I only just want a simple answer. Look, I will stop talking about it. I will get off the subject.

MR. H. COLLINS: True or false? If you stoop to it, it is not going to mean very much.

MR. NEARY: Are there beds going to be closed in St. Clare's, the Grace, the General, Central Newfoundland, Western Newfoundland, a simple yes or no.

MR. H. COLLINS: When I respond I will tell you.

MR. NEARY: A simple, yes or not.

MR. H. COLLINS: There is no such simple answer.

MR. NEARY: There is no such simple answer. Well there is a case, Sir, where the minister is being evasive and will not give us a straight answer. Because, Mr. Chairman, I understand that these hospitals are taking steps, are in the process of closing beds because of budgetary restraints, belt-tightening and cut-back, and the minister tells us he does not know about it.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to also find out from the minister if there is a surplus of nurses in this Province at the present time. I asked the minister the other day to indicate if there were any large numbers of applications originating from the Province of Ontario where a couple of thousand beds have closed and nurses are being laid off, and there is a surplus of nurses in Ontario right now, and they are desperate for employment, looking for jobs, and I asked the minister if there were any applications from these nurses originating in Ontario coming into Newfoundland, and the minister told me, no.

MR. H. COLLINS: No, I did not respond to that at all.

MR. NEARY: The minister told me, no, Sir. The minister says, he did not respond. Well, Sir, you know, I do not want to send for Hansard, but the minister told me, no. And I have done a little research since -

MR. H. COLLINS: I did not respond to whether there was a shortage of nurses or a surplus of nurses. I did respond to the fact that there were no applications to my knowledge received from nurses in Ontario.

MR. NEARY: Well can the minister respond now?

MR. H. COLLINS: There could have been applications gone to Grand Falls and Corner Brook and Happy Valley - Goose Bay which, you know, they would apply to the hospitals for which I might not or would not know about, of course.

MR. NEARY: Well then why did the minister say, no, when he did not know?

MR. DOODY: He said, "Not to his knowledge."

MR. NEARY: The minister did not say, "Not to his knowledge." He is not as cute as the Minister of Finance who would give a wishy-washy statement and, you know, would not back himself in the corner. The Minister of Health said, "No!" And he did not say, no, not to my knowledge, not like the Minister of Finance who can figure-skate on thin ice better than anybody I ever saw.

MR. COLLINS: He is fifteen cute.

MR. DOODY: That is not easy on one foot, is it?

MR. NEARY: No, that is right.

But the minister told me point blank, no.

Well my research indicates that a large number of applications are coming into Newfoundland from nurses in Ontario -

MR. COLLINS: They could be to the hospitals.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

- who are unemployed, and who are looking for work, desperate for jobs now.

And that leads me to my next point, Sir -

MR. COLLINS: Burgeo.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe all over Newfoundland. I do not know. I am not worried about Burgeo.

MR. COLLINS: You are not.

MR. WHITE: They got a good member.

MR. NEARY: They got a good member in Burgeo.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: But, Sir, what I want to find out from the minister now is: How many graduates are coming out of our hospitals this year? Do we have a surplus of nurses in Newfoundland at the present time? Are their jobs for all the nurses who will graduate this year? A year or two ago the situation was just the reverse. There was a desperate shortage of nurses. As a matter of fact on one or two occasions I remember in some of the hospitals they had to close down wards, because they could not get nurses. They had a job to get nurses

Mr. Neary.

for the operating rooms, for the intensive care units, to work in the emergency and so forth. The nurses could pick and choose their jobs, and they all wanted to be supervisors, and they could pick the easy jobs in a lot of cases. And I am not saying that nursing is easy. I suppose it is hard work no matter how you look at it. But whatever the best jobs were there were such a surplus of nurses that they could pick and choose their job. Is the situation the same now? Or do we have a surplus of nurses? And if so, Mr. Chairman -

MR. DOODY: It is not easy work. Some of these people work pretty hard.

MR. NEARY: Yes, they certainly do, and that is what they do, work pretty hard in one of the most difficult departments, I suppose, in the hospital.

Mr. Chairman, what I would like for the minister to tell the House now is: What is the situation regarding nurses training now? Are we training too many nurses? Are we going to find ourselves soon like the vocational schools training welders and electricians? The next thing you have a surplus, and there are no jobs for them. Are we going to just keep on training the same number? Are there enough jobs now to go around? Is it still a problem to get nurses to go in the outports, the outlying areas, the isolated parts of Newfoundland? I would like for the minister to give us a little progress report on that situation.

And I also would like the minister, although this is not 100 per cent under the minister's department, but it does have a bearing on health and on the minister's department and that is the matter of alcoholism. I would like for the minister to be able to tell the House if this problem of alcoholism is getting worse in Newfoundland? What affect the RCMP roadblocks had on cutting down on accidental deaths on our highways, if it cut down on injuries and so forth, and did that take any pressure off the hospitals around

Mr. Neary.

Newfoundland, especially the emergency departments? Did that have any serious effect? Has the minister noticed any improvement in the number of beds that are now available as a result of the RCMP roadblocks? That would be sort of an interesting statistic if the minister could provide the House with it. I do not know what the statistics are, Sir, but I meant to call the RCMP before I came into the House this afternoon to try and get the statistics on the decrease in the number of accidents and the number of injuries and the number of deaths and the amount of property damage since the roadblocks were instituted. This House would probably be amazed, Sir. We would probably be shocked if we knew the excellent results, the great results that have occurred as a result of these RCMP roadblocks that were set up. I believe the results have been absolutely fantastic, have been tremendous, and although the owners of some of the taverns and the licenced establishments and the liquor establishments and so forth were objecting to it, who were kicking up a fuss because they were losing revenue, and no doubt the Province probably has lost a substantial amount of revenue as a result of these roadblocks. You know, I do not think, Mr. Chairman, that any man, any Newfoundlander in his right mind would object to these RCMP roadblocks when it comes to saving lives on our highways. As I say, I do not know what the statistics are. I would like for the minister to be able to get these statistics from the various hospitals around Newfoundland.

MR. NEARY:

Maybe the minister does not have the statistics now, but perhaps he can get the statistics and let the House know just what the impact has been on the hospitals as regard to taking the pressure off for emergencies and emergency beds and emergency situations. It would be a very interesting statistic and I would like for the minister to be able to enlighten the House on that matter.

Then talking about alcoholism, Sir. The minister might sort of give us a general statement on whether or not the reports that we hear about Newfoundland having the worst record of alcoholism in the nation, if that is correct, if Newfoundlanders are heavier drinkers than their counterparts in the other parts of Canada or if Newfoundlanders are heavy drinkers and what steps are being taken by the minister's department to counteract this problem, if anything is being done. I know there are some grants given out to various organizations. I know I had a brief a year ago from Alcoholics Anonymous from the gentleman who is the chairman of Alcoholics Anonymous.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Who is that?

MR. NEARY: Well I will not mention the gentleman's name because he has reformed himself, he has seen the light. He has been saved, as they say. He used to be a very close associate and a very close colleague of the hon. the Premier, never in his cabinet but in his House.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is a brand snatched from the burning.

MR. NEARY: Yes that is right, a brand snatched from the burning. He used to be a colleague of the hon. the Premier and he is doing an outstanding job. I do not know if the hon. gentleman is still the chairman but a year ago when he brought me the brief that he was submitting to the government to ask for my support he was then the chairman. We sat down for an hour and a half and talked about alcoholism in Newfoundland and I learned a lot from the gentleman about the need -

AN HON. MEMBER: Over a bottle of wine.

MR. NEARY: -No, no. It was over a coffee down in the CNIB cafeteria here -

MR. NEARY:

- about the need for the government to pour money into an educational programme, into a rehabilitation programme for alcoholics. Because no matter, Sir, somehow or another in Newfoundland we always have to be tops, we always have to be the best.

MR. DOODY: The Department of Finance is doing what it can.

MR. NEARY: The Department of Finance is doing what it can to sell the booze, to peddle the booze. I think, Sir, since this administration took over 600 brewers retail licenses have been issued, over 600 at least. I asked for the statistic one day.

MR. DOODY: Was it provided?

MR. NEARY: Yes it was provided. I got the information, over 600. I could hardly believe it.

MR. DOODY: It is more since then.

MR. NEARY: Probably more. It is probably up now around 700 or 800. But we are getting more outlets. And I am not one of these who subscribes to prohibition. But I believe that the government who is responsible for peddling the booze, for selling the liquor in this Province, that it is incumbent upon that government to point out to people, especially young people who have now apparently turned from drugs to booze. They have gone back for some reason or other to the booze again. This is the sort of thing that I would like for the minister to talk about when he gets an opportunity again, to tell us why this is. Is it because the booze is cheaper? Is it because drugs are not as available as the booze? Why is it that the trend now seems to be that the young people are now switching from drugs to booze? Well maybe the minister is a good salesman. But I have a feeling that is not the reason at all.

Why is it that Newfoundlanders drink so much? Perhaps the minister cannot tell us. But I am sure the minister must have had some research. Well maybe it is this House, maybe it is the politicians that are driving people to drink. I do not know. Maybe it is the government that is driving people to drink. But something is driving people to drink, Sir, and it is affecting their family life.

MR. NEARY:

It is affecting their jobs.

MR. DOODY: Has the thought entered the hon. member's mind that his long-winded speeches might be contributing towards the alcoholism?

MR. NEARY: Maybe, but as I look around the House I do not see too many of my alcoholic friends sitting in the gallery. I am not sure if there are any in the press or not. I do not think so. There may be a few on the government side of the House. I am not quite sure. But my long-winded speeches, Sir, have a little meat in them. At least when I get up to speak I say something of interest to the ordinary Newfoundlander. I just do not get up and talk legalistic jargon or get into legal wrangles or partisan political scuffles. When I get up I hope I do talk a little common sense. Mr. Chairman, members can scoff at what I say all they like and joke all they like, but alcoholism is a big problem in Newfoundland. It is affecting a lot of families. It has been responsible for breaking up a lot of families. It has been responsible for numerous deaths on our highway, for all kinds of injuries, for all kinds of accidents. It has been the result of people losing their jobs. It has caused our productivity to fall off because of absenteeism from work because of drinking and alcoholism. If the hon. members want to scoff at that, well so be it. I cannot stop them.

I drank enough myself I suppose in my day to float the Queen Elizabeth II across the Atlantic and my hon. friend joined me on many an occasion. The hon. gentleman joined me and many is the time we downed a bottle of screech and a case of beer. Well I am happy to say that I have not had a drink of hard liquor or a drink of beer in about going on nine years.

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: And the wine industry is very grateful.

MR. NEARY: Ah but I enjoy a bottle of wine, I certainly do.

MR. MURPHY: Not a bottle!

MR. NEARY: Yes, a bottle. Sometimes I sit down and I drink a couple of bottles. You know the funny part about it, Mr. Chairman, is that

MR. NEAPY:

you can get just as stoned on wine as you can on hard liquor or beer. I found that out.

MR. SIMMONS: We know.

MR. DOODY: Some day I might be able to achieve your patracian tastes.

MR. NEAPY: Well at least I have gone that far. I have kicked the habit. As a matter of fact I can only afford a bottle of wine about once every three or four months. But I enjoy it and when I get a chance, as the hon. member knows, I will have my glass of wine. On a couple of occasions recently I have gone to the home after the House adjourned at eleven o'clock with my hon. friend, the former Premier and before we went to bed or not at his place -

MR. DOODY: I have heard of basement meetings but this is ridiculous.

MR. NEAPY: Before I went home.

MR. MURPHY: I knew you two were pretty friendly!

MR. NEAPY: I do not have to prove my ability, by the way, I am the father of twins. Before I went home to go to bed the hon. former Premier and myself had a couple of glasses of wine and a great chat and we read some -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Each.

MR. NEAPY: A couple of glasses each and I found that it made me sleep better and I was in better form the next day when I came up to the House.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I am not going to get a chance to finish now and I am sure that Your Honour wants to rise the Committee so that we can have the Late Show. I move the adjournment of the debate.

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

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: It being five-thirty a motion that the House do now adjourn is deemed to be before the House. The first matter for debate concerns the purchase of land for use during the Summer Games. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Neary:

even if we accept the assurances of the hon. Minister without Portfolio, presently responsible for recreation, that there is no wrongdoing or conflict of interest in the acquisition of land for the 1977 Summer Games aquarena, in all fairness, Sir, to the public and to the members of this House and the members of the Canada Games Committee there should, in my opinion, be a thorough investigation of circumstances in connection with the land purchase. To set the record straight, Mr. Speaker, this land was not choice commercial property as the House was told the other day by the minister. The land in question was in the C.A. Pippy Park control area and had been designated by the St. John's City Council as open space. In other words, Mr. Speaker, it could only be used for recreational or sport activities. This then, Sir, explodes the argument put forward by the hon. minister that this was prime commercial land and that a fair price had been paid.

MR. SMALLWOOD: By law it was not.

MR. NEARY: No, it was not.

MR. SMALLWOOD: By law.

MR. NEARY: By law it was not.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have to examine the conflict of interest situation. The minister tried to leave members of this House with the impression that Mr. Robert Morgan was merely acting as an in-law for the MacPherson family in the purchase of that property, and just exercising option management agreements on the property. Well, Mr. Speaker, fact number one indicates that Mr. Morgan was directed by the Chairman of the Summer Games Committee, Mr. Andrew Crosbie, to assemble the land for the project and practically overnight Mr. Morgan converted the land on which there was no option for a purchase price of \$75,000 into a charge on the Canada Games financing of \$275,000, over 200 per cent mark-up. And fact number two, Mr. Speaker, at least seven members of the Canada Summer Games Committee are either employees of Crosbie's companies or shareholders in Crosbie's corporations. For example, Sir, Mr. Robert Morgan himself, who was entrusted with this extremely profitable land assembly deal, is a shareholder in a Crosbie Company called the St. John's Development

Mr. Neary:

Corporation, controlled by Newfoundland Engineering Company Limited, another Crosbie Company, general contractors for the project.

The hard, cold facts of the matter, Mr. Speaker; until it has been proven otherwise we have no option in this House but to consider Mr. Robert Morgan used a position of trust and the confidential information that went with this position of trust to complete and take total advantage of this position for himself, displaying absolutely no consideration for the taxpayers of Canada or of Newfoundland, but concentrating on gouging them unnecessarily with inflated prices, and unjustifiable greedy mark-ups that could if totalled, Mr. Speaker, amount to a quarter of a million dollars, enough, Sir, to make the Sky Shops look like chicken feed.

Mr. Speaker, unless Mr. Robert Morgan turns back to the Summer Games Committee his ill-gotten gains, the Minister of Justice of this Province has no choice but to launch an immediate 1977 Summer Games investigation, and in this he should receive full co-operation of the minister responsible for recreational, who to date has taken on the role of the protector rather than seeking the truth. Should our own Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker, refuse to take the appropriate action on this matter, I shall have no choice as an elected representative of the people but to place all of the facts that are in my files in the hands of the Federal Minister of Justice as the cost of the Canada Summer Games, Sir, is shared by the Government of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we have no right to just brush this matter aside. The facts are there, Sir. It is not just an accident or a coincidence that Mr. Morgan assembled this land and make this ripoff and the government have no choice, Sir, in my opinion, but to investigate this conflict of interest and this whole matter of a gentleman who is placed in a position of trust making a quarter of a million dollars in less than two weeks in one transaction. Now, Sir, if that is not something that warrants investigation in this Province, then I do not know what does.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister without Portfolio.

MR. R. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, the position with the Canada Summer Games and the appointment of the Committee is thus, that the idea of the Canada Summer Games originated with City Hall here in St. John's. And City Hall, with the support of the Province, and I suppose with the support of everyone in the Province, or most people at any rate certainly in this part of the Province, fought for the Summer Games, or I should say argued for the Summer Games, and in the end were successful in bringing the Summer Games to the Province, to the City of St. John's.

But I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that it was not the Province of Newfoundland that initiated this project. The project was a project of St. John's City Hall. After the City of St. John's got the Summer Games, the City Hall then caused the Summer Games Committee to be appointed. So the Committee

Mr. Wells.

was not appointed by the Province and is not a creature of the Province, and does not answer to the Province.

MR. NEARY: There is public money involved.

MR. WELLS: Oh, yes, I know.

City Hall appointed Mr. Andrew Crosbie to be Chairman of the Summer Games Committee and subsequent to Mr. Crosbie's appointment the following people were appointed, - and I think it is worth-while to read the names of the people who are the members of the Committee - Mr. Jim Fagan, Mr. Garry Rowe, Mr. William Adams, Mr. Alex Henley, Mr. Gerald Tilley, Mayor Dorothy Wyatt, Mr. Anthony Brait, Mr. Gerald Christmas, Mr. Thomas Doyle, Mr. Kenneth Duggan, Mrs. Christine MacDonald, Mr. Bruce Woodland, Dr. Donald Wyatt, Dr. Arthur Morris and Mr. Grant Chalker, who is a non-voting member.

MR. NEARY: Crosbie.

MR. WELLS: But a non-voting member.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has alleged for some time that this Committee, because the Committee is responsible for taking the decisions, has been - I think the words, I cannot remember if he used them today, but I distinctly remember yesterday, I think, when I was asked a question in the House - conspiracy and fraud. Well, I heard conspiracy and fraud. Now there is no hard evidence before me, Mr. Speaker, and these people are not answerable to me as Acting Minister of Recreation. They are not answerable to the government. The government was asked to make a contribution to the Summer Games and the government made it. Now it may be argued the government should have imposed this condition or that condition. Anything could be argued. But the government made this contribution to the Summer Games to a committee the names of whom I just read, who are responsible people in this community, responsible, decent, honest people as far as I am concerned and as far as the government is concerned, until they are proven otherwise. Now no one has proven, no one has laid charges,

Mr. Neary.

that is with hard evidence in a court of law or elsewhere to convict these people. And these people stand as decent members of the community, presumably making sensible decisions based on the evidence which is before them. Now the hon. member has brought this up. He has brought this up many times in the House, and he argues that this or that happened. Mr. Speaker, I have given all the explanations that I can. I have given to the House and tabled in the House the letter from the Summer Games Committee. This is not a direct project of the Government of Newfoundland or the Province of Newfoundland. The Government of Newfoundland in good faith agreed to contribute a certain sum, whatever it was -

MR. NEARY: Five million dollars.

MR. WELLS: - \$5 million, part of that, \$3 million has been contributed; there is \$2 million more to be contributed. The explanations have been given to the House and I am not casting myself in the role of the defender at all. But if the hon. member has evidence which would indicate impropriety, conspiracy or fraud, then I think the hon. member should swear out an affidavit and go to the RCMP or to the Constabulary or whoever and say, this should be investigated. But I would say also to the hon. member - he has asked me questions, and I have done my best with the information which is available to me to answer - but I think in his capacity as the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in this House of Assembly that the hon. member wanting to know details which are not available to the government - and there is no reason they should be - that the hon. member should go direct to City Hall or to the Canada Summer Games Committee and pose his questions for answers.

MR. NEARY: I have gone to City Hall.

MR. WELLS: You have gone to City Hall.

Has the hon. member gone directly to the Canada Games Committee?

MR. NEARY: No, I have not.

MR. WELLS: I believe for the kind of detail that he is asking -

MR. NEARY: That is why I am asking questions.

MR. WELLS: The member asked for answers and he got them, and they were tabled. Now I think if the member is not satisfied and believes that there is fraud and conspiracy then the member should go to the appropriate authorities which are the police.

MR. SPEAKER: The next matter for debate is on the subject matter of the pensionable service of World War II veterans who transferred to the service of the Government of Canada in 1949.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I regret that it is necessary for me to appear in the Late Show on this matter. I would say it is necessitated in my view by an unfortunate lack of courtesy by the hon. Minister of Finance in responding to my question the other day when I asked him to yield. And I just say that if the hon. minister had seen fit to render to me the same according courtesy that he is well-known for rendering to the Opposition, and rightly so, this may not have been necessary, because all I was intending to do when I asked the question was really to help to assist the hon. gentleman.

MR. MARSHALL:

In saying that Ottawa is responsible for our veterans' pensions, the hon. the minister is both misinformed by his officials and uninformed of the matter, and I am very concerned about this particular question because if the government acts on this misinformation they will thereby affect a substantial number of people. This Province, Mr. Speaker, and not the Government of Canada is responsible for the pensionable service of transferees from the Commission of Government to the federal government service. Now if you turn around and you say that this government is responsible for pensions of another concern, of another party, it is an ideal opportunity for a putdown or a come down.

How does one person say that a body is responsible for the debts, obligations, salaries or pensions of another concern? Ideal opportunity for a putdown. You could extend it to say well why should not the government be responsible for the pension payments of veterans in the employ of the Government of Manitoba or crown corporations or what have you. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, there is no intention of saying that one is responsible for the obligations of another unless one agrees. That is just the bare point, Mr. Speaker, that the government of this Province has agreed to accept responsibility for pension payments to people who are now presently in the employ of the federal government and who transferred in 1949.

Now I realize it is sometimes going against the Holy Writ to block the Civil Service. But if Your Honour will bear with me, Section 39 of the terms of union set it forth quite clearly. Section 39 of the terms of union says, "Employees of the Government of Newfoundland in the services taken over by Canada pursuant to these terms will be offered employment in these services or in similar Canadian services." Section 2 goes on and this is the crucial one, "Canada will provide the pensions for such employees so that employees will not be prejudiced." Okay? Canada provides the pensions, fine! But it goes on to say most significantly, Mr. Speaker, "And the government of the Province of Newfoundland will reimburse Canada for the pensions

MR. MARSHALL:

for, or at its options make to Canada contributions in respect of the service of these employers with the Government of Newfoundland prior to the date of union.'

It goes on to say, "But they will not be obliged to make payments for pensions higher than they would have gotten normally here." It is clearly there, Mr. Speaker, in the terms of union. It is clear then that this government is responsible for all service of transferees from the Commission of Government prior to 1949. If this group of people are to get any credit for their war service recognized as pensionable service it must be recognized by the government of this Province. I suggest the minister might review his advice from his officials and see if any mention was made with respect to Term 39 (2) of the terms of union in his advice. If this advice was not rendered by his officials, he might like to ask them why because it is very pertinent and very applicable.

We are used in this Province to seeing the federal government not comply with its obligations in certain areas. But in cases such as this we have to realize where we have the responsible position in this particular area. This is a group of people, Mr. Speaker, who their comrades who are presently in the employ of the Provincial Government where we have undoubted responsibility now have their war service recognized. We are equally responsible for these people and we should recognize their war service. Otherwise we are discriminating against them which is something that I know the government would not wish to do. Laws are made from time to time with good intention. That was a good law to be brought in. The government is to be complimented by it. But the fact of the matter is there are many times laws are brought in and when they apply, they apply to discriminate between one group and the other. So it pertains here in this particular case.

There is no group of people in our society today who deserve more consideration than our veterans. These people now are coming to the pensionable age and this matter is a matter of urgent consideration.

MR. MARSHALL:

It must be accepted by the government. Now I rise here today because I think the most important thing apart from all of the other considerations that arose as a result of the questions that I posed is that the minister could possibly indicate that government might indeed look at its intention and reassess its intentions with respect to this matter to see whether or not we do have an obligation. I think they will find that in fairness and in equity and in all good common sense these people should be given their rightful due.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

HON. W. DOODY: Mr. Speaker, in response to my hon. colleague from St. John's East I can only reiterate and repeat the answer to his question of a day or so ago, and if I had the Hansard transcript with me I would read it verbatim. I am rather surprised to hear that he is rising at this time to debate the question in the Late Show because of my lack of courtesy in treating his question or his statement or his petition of a few days ago. I had really no intention of being discourteous. As a matter of fact I discussed the matter with him before the petition was placed before the House, and I supplied him with the information that was available in the department, discussed it with him, and told him as I have in the past on other questions that I was willing to discuss it further with him and make whatever information is available to government available to him. The lack of courtesy was just an interpretation, I guess, of the matter at the time.

However that is not the point at issue really as far as I see it. The point at issue here is whether the Province of Newfoundland has a responsibility for the war service pensionability of people who are employed by the Government of Canada. And the answer to that has to be that the Government of Canada has the responsibility for its employees. The terms of union were discussed by the hon. member, and according to the terms of union the liability for pensions and the accredited pensionable service of pensionable transferred employees were fixed at that time in 1949. Any changes in Newfoundland pension legislation brought about since April 1, 1949 have not been accepted by the Federal Government as being applicable to Newfoundland transferred employees.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: It is a shame.

MR. DOODY: The War Services Pensions Act, 1975 was brought in in May of last year. And it was brought in by the Government of Newfoundland for the employees of the Government of Newfoundland who were war veterans. And one would expect that the Government of Canada would have like legislation for its own employees who would credit them with war pensions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DOODY: It is unreasonable to expect the Government of Newfoundland to take the responsibility for the pensions of another jurisdiction. This is not a very pleasant situation, Sir, and not one that I enjoy debating because obviously it sounds as though the Government of Newfoundland, or me in particular, are not conscious of the service rendered by the war veterans of the Province to the cause at the time, whether it be the cause of Canada, the cause of Newfoundland, the cause of the free world, the cause of democracy or the cause of whatever. As I pointed out to the House a few days ago, there are very few people in this hon. House who are more aware of the affect of such duty as I have been and as my family have been. This is not a matter of discrimination against a group of people but rather a matter of a jurisdictional area. If the Government of Canada does not see fit to recognize the war service of the veterans of Newfoundland who are working for the Government of Canada, it is a deplorable situation. But it is not one which the people of Newfoundland should be expected to accept on behalf of the Government of Canada. Heaven knows we have little enough monies of our own to distribute among our own pensioners, among people who are pensionable by the Province of Newfoundland. In a letter which I wrote to one of the signators to the petition so ably presented by my colleague from St. John's East in January of this year, the last paragraph of that letter says, and I quote, "In the event that you wish to make representation to your present employer, the Government of Canada, regarding this matter officials of the Department of Finance will be pleased to offer any technical assistance that is possible. We will do everything that we possibly can to get these people included under the pensionable services that are available under the Government of Canada, under the employer for whom they work." But in all fairness, Your Honour, the Government of Newfoundland cannot be expected to pick up the tab for the war services pensionability of employees of another jurisdiction. The Government of Manitoba was mentioned - it does not matter to me whether it was Bowring or Ayres or the Government of Canada, the Government

Mr. Doody:

of Australia or some firm in Great Britain or wherever the pensioner happens to be working right now, This Act of 1975 was quite specific in its applicability. The War Services Pension Act of 1975 was passed with respect to the war services of the employees of the Government of the Province of Newfoundland. And unfortunately, Sir, although the cause is worthy, and one which we all support, it is not one in which we can afford to participate. We cannot in our Province afford to pick up the tab for another jurisdiction. I thank, Your Honour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The final matter deals with the fatal accident on the Trans-Canada Highway near Grand Falls.

The hon. member for Buchans-Windsor.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in starting I would want to say to the Minister of Highways that we were pleased with the magisterial enquiry appointment, the announcement of such an enquiry. However we are not sure, and I am not sure, that a magisterial enquiry will indeed serve the purpose that we had hoped would be served. I doubt very seriously if a magisterial enquiry will be able to get the information they would require from Price (Nfld) and thereby ascertain or thereby determine as to just what extent Price (Nfld) may or may not have contributed to the factors that brought about this tragic accident.

Mr. Speaker, in the first instance when that trouble started, when the road was closed on December 22, since that time I have had several occasions to come to this House and number one, complain about the deplorable conditions that had been allowed to exist on that detour, and number two, I have at one point complained about the inadequacy of the safety precautions taken by the Department of Highways in warning people that they were approaching a detour. I say here, Sir, and I stand on this, that the conditions that existed up until that road was reopened would not have been tolerated anywhere else in Canada. I have seen on mainland roads on mainland Canada warning systems that would have made that look sick and that was the Trans-Canada Highway. I have seen warning lights, flashing lights, harricades. It would be impossible to have the speed of a car going over twenty-five miles an hour before you would approach the detour.

However in the - and I know I drove that road every weekend from the time of the flooding until the accident. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that for some reason or other the department responsible did not consider it that important to have adequate lighting there. There was not adequate lighting from day one, and I would challenge any person in Newfoundland to defend the type of lighting was there. But

MR. FLIGHT:

we were lucky, we got through. And the level went down on the river and our road was open. But it was a miracle, Sir, I assure you with the type of lighting, particularly that approaching from the West, it was a miracle that somebody did not keep going straight out into the overpass and on out into the water long before. There were lots of people in Newfoundland who were very concerned about it. However, we got through.

Now we hear conflicting evidence today that states that the Department of Highways did indeed meet their obligations, that there were adequate safety precautions taken the night that this accident occurred. There is a statement by the minister who says that there were barricades. There are statements from eye witnesses that there were not barricades. There is a statement from the minister that says that there were lights hanging on barricades layed parallel with the road. There are statements from eye witnesses which say they were not, they were laid on the shoulder of the road. We know, Mr. Speaker, that the shoulders of that road were washed out, torn away by the ice and the Department of Highways had replaced the shoulders but they were replaced in the rough. They were not graded the last time I passed over them. It would have been a hazard to go out on them. If a driver was forced on that shoulder it would have been a hazard under ideal conditions. There was no top grade, Class A on the shoulders.

So, Mr. Speaker, since we have a magisterial enquiry I will not pass any judgements here as to whether or not there was indeed negligence on behalf of the Department of Highways. However I am very much concerned with Price (Nfld)'s role in this, Mr. Speaker. Price (Nfld) roughly a year ago rose the dam on the Exploits River by six feet, consequently raising the water level in that area six feet. Now, Mr. Speaker, there had never been, never but never been flooding in that area before. I have seen the water level rise in that particular area to a point where it came up level with the shoulders

MR. FLIGHT:

of the road but there was never flooding and there is no doubt that the cause of the flooding in that area is because Price (Nfld) rose the dam six feet. The question I want answered, Sir, and the question I want that magisterial enquiry to answer, and the question that I would like to see some minister speaking on behalf of this government is, did Price (Nfld) have the permission of any department? The Minister of Highways says that his department objected to the raising of the dam, but he says that the Minister of Environment permitted the raising of that dam. Now I want to know, number one, was Price (Nfld) given permission by this government to raise the dam? If not, is Price (Nfld) operating in this Province under so loose an arrangement that they can do what they like? They can control the water level of one of our largest rivers with no consideration for the consequences, because the consequences were obvious to any engineer or anything else once that level of water comes in that area. If indeed they are operating, are they operating with immunity? Are they responsible for the damage they do to the Province or to the property of people?

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the magisterial enquiry does not to my satisfaction answer those questions, I will raise the point in the House again and I will continue to demand whether or not Price (Nfld) was given permission to raise the dam and if they were not given permission, if they did it on their own, were they acting legally, were they acting under the laws of this Province in doing so. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, just a brief response to the points put forward by the hon. gentleman from Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight). I will not again put forward the facts as they were put forward during the Question Period, both yesterday in the House Assembly and again today. I will state, as I stated before, that these facts were put forward as they were put forward to me. They were put forward to the House of Assembly as they were put forward to me in a report from the officials in the central region of my department, the Grand Falls regional office. The reports received from my officials indicate that they did take every precautionary measure. And as I indicated earlier in the Question Period they acted prudently in their activity with regard to the accident. I will not comment any further on the accident, but I will say I am hopeful that the magisterial enquiry will answer all questions. And when I say all questions I mean all questions pertaining to the possible causes, of not only the accident, the very unfortunate and tragic accident, but the causes of the flooding of the highway. I sincerely hope that the magisterial enquiry will answer all these questions. That is my only comment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: It is deemed now that a motion to adjourn is before the Chair. Is the House ready for the question? Those in favour "aye." Contrary "nay." In my opinion the "nays" have it.

I therefore leave the Chair until 8:00 p.m. this evening.

The House resumed at 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, when the Committee rose -

MR. ROWE: On a point of order.

MR. NEARY: What is the point of order now?

MR. ROWE: The point of order is this, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Pideout) was on his feet saying, "Mr. Chairman," before the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and he was not recognized. That is the point of order.

MR. NEARY: That is not a point of order. That is a point of jealousy, Sir, not a point of order. It is a point of jealousy, boy. Sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) is speaking to a point of order.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, I do not know if you missed the member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Pideout) or whether you were going on the assumption that the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) had adjourned the debate.

MR. NEARY: I did adjourn the debate.

MR. ROWE: Yes, but you cannot adjourn debate in Committee stage.

MR. NEARY: I know, I realize that; but I did and the Speaker recognized it. Mr. Chairman, that is not a point of order.

MR. ROWE: I would just like to get a ruling, Mr. Chairman, on what basis the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was recognized. That is the simple question that I am asking.

MR. NEARY: The Chairman recognized me. He has two eyes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

According to our little blue book on procedure, which I realize may not be an official booklet but nevertheless it is one by which the proceedings of the House and the proceedings of the Committee are governed, when the Chairman of debate takes the Chair the first proceeding is that he calls order. At the time I called order I believe there were two members on their feet. According to rule 48 in our Standing Orders "When two or more members rise to speak, Mr. Speaker calls upon the member who first rose in his place." When two members were already on their feet at the time I called order I am afraid that it is incumbent upon me to make some sort of choice. It is very difficult to do otherwise. I would be remiss in my duty if I did not do something. I therefore undertook to raise my head. I saw that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was on his feet, so I gave the hon. member the floor.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, a further point of order. Your Honour has resolved that and that is fair enough. There is no argument. But may I ask whether - and I do not begrudge the hon. gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) a moment of time, and I do not want him to feel that I do - my question or the point of order is this, Sir: Does the hon. member now have forty-five minutes to speak or does he have fifteen minutes to speak, that being roughly the amount he had left. He had roughly half an hour before the Committee rose for the five-thirty debate on the adjournment. It is an important point. Being in Committee, you know, members can speak as often as they like, forty-five minutes each. But the question is simply whether the hon. gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) now has fifteen minutes before he must conclude or forty-five minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is my understanding that in Committee members can speak any number of times and that when they are recognized and do speak they can go the forty-five minutes. My understanding would be that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) does have forty-five minutes.

MR. NEARY: Thank you very much, Your Honour. I know, Mr. Chairman,

MP. NEAPY:

that the hon. Leader of the Opposition would like to invoke closure in this hon. House, but I intend to assert my rights and I want to thank Your Honour for the ruling. Now, Sir, when the House rose I was dealing with this very serious matter in this Province of alcoholism. I called upon the Minister of Health to make a statement to the House on the seriousness of this problem in Newfoundland and why it is that Newfoundlanders are such heavy drinkers, and what the government intends to do about alcoholism and drinking that is causing so much suffering and hardship amongst families and throughout the Province; what the minister is going to do in the way of beefing up the educational programme, because I feel, Mr. Chairman, that for the government that sells the booze, that the government in this Province have the exclusive right to sell liquor and to sell booze and beer, then it is incumbent upon that government, Sir, if they do not run an educational programme themselves that at least they give organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous, give them sufficient funds to run an adequate educational programme to teach people - I do not know if you can teach people how to drink. I suppose you can take a horse to water but you cannot make him drink. But I do not know if you could stop people from drinking but at least educate people the same as the tobacco companies had to do with the cigarettes. They had to stamp on the label of the cigarettes the danger of smoking and how it could cause lung cancer. Well, liquor can cause cirrhosis of the liver and all kinds of other diseases.

I believe, Sir, it is incumbent upon this government to state a policy, to state what their intentions are with regard to this great problem of alcoholism in Newfoundland that has broken up families, that is causing unemployment, causing good men and good women to lose their jobs. It is causing accidents on our highway. I would say, Mr. Chairman, that it was probably responsible for ninety per cent of the accidents, fatal accidents and injury and property damage on our Trans-Canada Highway. Since the PCMP instituted the road block, I would say that there has been a drastic down turn, a

MR. NEARY:

substantial decline, in the number of accidents on the Trans-Canada Highway caused by booze, caused by drinking.

MR. DOODY: There is a big drop in the taverns.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to get into that debate because we will come to that if we ever get to the Finance estimates about the loss of revenue due to the roadblocks.

MR. DOODY: We are not complaining about that.

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, I do not think that any sensible Newfoundlander, anybody with a grain of common sense at all would not agree that the roadblocks were a good thing even though the government has lost revenue and the tavern operators and the licensed establishments have lost revenue and income. But nevertheless hundreds I would say - not hundreds - dozens and dozens of lives have been saved in the last few months. I certainly had to tip my hat to the RCMP for introducing this programme.

MR. DOODY: Your Minister of Justice -

MR. NEARY: No, Sir, it was not the Minister of Justice, it was the RCMP who took the initiative in this particular case. Perhaps the Minister of Justice may have played a minor role but I believe it was Staff Sergeant Sturgeon was the gentleman who introduced the programme -

MR. DOODY: On the wine?

MR. NEARY: No. No wine tonight. But anyway, Mr. Chairman, no matter who wants to take the credit for it I feel it was a good thing and it saved a lot of lives and it has freed up a lot of hospital beds that can now be used for the sick, for people who need medical attention. The place was blocked off before, I suppose, with victims of accidents on the highway. I would say

Mr. Neary.

there has been a tremendous improvement. But, Sir, the point that I was making before supper, Mr. Chairman, was this - I do not know, I could be wrong, perhaps the minister might have statistics that can prove me wrong - but it would seem to me, Sir, that the young people now are shifting from drugs to liquor. A few years ago - and Newfoundland is usually about a year behind; we run about oh, I suppose, a year or two behind the trends in the United States, and I suppose to some extent the trends on the mainland of Canada - and it took about a year and a half to two years for drugs really to catch on in Newfoundland. And now it seems to me that the young people have now switched from drugs back to liquor, although I understand there is still a fair amount of drugs used in Newfoundland, and I do not know whether the minister is keeping statistics, whether he can enlighten the Committee on how serious now the drug problem is in this Province as compared to alcohol. And the minister might also tell us about the number of suicides. I do not know. Again, Sir, I could be wrong. I follow the newspapers fairly closely and I have noticed over the last couple of years, at least, some deaths that, you know, are caused under peculiar circumstances which would indicate to me, at least, that the suicide rate in Newfoundland is increasing substantially. And I know Your Honour is probably more familiar with the topics now under discussion than anybody else in this hon. House, and Your Honour has the right by the way, the Deputy Speaker can participate in these debates as Your Honour did the other day and made such a wonderful contribution. Deputy Speaker Noel when he was here used to participate in the debates. Everybody but the Speaker of the House can get up and let off steam.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. member will allow me? Before Confederation when there was a House of Assembly, Mr. Speaker had his own desk and chair, which is to his right, the same side as the Opposition, and when

Mr. Smallwood.

he left the Chair he would go and sit at his own desk, in his own seat and would sometimes take part in debate.

MR. NEARY: I see.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I have heard this done twenty times at least.

MR. NEARY: Well, I was not aware of that, but certainly -

MR. DOODY: He could have his own law practice if he wanted to.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Oh, well that is another thing.

MR. NEARY: I was not aware of that, but I know since I have been in the House, or since Confederation, I have not seen a Speaker make a speech. But I have seen the Deputy Speaker make many a speech, and Justice Noel who was a former Deputy Speaker of this House, made a major contribution to the debates of this hon. House as I am sure Your Honour will. And maybe before the night is over he may wish to participate again in the Health estimates, because there are always points that come up that may escape your attention at the moment while you are on your feet and then you think of it later on, and you want to get back into the debate, and that is the beauty about the Committee. When you are in Committee on estimates, you can speak as often as you wish, but only for forty-five minutes at a time.

So, Sir, I do not know if I am right or wrong, but somehow I get the impression from the newspapers and from reports that I hear and so forth that the suicide rate is going up in Newfoundland for some reason or other and perhaps the minister can enlighten the Committee and tell us if that is true. Of course, if many people came to this House very often we would probably have the highest suicide rate in Canada. Fortunately, we only get a handful of people in the galleries from time to time. But this seems to be something that the minister should comment on to enlighten the House on whether or not it is correct, and what the reason for it is: Is it the kind of society we are living in today that people just cannot cope, that they are opting out because of the high cost of living, because they cannot find a job? Or is it because of domestic problems?

Mr. Neary.

Is it caused by drinking? Is it caused by drugs? Or is it caused by the fact that people just do not have enough money? Is society upside down ,topsy-turvy, people do not understand what is going on, that, in fact, if it is happening? And then, of course, that brings up the question of overdose. I mean,we only hear of the people who commit suicide. They make the obituary columns in the newspapers or they may get a little story on the back page of the paper, sometimes on page two, maybe sometimes on page three. But what about all the attempts at suicide that we do not hear about, is that increasing? What about overdoses?

MR. DOODY: The only great example of overdoses we have is the hon. member's speeches. They are documented.

MR. MURPHY: That is not his fault.

MR. R. MOORES: Actually, 'Steve' the suicide rate in Newfoundland is the lowest in Canada.

MR. NEARY: Is the lowest in Canada, is it?

MR. R. MOORES: Yes.

MR. NEARY: The hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores) reminds me that the suicide rate - I presume the hon. member is quoting from something there.

MR. R. MOORES: No.

MR. NEARY: He says the suicide rate in Newfoundland is the lowest in Canada.

MR. R. MOORES:It is .

MR. NEARY: Well maybe it is.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is true.

MR. NEARY: That is true, is it.

And, Sir, what about attempts at suicide?

MR. DOODY: I could do a poll in caucus.

MR. NEARY: If the hon. minister would like for me to sit down, you know, I will.

MR. DOODY: I would love for you to. I want to speak.

MR. NEARY: No, but, Sir, all these matters are very relevant to the estimates under debate. We want to sort of get a report from the minister of the state of the health of the people of this Province, and the minister did not voluntarily give us the information, so I have to keep asking the minister questions about overdoses. Mr. Chairman, when I was Minister of Social Services I drew up a new procedure whereby indigent people could procure drugs, those are prescription drugs now. And I thought the card that I drew up was fairly foolproof, that there was no way that you could get prescription drugs from more than one doctor at any one time. But I have discovered since, Sir, that there was a lot of weaknesses in that card, that people who get these drug cards from the Department of Social Services can take them to one doctor in the morning and get their valium or their librium or their tranquilizers or whatever it is they want; they can just go into the doctor and they say, "Doctor, could not sleep last night. I was up all night. Boy, me nerves are gone." "Sure, boy, here is a prescription, go down to the drugstore." Down they go with their drug card and get it filled.

MR. DOODY: A glass of wine would do the trick.

MR. NEARY: It would be far better if they took a glass of wine. And, you know, Mr. Chairman, I am not talking about psychiatrists. One time, as my hon. friend knows, when people had something on their mind, they would go to their clergyman, or they would go to confession. But somehow or other now they have gotten away from that. People now go to psychiatrists and witch doctors and what have you. But most of the prescription drugs I am talking about, Your Honour, come from M.D.'s, come from general practitioners. And so they take the card, they go down to the drugstore, and they get it filled, they get their little pink pills or yellow pills or red pills or whatever it is, and then in the afternoon go to another M.D.

MR. DOODY: They say Kelloggs will be putting them out pretty soon.

MR. NEARY: Well, I would not be a bit surprised, because they are very plentiful around, I can tell you that.

Mr. Neary.

Then they go in and they say to the doctor, "Well, boy, look it here, I am a week now, I got the bad back and, boy, I cannot sleep, and I am irritated and cannot do anything around the house, cannot get a wink of sleep at night, can you give me something to fix me up?" And another prescription and away they go down to the drugstore again, and the next thing you know they got several bottles. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, when I was minister they used to exchange welfare recipients used to exchange pills, believe it or not!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: That is right! They would exchange him. So the next thing you know you get several bottles scattered around, and the next thing you know they are dragged in for an overdose. And this does not only apply, Your Honour, to people on social assistance because the sons and daughters and wives and girlfriends and relatives of wealthy people also -

AN HON. MEMBER: More so.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe more so, I do not know, but I would say they certainly drive the statistics up. They are well known for taking overdoses, too. I do not know what is causing all of this, whether everybody is uptight, whether it is the kind of society we are living in, or maybe the doctors, I do not know, Mr. Chairman, perhaps Your Honour knows. Maybe the psychiatrists - not the general practitioners - I would not say they are as guilty as the psychiatrists, they are guilty to a certain degree, Sir, because when I was Minister of Social Services I did a little research on this. But the psychiatrists, even though they know in their hearts, and not in their hearts, they know from their files that that person has taken an overdose on several occasions, they would still write out the prescription for them to go and get enough pills so they can go and take another overdose. Is there any way, Mr. Chairman, that this can be restricted or controlled or stopped? I mean this whacking out tranquilizers and valium and librium and, I do not know, what other ones?

MR. H. COLLINS: The two chief ones.

MR. NEARY: The two chief ones, and all kinds of other tranquilizers just passing them out and leaving that temptation in front of people, people who do have a weakness. They are sick, Your Honour.

And I do not know if the Minister of Health has ever thought about how they could cope with that problem. The drug card that I designed, Sir, and I designed it, had a great lot of weaknesses in it, I thought it was foolproof myself. But apparently they could still redden their drugs and exchange them and do what you like with them,

Mr. Neary:

they could take them to three or four medical doctors or two or three psychiatrists. You know I brought a form into the House one day, Sir, and I passed it around, because I really believe, Mr. Chairman, that the druggist should keep a record, and you can do this through computers now, keep a record of all these pills, all the prescription drugs that are brought by members of a family say in the run of a year.

MR. MURPHY: How about if they switched to different drug stores?

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. MURPHY: Would the card be one drug store or would they be scattered around town?

MR. NEARY: Well if it were computerized - they tried to computerize it I think it was in Ontario, I am not quite sure. If it was computerized in a Province like Newfoundland you could probably go to whatever drug store you like and they would just feed the information into the computer that was centrally located, and it would come back and tell you whether or not that person had drugs the day before, the same morning or a week ago. But there must be some way that this can be controlled, Mr. Chairman.

MR. COLLINS: There would have to be some suspicion - you could not run it through the computer all the time.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. COLLINS: You would have to have some suspicion before going to the computer.

MR. NEARY: No! There should be a record. I feel that there should be a record kept. A family record.

MR. COLLINS: You do not mean to be suspicious of everybody, do you?

MR. NEARY: No, I do not mean that you should be suspicious of everybody, but if there were family records kept and computerized, and I pass the form around one day it is probably still laying on some of the members desks. But I think it would be a good idea, it would be a project worthwhile I think for the minister to think about. The minister, I know, has a lot to think about.

MR. COLLINS: If we have a suggestion here, we would give a few dollars --

MR. NEARY: Well, Sir, if there were a suggestion box in this House I would stuff it full every day. But there is no suggestion box, and the only thing that I can do as a member of the House who is conscientious and who is trying to put forward positive, constructive suggestions, ideas that I would think the government should implement, the only way I can do it is on the floor of this House. Mr. Chairman, I am not out to crucify the government only when they deserve to be crucified, but we have a responsibility as elected representatives of the people to also make positive suggestions to the government. And God only knows I make enough. I can be critical when I have to. And I can criticize ministers and the administration when I think they are out of line, like for instance the Health Sciences Complex that I mentioned this afternoon. I feel that the government owe it to the people of this Province to carry out an investigation, They have made a stab at it. It may not be to my satisfaction, but I cannot go over and beat them over the head or hold a gun in their back and say, "You have to do it my way." The Government obviously is going to do it their way, and we can only wait and see what happens.

So, Mr. Chairman, these are a few points that I hope that the minister will keep in mind and that he will be able to provide answers for when he stands again to participate in the debate. I do not believe we are going to get through the Health estimate tonight somehow or other. I would like to know too from the minister about the Health Sciences Complex, when it is going to open? Apart from the scandal that we are hearing about, apart from that, when will it open? It is a year overdue now, and the cost is gone up by \$20 million. The government have not justified the escalation in the cost. It has gone up by \$20 million. It is going to be a year late, a year overdue before it gets opened. And does that mean now that all of the excellent men, that all of the experts, that all of the fine doctors and the researchers that came in, who were recruited for

Mr. Neary:

for the Medical School, are they satisfied to hang around and work under difficult circumstances until the Health Sciences Complex is opened or have they left? Do we still have a fine team of medical men of surgeons and researchers on the staff of the Medical School or are they leaving? Are they looking for jobs in other provinces and in other countries or are they satisfied to stay around until the Health Sciences Complex is opened? That is a question that I would like to put to the minister. Will we still have that fine Medical School intact by the time it opens up? And will it be opened by the 1st. of January as the minister told us it would? That is a question that I am sure that a lot of people would like to have the answer to at the present time. And the minister did not tell us the other day what will happen to the old General Hospital when the Health Sciences Complex opens. Is that going to be closed down or will the newer wings be used as I suggested the other day for nursing care, for geriatric care, for people who are occupying now expensive hospital beds that really all they need is nursing care and personal care? That is a question that the minister has to answer.

And, Sir, what about now the facilities down at the - and the Carbonear Hospital, I would like to know from the minister when we are going to have the official opening of the Carbonear Hospital? I understand it is ready now. The construction is complete, is that correct?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

MR. NEARY: The construction is complete. Are there any staff in there?

AN HON. MEMBER: It has been completed for three weeks.

MR. NEARY: The hospital has been finished, completed, the construction completed for three week, and so I think the minister owes it to the people on the North Shore of Conception Bay, and on the South Shore, I suppose, for that matter, and to the people of the Province as a whole to let us know when the government are going to hold the official opening of the Carbonear Hospital.

MR. R. MOORES: As I understand it, though, the problem is not with the minister but with the actual staff, the local administration at Carbonear.

MR. NEARY: What is the problem?

MR. R. MOORES: I do not know specifically.

MR. NEARY: But my hon. friend the member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores) says the problem is not with the minister but with the staff or the board at Carbonear. Well perhaps the minister can straighten that out for us tonight, because I would certainly like to know, and I believe other members of the Committee would like to know when the Carbonear Hospital is going to open, and I am not talking about the scandal over there either, that I hope will be sorted out in due course. I am talking about the actual operation of the hospital, when it will be ready to receive patients?

And what about the Waterford Hospital? Is the minister now satisfied that the Waterford Hospital with the expansion and so forth is now capable of taking care of the needs of this Province?

MR. NEARY: Does the minister have any plans for future expansion of the hospital? I had occasion to visit the institution recently -

MR. DOODY: I am not surprised.

MR. NEARY: No, I am sure the member is not surprised. I did not see any of his relatives over there, I must say.

MR. H. COLLINS: My wife was there today.

MR. NEARY: Was she? Well, I do not know if his wife was over to see the same gentleman I was over to see, but I had a number of complaints. You know, Mr. Chairman, I get a - believe it or not - letter a week from the Waterford Hospital.

MR. SMALLWOOD: From the same man?

MR. NEARY: It is from the same man?

MR. MORGAN: Is it from the same man?

MR. NEARY: No.

MR. SIMMONS: The Director of Admissions.

MR. NEARY: No, it is not the Director of Admissions because if it were, he would be writing me about the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir. The Administrator and myself have discussed the member on numerous occasions.

MR. SIMMONS: You can tell it now, boy.

MR. NEARY: This is a gentleman who, especially since the episode of the band, Sir, we began to have very grave doubts about the hon. member following that.

But anyway, Mr. Chairman, this particular gentleman thinks that he is being done a grave injustice. I turned most of the letters that I had over to the Minister of Justice.

MR. FLIGHT: I have had letters from him.

MR. NEARY: Yes, all the members. I would not be a bit surprised if every members of this House whose name has appeared in the newspapers has received letters from this gentleman. The ones I had I turned over to the Minister of Justice for investigation.

MR. SMALLWOOD: This is just to ask the hon. gentleman if this is the Newfoundlander who was in New York and returned to Newfoundland

MR. SMALLWOOD: rather involuntarily? Because he writes me and blames me for it.

MR. DOODY: That is right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He also writes everybody else.

MR. DOODY: That is right.

MR. NEARY: As a matter of fact he blames the former Premier for kidnapping him and bringing him back to Newfoundland.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is right! Kidnapping him and bringing him in here.

MR. NEARY: Anyway, that particular situation is more to be pitied than blamed.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of course.

MR. NEARY: I am not going to dwell on that.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He is quite harmless. He has nothing else to do.

MR. NEARY: Maybe so. But I did get a chance while I was visiting some other people there to take a look at the older parts of that institution. And I believe the minister will agree that there is still a great need for upgrading and improving the older wings of the Waterford Hospital. The government, no doubt about it, have made great strides, no question about that, in improving the facilities but there is still a great lot that needs to be done.

Let me see, I think that brings me, Sir, to about the end of my - oh yes! One other point, there is one other very important point I want to make, Sir. Back when I was a member of the old-line Liberal Government, when the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) was the Premier, I remember a plan that was put forward, I do not remember who it was who put this plan forward but the hon. the Premier might remember, in connection with the distribution of drugs in Newfoundland. There was a proposal made at that time that the government should purchase all the drugs and sell them to the drug stores.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. member will allow me: It was the present hon. member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Nolan) who was

MR. SMALLWOOD: then the Minister, I think, of Supply. He was very keen on the idea of setting up a government drug store to supply all drugs that the government had to supply. He visited Ottawa and he saw what the Government of Canada are doing. He was very, very keen on it and I think we would have gone ahead with it if we had stayed there a little longer.

MR. NEARY: Well I certainly hope that the member for Conception Bay South will enlighten the Committee, because I thought it was a pretty fine idea. I did not know my honourable and dear friend was the father of that idea.

MR. NOLAN: If the hon. member will permit: It is my understanding that we had some studies from pharmaceutical firms and so on, and if the Minister of Finance will bother to check, for example, what you pay for drugs even today, say for cottage hospitals if they are still purchasing, you will find that there is a substantial, very substantial difference between what you pay retail and what the government pays.

MR. DOODY: A fantastic difference.

MR. NOLAN: A fantastic difference. In fact, if you are buying so many thousands of pills, whether it is valium or librium as the minister mentioned, you will often find the companies coming in saying, "If you buy 100,000 of this we will give you 50,000 free," believe it or not! Okay for the government!

MR. DOODY: In forty-five gallon drums.

MR. NOLAN: Yes. So the situation was not necessarily to go holus-bolus to buy every drug for the Province, but to take a good hard look at it to see what could be done to help alleviate the situation at least in some levels. And if I am not mistaken I am sure I remember in the last three or four years hearing, I believe the former Minister of Health, perhaps the hon. Dr. Gus Rowe, mention that the government was looking very closely at this.

MR. NEARY: Well I thank the hon. member for his contribution, Sir. I hope that the member will speak on the Health Estimates and enlighten us a little more because that struck me, Sir, as being a very common-sense idea, a very worthwhile plan, and one that unfortunately we did not get a chance to pursue because we got the Royal Order of the Boot on January 18, 1972.

MR. SMALLWOOD: When we lost our jobs.

MR. NEARY: We lost our jobs. No, the member might have lost his job, I think he quit, but this member stayed on. Although I was not the minister, I believe it that the present administration should take a good hard look at. I do not know if it is feasible or practical. Perhaps the member for Conception Bay South, who did the research on it, may be able to tell us more about it. But one thing I do know, Sir, is this, that the minister, I believe, did start to purchase some drugs for the Province through the Government of Canada. The Government of Canada purchase in bulk and I believe we joined with the Government of Canada. All the provinces apparently can do this, can purchase through the Government of Canada and get drugs a lot cheaper than buying directly from the wholesalers.

MR. SMALLWOOD: May I make a comment?

MR. NEARY: Yes.

MR. SMALLWOOD: If the hon. member will allow me, he might address himself briefly to the question of the two kinds of drugs, the branded propriety drugs or the branded drugs, and the - what is the word?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Generic.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Generic drugs, and the enormous savings that can be made there. And while he is at it he might address himself for a moment to the question of our getting large proportions of our drugs from the country of Italy, which has become one of the world's great suppliers of first class drugs.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Chairman, again I want to thank the hon. the member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) for giving us that piece of information. I am not really qualified, otherwise I would go into it a little more deeply. But I somehow or other feel now that since the minister and since the government adopted the policy of appointing boards, that the boards now have gotten away from purchasing their drugs via the Government of Canada.

MR. H. COLLINS: Not really.

MR. NEARY: The minister says, not really. Not really, which leads me to believe that I am partly right, partly right.

MR. DOODY: You usually are.

MR. NEARY: That is right! My usual reliable sources of information -

MR. DOODY: You usually are partly right.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He means only partly right.

MR. NEARY: Well, Sir, my track record is not too bad so far, and we will see how wrong I will be on the Health Science Complex. See how wrong I will be.

Since the inception of the boards, the boards now are acting independently, going off on their own and purchasing their own drugs and supplies, and they are paying through the nose. Whereas there is a system whereby, and I think the minister should insist on this - one thing the minister should insist on when he appoints a board is that all the drugs and all the supplies should be purchased through the Central Purchasing agency and not the boards do their own purchasing. I believe the minister should insist on that. That is one privilege they should not have.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is ridiculous! It is the last word, and it is silly.

MR. NEARY: Well they are doing it. It is and it is silly and ridiculous and it is costing the taxpayers more money than it should. I believe the minister should get this back under control. I do not know if it is the minister's department of under the Supply and Services. But Supply and Services then go to Ottawa

MR. NEARY: and Ottawa will purchase the drugs and we could save hundreds of thousands of dollars. I do not know how many hospitals are doing their own purchasing today, but the Minister of Finance will be interested in this because the minister can save a few dollars. And there is

MR. NEARY:

a positive, constructive suggestion. I am after throwing out now about ten tonight so far, ten constructive, positive suggestions. I hope I do not pick up the weekend edition of The Evening Telegram and read a column that says, "Members are wasting their time in the House. All they are doing is scraping and clawing and scrobbing at one another and not a positive, not an original idea in them." But I am after throwing out about ten tonight, so far.

MR. DOODY: You might get a government arrangement in the cartoon section.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe. I would make the cartoon section more than any other member of the House and after the little wine that was sold this afternoon I will probably make it again. But, Sir, these are all very, very serious matters that can save the people of this Province a lot of money. I realize now, Sir, that I am getting near the end of my time. I have got about five minutes more to go. The member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. T. Rideout) is champing at the bit, cannot wait to get up to lash into the minister about his neglect of the occupational hazard part of his department. So I want to end up just referring back to that for a moment. Again reminding the minister, that although I said this afternoon that I firmly believe it should not become a political issue, I think that the government has to a certain degree dragged their feet a little bit. The minister is so calm. The minister can sit there, you know, -

MR. COLLINS: Would you not rather for me to be calm?

MR. NEARY: Yes. No, I would like for the minister to get excited about this.

MR. COLLINS: Get mad.

MR. NEARY: Oh, not get mad, but to get enthusiastic, to get enthusiastic about it, to get excited about it, to convince me that the government is doing everything in its power to try to protect the lives of these people who are involved in these industries, working for industries where you have occupational hazards, namely, the phosphorus plant at Long Harbour. My hon. friend does not have the only community where occupational hazards exist -

MR. NEARY:

the phosphorus plant, the mill down at Iron Ore Company of Canada, the asbestos mine at Baie Verte, the Buchans mine. What other ones do we have?

AN HON. MEMBER: I do not know, whatever you set up.

MR. NEARY: That is four.

MR. DOODY: Whatever you put there without regulation.

MR. NEARY: Whatever we put there without regulation!

AN HON. MEMBER: Come By Chance.

MR. NEARY: No, Come By Chance - no? Well that is a different kind. I am not talking about something that would injure your health. I mean -

MR. MURPHY: Long Harbour.

MR. NEARY: Well, I mentioned the phosphorus plant.

MR. DOODY: What about St. Lawrence, the St. Lawrence mine?

MR. NEARY: Oh, the St. Lawrence mine is the other one. There are five. There are five, Sir, potential deathtraps black holes of Calcutta in this Province.

MR. SIMMONS: That is a good headline "Steve".

MR. NEARY: Well maybe it is. But I said it not the -

MR. SIMMONS: Headlines in the cartoon tomorrow.

MR. NEARY: Oh good! And the cartoon will show high heels to prop me up, to make me a little taller than I am, a pair of stilts. I saw a cartoon the other day where a couple of little boys were out in the harbour going around on stilts. It reminded me of the hon. gentleman.

But, Sir, this is a very, very serious problem - five potential death traps in this Province. The minister just cannot sit back slouched in his seat without emotion, without any emotion. The minister has to be able to convince me and he has not convinced me yet. I want the -

MR. COLLINS: We face these problems every day.

MR. NEARY: Well personally - look, I can only speak personally. I can tell the minister has not convinced me that the government is doing everything in

MR. NEARY:

its power to protect the lives of these people. Every day is a threat. Every day their lives are endangered. I hope before the night is over -

MR. COLLINS: Sixteen hours a day!

MR. NEARY: - I would like for the minister to get up and say, "look", members of the House, Mr. Chairman, and members of the Committee; we are going to get the best in the world to take a look at that asbestos situation in Baie Verte where you have asbestosis. We are going to get the best in the world, whatever it is and money will be no obstacle. Make the company pay for it. Grab them by the throat and shake it out of them, the money. They are the ones who are making the profit down there." And if the minister wants to bring a piece of legislation into this House to make that company contribute substantial amounts of money for research, he will get my support. I am all for it. I think that is what should be done, and it should be done without delay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose I should take a few minutes at the beginning to reply to, I suppose charges is the word - there is nothing else I can find to describe them - flicked my way earlier this evening by the hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary).

MR. NEARY: Do you know how to deal with it?

MR. RIDEOUT: I will get to it now. Just take your time. I should take a few minutes to comment on that. I find it rather almost contemptible to do so. There are two ways of looking at it, I suppose. I could count myself lucky and say that now I have finally joined the big league of politics because I have been flicked by the hon. Super Flick from LaPoile. I could look at it that way and be sort of honoured.

MR. NEARY: Do not get nasty like your leader.

MR. RIDEOUT: At least I got a leader and I am proud of it. Now I did not interrupt the hon. gentleman -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I did not interrupt the hon. gentleman while he

MR. RIDEOUT:

was flicking away down in the corner. Now I ask your protection for the same rights in this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Sooky baby.

MR. RIDEOUT: The hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), Sir, would do well probably to remember the old age saying, "Sometimes blessed are those who have nothing to say and cannot be persuaded to say it."

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: He does not seem to know that rule. On the other hand, Sir, I could be proud of the flick, I suppose, and say I finally got into the big league of politics. I could be proud to look at it that way. On the other hand, I suppose, I should say something regarding the charge - that is all that it amounts to - the charge that I have done nothing about the situation at Advocate Mines in Baie Verte until I wrote a letter to the hon. Minister of Health the twenty-sixth of March. That is something for the hon. gentleman from LaPoile to substantiate, Sir. It might not be as horrible as the charges he flicked across the House a few weeks ago to the hon. House Leader. It might not be as horrible as that. But it means something to me personally. It is quite a statement for an hon. gentleman to make. He would do well if he would look after his own district and leave other hon. members to look after their own.

If meeting with the union in Baie Verte, Sir, within the first month that I was elected, to discuss the problem that they are experiencing at Advocate Mines, if that is not doing anything then I am guilty, I have not done anything. If meeting with the Minister of Health during the first few weeks after I was elected to discuss the problem of Advocate Mines in Baie Verte, if that is doing nothing then I have done nothing and I am guilty. The first question, the first time ever I got on my feet in this hon. House to ask a question I directed it directly to the Leader of the government, the Premier, questioning him on the plans or activities that his government was making an attempt to carry out in Baie Verte.

MR. RIDEOUT:

If that is doing nothing then, Sir, I have done nothing and I stand guilty. If keeping close contact with the minister, and the minister can say this as well as I can, if keeping close contact with him on every leak that comes out about Baie Verte, if that is doing nothing then I have done nothing. If making numerous press releases to keep the public attention centred on the situation in Baie Verte - I remember three or four months ago one in particular was carried on the provincial CBC T.V. news in the evening, if that is doing nothing then I have done nothing. If being in continuous contact with what I consider to be the world's authority on asbestosis and asbestos related diseases, Doctor Irving Sellikof of Mount Sinai University, if being in constant contact with him since I got elected as the member for that district, with a view to having him come to Baie Verte and look at the situation, if that is doing nothing then I have done nothing. If my continuous research into asbestosis and all forms of asbestos related diseases is doing nothing, then again I have done nothing over the past eight months. If all that means, Sir, I have done nothing then so be it. The people of Baie Verte and the people of the district of Baie Verte-White Bay will judge me. I will not run from my district, Sir, when the next election comes. I will seek election in the district of Baie Verte-White Bay again. I am not afraid.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: If all of that is doing nothing then I have done nothing. But I stand ready at any day and any moment to go before those people. If they feel that I have done nothing then so be it. They are the ones who will be the judge of that.

Now, Sir, the particular letter to the minister dated March 25 was for a specific purpose, asking the government, the minister in particular, suggesting, almost pleading that they come in on this study that is going to be carried out in Baie Verte. It was not the first contact as I have already mentioned. It was a specific letter to deal with a specific purpose.

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MR. RIDFOOT:

To construe that, to take that and twist it into a way that only the hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) can do, Sir, is almost beyond one's imagination. It is only an hon. gentleman like that could do it, the hon. Super Lip from LaPoile - the hon. cracky, almost I would be warranted to say, from LaPoile

MR. RIDEOUT:

If that is doing nothing then I have done nothing. I call it despicable. There is hardly a member who can get on his feet in this House - it makes no difference which side of the House he is on, Sir, whether he is on the government side or in the Opposition, it makes no difference where he is at, every now and then there will be a flick at somebody, flick, flick, flick. That is all you can hear from the hon. gentleman is flick. The venom and the contempt that he has for members, accusing them of doing nothing in their districts in eight months being elected.

MR. NEARY: Your leader is teaching you to be nasty too.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, and I am proud of it, every bit of it. Now keep quiet. I was quiet when you were speaking.

MR. SIMMONS: They are still looking for him in Grand Bruit.

MR. RIDEOUT: The contempt that he shows for members of this House - anybody associated with the Liberal Party, that is all it takes. The hatred he has for the Leader of the Liberal Party just pours out through his eyes, Sir, through the hon. member's eyes. It is so obvious it is not even funny.

MR. NEARY: Is this going to cure the asbestosis?

MR. RIDEOUT: I will get to the asbestosis.

MR. NEARY: Get to it.

MR. RIDEOUT: The sun will shine tomorrow, Sir, and the hon. gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will want to take credit for it. I have never seen a case of a man being on an ego trip for so long in my life.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: Everything that goes on he wants credit, asbestosis in Baie Verte, let it be what it may. Oh, the suggestion box, he would fill it full to the brim, suggestions.

MR. SIMMONS: Not with suggestions though.

MR. RIDEOUT: Not with suggestions, that is right. Now I want to get on to -

MR. NEARY: Do not get nasty now, like your leader there.

MP. RIDEOUT: I have had what I want to say, Sir. Mr. Chairman, I did not interrupt the hon. gentleman when he was speaking. Now I ask for the same right. If he cannot be quiet, then let him leave the House.

MP. NEAPY: If you dish it out, you have to be able to take it too.

MP. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MP. RIDEOUT: I can take it. I sat and took it when the hon. gentleman was giving it to me. Now I have replied.

MP. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MP. RIDEOUT: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has indicated he wishes to be heard in silence. I am sure all hon. members will accede to his wish.

The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now I want to get back to this asbestos problem again at Advocate Mines in Baie Verte for a few minutes, Sir. I said Tuesday night mostly all I wanted to say about it. There are a few other things I would like to say at this particular time. I know that the Department of Health is not the only department of government that is responsible for occupational health in this Province. I know that. I mentioned that, I believe, in the few remarks I had to make the other night.

But, Sir, I say that the people of this Province whether it be occupational health or - I will just speak to occupational health for the moment - the people of this Province involved in situations of this type have to look to the Minister of Health for leadership. There is no point in talking to a man who has contacted asbestosis or silicosis, that the problem lies with the Minister of Mines and Energy. There is no point in telling him that the problem lies with the Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations. We have to look to the Health Department for leadership. This is where I feel this particular administration is sort of dragging its heels a little bit and falling down on the job a bit.

I am not naive enough to say that nothing has happened. The Division of Occupational Health with Dr. Colohan as its head is

MR. RIDEOUT:

a beginning. I recognize that. I have talked to the minister about that dozens of times and we have talked about what the division was attempting to do. Well that in itself, Sir, is not enough. A minister of the crown, a minister of this government, made a public commitment that the situation at Baie Verte would be investigated pronto. That was the word or the transcripts I believe that were referred to by the Leader of the Opposition today, that the situation at Baie Verte would be investigated. And it was not investigated.

Dr. Morgan came in at the request of the union and carried out a study. I referred to his study Tuesday night in some detail and I will not go through it again. He made a number of recommendations. He drew a number of very, very good conclusions. He pointed out that there were dozens and dozens of inaccuracies existing in Baie Verte. He pointed out cases where the company, he felt, was dragging its feet. This is where the government has to become involved and make sure that the company does what has to be done in that particular situation. That is my contention and that is why I am so concerned. This is the justification I use for saying that the activity just has not been there.

Maybe the hon. gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) referred to a problem when he says the minister is not excited enough about it. Maybe that is the proper way to phrase it. But it has just not been there. It looks like it is something that is not important enough. Yet I believe the hon. minister when he says that he is concerned about it. I know he is. We have talked about it dozens of times.

I want to say a few more words on this deal of Dr. Sellikof coming. I have talked to Dr. Sellikof a number of times now. He made it very clear to me, Sir, that he would not accept in any way and he did not feel in his good conscience that he could accept in any way any funding whatsoever from the company to help him carry out that study. He explained his reasons to me for it. He wanted it

MR. PIDEOUT:

to be an impartial study, an independent study, a study that would be free from any form of censorship. He did not want it to be labelled as a company study or a union study. I think that was a reasonable stand to take. He has a certain amount of financing. We all know that. All those great research institutions have a certain amount of financing. But the point in requesting government funding, Sir, to me the big point was that this was a chance for the government not to become involved in thousands and thousands of dollars. This study is probably going to cost \$50,000 or \$60,000. I requested a maximum of \$5,000, a pittance. That is all. Just enough for the government and the Province to show that they were interested, that here was the best in the world willing to come in and that they were not coming in without any support or concrete material support from us as a government of this Province. That is what I was interested in. I think the government should have been able to do that. I was rather disappointed when I received of course the minister's answer. We talked about it later and he told me he would look at it again and that type of thing. But nothing has happened since.

Now, the company in Baie Verte, yes, was approached by the minister's officials. I know that. I have known that for weeks. Sir, did they ask questions about funding? The company in Baie Verte is not involved in the funding because Dr. Sellikof does not want them to be involved in the funding, and rightly so. So it is a weak argument for not supporting this idea of public support for this study by saying that the proper funding had all been arranged and that type of thing. Johns-Manville, the operators of Advocate Mines in Baie Verte is paying for the cost of X-rays. That is the whole sum total involvement of the company in any way in that survey. The union is paying nothing and has not been requested to pay anything and has been refused acceptance of any offer that they might make.

Now the important point to remember too, Sir, is that Dr. Morgan's study was referred to a number of times by the minister and

MR. RIDEOUT:

I believe by the Leader of the Opposition and Tuesday night past by myself. Dr. Morgan's study suggested, strongly suggested that another study be done within a year at Baie Verte, strongly suggested. Now here is this study about to be done and we have washed our hands of it. We have not done anything to, in a meaningful manner, to support it. Oh, we have come out and said yes we are glad they are coming in. But, Sir, is that the best we can do? Is that the best we can do, is just mouth off and say we are glad they are coming in and not put anything where our mouth is?

I know the company should and the company probably would be willing to pay something. Nobody has suggested that they would not. But as a government is if the best we can do is just say we are proud they are coming in and not get involved in any other way? I suggest it is not. I suggest it is not enough. That is why I am disappointed in the route that the minister has taken.

Now to respond with personal attacks on the Leader of the Opposition, that is not enough. Talks about making the situation in Baie Verte a political situation is not enough. We are politicians, I suppose we are. That is what we are called, politicians. Anything that a politician mentions is bound to be construed as making a political football out of it. But, Sir, as I tried to impress on this Committee the other night, the lives of people are at stake. And if there is nothing else that I do while I am the member for that district I will not let this situation drop.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: While I am the member for this district and while I am our spokesman for health, on those two accounts I will not let that situation drop.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: The government, Sir, should reconsider. We do not know what Dr. Sellikof is going to find at Baie Verte. I hope to God he finds nothing and that may be the end of it, to say that everything -

AN HON. MEMBER: I hope we get a good report.

MR. FINEOUT: That is right. I hope that he finds nothing and that all the fears will be put to rest. But the fears in Baie Verte, Sir, are not caused by politicians. Fears in Baie Verte are caused because the people are intelligent enough to know that there is a problem there. They know it has been there for years sitting under their nose. Nobody knew asbestosis when the mine opened up. They figured it was something good to eat. It was the first and I believe it is still the only asbestos mine in Newfoundland. We did not know anything about asbestos. We did not know anything about asbestosis.

I remember as a high school student working at Advocate Mines in Baie Verte when we played in the milled asbestos, the fibers. We played in them, threw them at one another during lunch breaks.

MR. RIDEOUT: Nobody told us any different.

MR. ROBERTS: Well at that time I think the medical knowledge had not gone that far, Mr. Chairman.

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, I have read some research that it had in Europe and in England but certainly not in North America.

MR. PECKFORD: When you were throwing it around Europe, playing with it.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, that is only seven or eight years ago.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is seven or eight years ago.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, that is only seven or eight years ago.

The point I am trying to get at, Sir, is the company - I got an article here I think from a newspaper that Johns-Mansville publishes, they are the operators of Advocate Mines. They have known they said and this is written up in their commentary in an editorial here, they have known for years about the dangers of asbestos dust. Nobody in Baie Verte knew it until the union became suspicious only three or four years ago, and then when the media became involved and CBC went down there and did a documentary and then W-5 went down there and did a documentary then suddenly everybody is aware of it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Could I ask the hon. gentleman a question?

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, Sir.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Do you know how long the mine, the operation there has been unionized; and second, is the union the one that is across Canada; and third, if so why would not that union have known from their experience around North America?

MR. RIDEOUT: Well the answer to your question, Sir, is this; first when the union started in Baie Verte it was a local union, non-affiliated with anybody. And it was only three or four years ago or five years ago that it became affiliated with the United Steelworkers of America.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That explains it.

MR. RIDEOUT: So it is only in those last five or six years that unions across Canada began to raise it and of course by that

MR. RIDEOUT: time the union in Baie Verte had changed from a self-contained local, I believe they called themselves Asbestos Workers Union or something. They had no affiliation outside the Province and then they affiliated themselves with the United Steelworkers of America and it is then the information started to be made known to the people in Baie Verte.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: When this article was printed it said the company knew of the dangers for years and years.

MR. RIDEOUT: Yes, this was just called Winter of '76, but it has - you can have a look at it later if you want - it has an editorial in it, you know, that goes through what Johns-Mansville has known about asbestos problems over the past number of years.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: It has been quite some time.

MR. RIDEOUT: It has been quite some time, yes. They have had research done on it for a long time. But the point I am trying to get at is, up until the time Dr. Morgan arrived in Baie Verte to do his study, and he mentions it in his study - I presume the Minister of Health has a copy of it - up until a day or two before he arrived the company had said nothing, absolutely nothing about the dangers of working in asbestos dust. But before he arrives they give a little pamphlet out. He mentions it in his brief. A four or five page pamphlet talking about the dangers of asbestosis or asbestos dust, talking about how workers should change their clothes and shower before they go home, and that facility is not even down there and not there yet, talking about the dangers of smoking and working in an asbestos dust situation. Just imagine how convenient, a few days before Dr. Morgan arrives to do the first study ever conducted in Baie Verte.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They do not have the showers yet?

MR. RIDEOUT: Not to my knowledge, Sir. They certainly do not have the situation, what is it they call it, the two locker system, I believe Dr. Morgan calls it, where they go in and change and then -

MR. ROUSSEAU: You are thinking of -

MR. RIDEOUT: Right, before they come home. They do not have that system in Baie Verte. It was never ever mentioned until a few days before Dr. Morgan arrived down there to do a study, and suddenly the company becomes concerned and starts to publish a little pamphlet. Sir, I say that is not enough.

MR. SMALLWOOD: You could not wash with a pamphlet.

MR. DOODY: The company is aware of it since seven or eight years ago?

MR. RIDEOUT: Well, they have certainly been aware of it, I do not know how far back, but I can say from my own personal knowledge four or five years.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The company?

MR. DOODY: The company.

MR. SMALLWOOD: The company has known it for twenty-odd years.

MR. RIDEOUT: Johns-Mansville has been aware of it for years.

MR. SMALLWOOD: All asbestos mining company in the world have known it for at least twenty years.

MR. DOODY: Well they are no different in most of the other provinces.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No different at all, and it is open pit.

MR. RIDEOUT: Sir, Advocate Mines has not been a bad corporate citizen and I am not intending to say that. But you can expect a company to do only in many cases what we force them to do. And that is the point I am trying to make, that the government has not been forcing Advocate Mines to do practically anything, dust control, environmental conditions in the plant and outside, the whole range of conditions under which the workers at Advocate Mines work, and the people on the Baie Verte Peninsula live. This is where the government has to be active. This is where the government has to make stringent regulations.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. RIDEOUT: Regulations that are comparable and in accordance with regulations found across North America and into the United States.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Add this House by passing legislation.

MR. RIDEOUT: When I say government I mean bringing it before the House, of course, and passing legislation. This is what we have to get into, and this is why I was very, very disappointed when the one chance that this Province has had up to this point to have the greatest of experts from outside come in and do something at Advocate Mines to study every many down there and we turned them down flat.

MR. SIMMONS: Shameful. Shameful.

MR. RIDEOUT: That, Sir, I found very disappointing.

MR. ROBERTS: Not even \$10 a man.

MR. RIDEOUT: I say, Sir, that the people of this Province who are working in areas related to occupational health, they are looking to the Minister of Health for leadership. We are looking, we are looking, we are looking and we have not found it and, Sir, on that note I sit down as a very disappointed member for Baie Verte - White Bay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Mr. Chairman, every hon. member of this Committee and of this House is in complete and absolute sympathy with the hon. member who just sat down and I include the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in that characterization, because I am sure that he has tremendous admiration and respect for the hon. member. Now he sometimes has peculiar ways of showing that but nevertheless I am sure that is how he feels.

MR. NEARY: You have got to shake them up once in a while.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Now I have a sort of selfish interest in this matter. First it was under my administration that they came in. It was at my invitation that they came into Newfoundland. I must confess that I had never heard of asbestosis, never hear the word, never read it, never heard a whisper of it at any time until the last year or two.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: That is an amazing comment.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well it happens to be a - There are several that I do not know even yet and I daresay I will live another twenty years and die still not knowing lots of things. There will be lots of things that I will not know.

MR. DOODY: That is an even more amazing comment.

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is astounding, is it not? I am in a sense to blame for the fact that that industry is in Baie Verte. I brought them in. I went down and opened the plant when it was ready to start operating.

Now another reason I have, rather selfish reason, that is that my brother works in the mine or the mill, I am not sure which, and I have not only my brother there in Baie Verte but nephews and nieces there and they mean something to me. I have a lot of personal friends in Baie Verte that I have known for many, many years. So there are two rather selfish reasons I have for being a little more than ordinarily interested in the problem at Baie Verte.

We must learn a lesson from St. Lawrence. St. Lawrence was operating two mines, two companies up there, one owned by one of the largest corporations in all the world, Alcan, Aluminum Company of Canada which is merely a branch of a much bigger company namely Alcoa, Aluminum Company of America, the Mellon people.

MR. DOODY: I think they are separated now though, are they not?

MR. SMALLWOOD: That is right, by law. That is right. But nevertheless one has grown out of the other.

Now that vast corporation in Canada operated, and they still do, one of the two fluorspar mines. The other one was operated by a man in New York named Walter Siebert. And we were no sooner in office after the coming of Confederation than Walter Siebert came to see me to tell me the sad story that he feared that he was going to have to close down for lack of capital. My administration guaranteed a loan to his company of \$500,000 which was a lot of money at that time. It was a lot more than it would be today. We

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MR. SMALLWOOD: also bought them or financed the buying of a landing -
an LST is it - a self-propelled landing barge, they used them for
landing troops in France during the war.

MR. DOODY: They also used them for tanks.

Mr. Smallwood.

Something of that nature. And because at that moment it was virtually impossible anywhere in the world to find a ship, to charter one, to hire one, or to buy one, shipping was very, very much in short supply. We financed them. And here the two mines operated side by side and all that time men were either dying or were contracting a deadly disease, a fatal disease and that went on for years and years and years, and it was almost by sheer accident that it was discovered, that this disease existed and that men were dying. And not only that men had died but that they continued to die and that there were a lot of mine workers who were doomed. They were going to die in a year or two years or three or five, and they did, and we all know the story now. The late Dr. James McGrath was the Minister of Health, and his deputy Dr. Leonard Miller, together making a magnificent team of medical administrators. They were said to be the best team of medical administrators in the whole of Canada, and their names were known and respected in the length and breadth of Canada. That department, with other able men in it, that department went along for years without realizing -

MR. J. CARTER: Why did you fire him?

MR. SMALLWOOD: I did not hear.

MR. J. CARTER: Why did the hon. gentleman fire Dr. McGrath?

MR. SMALLWOOD: Who?

MR. J. CARTER: You.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Oh, nonsense! That is sheer nonsense!

Dr. McGrath, who had a desperate health condition, who would come into Cabinet meetings with a large bottle, that large, of a white substance which he had to take every half hour, who had all kinds of things wrong with him, all kinds, wanted to resign, wanted to leave, and I pleaded with him to stay in, to stay in, and he stayed in at least two years after he was eager and anxious, desperately anxious to get out. Fired! He was one of the dearest friends I ever had in this life, one of the finest men that ever lived, Dr. James McGrath.

Mr. Smallwood:

Yet that great department, those great medical men went on for years and years, ten, twelve years without realizing what a bombshell we were all sitting on. Finally we brought men down from the Department of National Health of Ottawa. They came down, and made an investigation, and they did not discover it. Then we brought in someone from somewhere else. It was a very sad story, and it finally came out. It became common knowledge, and not only in Newfoundland, but from coast to coast in Canada it became a story that curdled people's blood.

MR. NEARY: Was it not a doctor from Ottawa who discovered it?

MR. SMALLWOOD: We had several doctors from Ottawa - there were two if not three - over a period - I am trying to bring it back - over a period of two or three years.

However here now we have evidence piled chin high - we are wading in it - evidence, unmistakable evidence, that we are sitting on the same kind of a bombshell in Baie Verte. I said last night when I read out a number of clippings from United States, Canadian and English newspapers that I have cut out here sitting in this place in the last few weeks - I read out some of them telling of the fear in England and in parts of Canada. They closed down a whole asbestos mine and mill in Ontario two or three weeks ago, closed it down completely, and then actions in court in different parts of the United States. The evidence is overwhelming. And I said as I read it out that the Minister of Health is an outharbour man, I called him a bayman, an outharbour man, who was born and lived most of his life in the outports on the Northeast Coast and who is a man of ordinary compassion, and common sense. He is not a skimpy hard-fisted, hard-headed heartless sort of minister. He is ordinarily decent, more perhaps than ordinarily decent as a minister. And I just cannot, I am not able, and I have got an ordinarily good imagination, but I cannot imagine that that minister is indifferent to this problem, that he is unaware of it. We just had a tribute paid to him by the hon.

Mr. Smallwood.

member in whose constituency Baie Verte is situate, who said he had had talks with him and conversations with him, and he said he was not so naive as to say that the minister was not interested, that he was not concerned, because he knew the difference. He knew that he is concerned.

MR. NEARY: The Leader said this afternoon that he -

MR. SMALLWOOD: I am addressing myself at the moment to a comment made by the hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) because I heard his speech yesterday, and the one just now with great interest and great pleasure. In my view he is a comer, he is a coming man in the public life of this Province. He has got spirit, and he has got fluency, and he is able, as we say, he is able to heave it out of him, which is a very good thing. The man has just come in here. He just walked in the other day, and already he has become one of the real speakers in the House here. And I am full of admiration for his spirit, lots of spirit, and this is what is needed. This is what this House needs. This is what public life needs. It needs men, especially young men, and youth is not a matter of calendar always, but men young in mind and young in heart and spirit, and spirited and energetic, and interested, keyed-up and interested in the problems of public life. And I agree with him in the tribute he paid to the hon. minister. Now I have to say this, that when I sat on that side of the House, and the present hon. minister sat across from me on this side of the House I had not great difficulty in keeping under control my tendency to have wild admiration for him. I had no trouble at all keeping that down. In fact I think between us there was the same lack of real difficulty. I doubt his admiration for me was unbounded and unlimited any more than mine was for him.

MR. NEARY: But he is not a vindictive man.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I do not think he is vindictive. I think he has compassion in him, and I am sure that whatever it is possible for him to do he will do to tackle this appalling problem for which we have to thank the member - not the member for - no matter how much he talked about it in the last two years - the man who has brought this thing up is the member who has brought it now, who has brought it to a head, is the member for that district.

MR. NEARY: W-5 brought it up.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Well W-5. Lots of people did. I do not claim any credit. I did not play any part in it. I have only become very conscious of it in this present debate. I have become very conscious of it because it all brings back to me the story of St. Lawrence, and are we going to have another St. Lawrence all over again. I plead with the minister. His colleague, the Minister of Forestry and Agriculture, told us here yesterday that in Labrador City, in Labrador, in his constituency, the Iron Ore Company of Canada, one of the two great iron ore companies there in that area, the other being in the city of Wabush, are now to spend - I still am not sure because my impression was when he first said it that it was \$50 million - in the current year the Iron Ore Company of Canada at Labrador City are planning to spend, are spending this year between \$4.5 million and \$6 million

MR. SMALLWOOD:

for dust control, which again is a killer. This dust control in an iron mine, in an iron mill can cause - what is it it causes?

MR. NEAPY: Silicosis.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Silicosis, which is a deadly disease, is it not? You can die of that, can you not? In fact if you get silicosis there is not too much hope that you will live, is there?

MR. NEAPY: Well you can linger on.

MR. SMALLWOOD: You can linger on - a nice way to be in the world, just lingering on.

Now, iron ore is a far less profitable product than asbestos, far less profitable. Furthermore there are far more iron mines in the world than there are asbestos mines. The asbestos mine at Baie Verte is probably the most profitable one in the whole of Canada for the simple reason that it is on tide water. You might almost say that at Baie Verte a ship can come in and throw her hook ashore onto the mine, that the ship ties onto the mine to be loaded with packaged asbestos; a very profitable mine, probably the most profitable asbestos mine in the whole of Canada.

Well if an iron mine which not only normally is far less profitable than an asbestos mine, if that iron mine and that particular iron mine having lost tens upon tens of millions of dollars in operation in recent times - they lost what was it, \$48 million?

AN HON. MEMBER: \$48 million.

MR. SMALLWOOD: \$48 million loss the year before last, and then last year just breaking even.

AN HON. MEMBER: They lost \$8 million in the first quarter.

MR. SMALLWOOD: They lost \$8 million in the first quarter of last year.

AN HON. MEMBER: Of this year.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Of this year, all right. They broke even last year, lost \$8 million in the first quarter of this year and the year before, \$48 million loss. Now if they can spend between \$4.5 million and \$6 million this year, and no doubt more next year, and no doubt more the

MR. SPALLWOOD:

year after with all those enormous losses, what in God's name is preventing or is stopping the government from insisting that that company spend real money. Suppose they do not declare a dividend for the next five years, suppose all their profits had to go for the next few years in doing whatever is physically and otherwise possible to be done to deal with this problem? Now I ask what is preventing the government. Maybe what is preventing them is the lack of legislation.

Have we got on our statute books today an Industrial Diseases Act? What about our Factory Act? What about our Mines Inspection Act? Now we have had a mines inspection act on the statute books for at least forty years, well certainly thirty years because under it the inspector would go to Bell Island to inspect the mine operation there. I think they had only the one inspector most of the time. He would go also to Buchans. And I believe that when an accident occurred in a mine it was the mines inspector under the Mines Regulations Act who had to conduct the enquiry into the certain circumstances of the death. I think that is the case.

Now, have we got any legislation. The Minister of Justice, who has written most of the legislation or caused it to be written the last eight years, maybe none has been written or introduced into the House in the last eight years. Maybe it was not needed. But I would suggest to the Minister of Health that he confer with his colleague, the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General and look at the existing legislation. Now if it is found to be inadequate, if it is found that it does not give the government the kind of authority it needs to have, all right draft one and bring it in here, now this session, next week, the week after next, bring it in here in this present session and I am sure the House will pass it. Now it does not have to be vengeful. It does not have to be vindictive. It does not have to be outrageous. It can be decent, civilized legislation and I would have no doubt at all that similar legislation can be found in other parts of Canada perhaps, and perhaps North America and perhaps other parts of the world. I do not know. But I would certainly imagine that

MP. SMALLWOOD:

the department will find lots of legislative precedent in different parts of this continent and the Continent of Europe.

I do not see how the government can fail to do that. It would be inexcusable and I do not think the government are looking for excuses. They do not welcome this terrible predicament at Baie Verte any more than the hon. member for the district does or I or any other hon. member. They do not welcome it. They do not countenance it. They are not prepared just to stand - what is the term they use? - to stonewall the matter, just stonewall it and let fellows over here talk their throats out and just stonewalk it and, you know, get stubborn about it and say, it should not have been suggested from that side of the House. We should have been the ones to suggest it.

The thing to do is for the Minister of Justice to stand up the minute I sit down, or ask me now to yield, so that he can get up and announce that it is being drafted, that it is almost completed. That is the thing for the minister to do. That is what I would do if I were sitting over there. The thing is the government must have the authority to do what needs to be done. Now if they have not got the authority, that is to say if the legislation that is in existence does not give them the authority, well then change the legislation. The government cannot change it. Governments do not pass laws. The House passes laws but the government can ask the House to pass them.

Now the member for the district of Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) could with a little legal help draft a clause or two and bring it in as an amendment. I am sure if he did - and a pretty appropriate one to do it, the very member for the district, although he ought to get closest collaboration with the member for the district that contains St. Lawrence, and the member for the district that contains Labrador City and the City of Wabush, he should get collaboration, close collaboration. In fact, instead of one member doing it it should be a sort of co-operative effort by the members of this House whether they be minister or not, the members of this House who have that problem in a particular and an accentuated way.

MR. NEAPY: Windsor-Buchans, Placentia East.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Windsor-Buchans, Placentia, that is Burin district is it not?

MR. NEAPY: No.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Placentia East? That is Long Harbour. Right.

Placentia East - the member is not here at the moment. These members should get together and I believe they would have the blessing of the government because it would be non-partisan, it would come from both sides of the House, there would not be anything partisan in it.

MR. NEAPY: The Minister of Justice represents the district with St. Lawrence in it.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Is St. Lawrence in the Attorney-General's district?

AN HON. MEMBER: Grand Bank.

MR. SMALLWOOD: No, it is not in Grand Bank district, is it?

MR. NEAPY: Yes it is.

MR. SMALLWOOD: It is. It still is. I know it was. Well, all right. Why would not the Attorney General be the chairman of an all-party - now there is nobody in the Liberal Reform Party representing a district that has a mine that constitutes any danger. But it could be a non-partisan committee and the Minister of Justice could go down in history as a man who brought that into the House. I am sure he wants to go down in history. If he does not, there is something wrong with him. What legislator does not want to go down in history well thought of?

That is all I have to say. I am going to vote against this motion to cut the minister's salary. That is just silly. That is just too foolish for words. I hope that when the point has been made by the official Opposition, that they too will gracefully withdraw. The purpose of it is to bring this thing to a head. Now having done that -

MR. SIMMONS: It is not a silly motion in that context.

MR. SMALLWOOD: In that context it would be a very sensible motion. But if it is persisted in, it is a silly motion. It has accomplished its purpose,

Mr. Smallwood:

now gracefully withdraw it. I cannot vote for it, and my colleagues who are not in the Chamber at the moment, told me they cannot vote for it, and so there would be four votes cast against it. And I dare say the government's life is hardly at stake.

MR. NEARY: I got to give my old buddy his salary.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And then there you are, but it will hoil down to two of us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. RIDEOUT: I wonder would the minister if he does not mind, I just want to say one word and then I will sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: I do not want the Committee to just be left with the illusion that the company, Advocate Mines, is doing nothing. I think I mentioned it Tuesday night, but it seems we have lost it in the debate today, that the company of Advocate Mines is doing nothing about the dust problem in Baie Verte. They did last Fall, I think October or November, announced a five year programme in which they are intended to spend \$3 million or \$4 million on dust control. It is precious little, I agree, with obviously profits that they are making. But I mean it is a start and I would not want the Committee to be left with the illusion that they are doing nothing. That is not the point at all. So I just want to say that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Justice.

HON. T. A. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, if I may have but a few words in this debate, and a very desirable debate, and a very necessary debate. May I say, I have been sitting here listening to the hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. T. Rideout), I have a fair idea as to the problem that is facing him, and a pretty good idea of the kind of agonizing decisions that he has to make. There have been some reference today during this debate on the tragedy at St. Lawrence, and there is no one in this House who has been - and I do not brag about this, it is not a very pleasant experience for

MR. HICKMAN:

anyone who has been so involved as I have been during the past ten years in the St. Lawrence problem - and there is a lesson to be learned in it, and it is not the easiest situation that a member from a district has to face. Corporations are not inclined to spend money, adequate money on safety voluntarily. And they do a reasonably good job of convincing governments, particularly governments in Provinces like Newfoundland where we are desperate for employment, where we are desperate for permanent jobs, that if we push them too hard that we will force them to curtail production or to even abandon the operation altogether. They have got a fair amount of expertise in that and they are not adverse to using it.

MR. NEARY: So you would be damned if you do and you will be damned if you do not.

MR. HICKMAN: On the other hand a member has an obligation to his constituents. The hon. member also has an obligation not just to let this House know, I know my colleague the hon. Minister of Health, and I know the hon. Minister of Mines are very cognizant and very determined to find a solution and provide necessary help for the asbestosis problem that exist in Baie Verte. But this House would be surprised at the amount of time that has to go into an effort into getting people throughout the Province to understand precisely what the problem is. If you go too far you will be accused of playing politics on the misfortunes of your constituents, but if you do not go far enough you will not generate the sympathy of the people of the Province for that particular area.

MR. RIDEOUT: Or be accused of trying to close the company down.

MR. HICKMAN: Or you will be accused of trying to close the company down.

And that is what I found when I first became a member of this House, first elected in 1966. The tragic history of St. Lawrence was very, very briefly touched on by the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood). The situation in St. Lawrence was that you had these two mines operating, Alcan from the very beginning showed some sense

Mr. Hickman:

of corporate responsibility, not enough, but some. The St. Lawrence Mining Corporation, which was owned by this gentleman named Siebert, they had no conscience, they had no interest in the welfare of the people of St. Lawrence, and they did nothing to protect the well-being of the people who work there.

And then there is the inclination of the professionals, the medical profession, to pay little, if any, attention to the suggestions and the complaints of the residents who were suffering from whatever this malady is. All during the 1940's and the 1950's an abnormally high number of people who had worked underground in St. Lawrence found themselves in at the Sanatorium, and they were being diagnosed then by doctors as having tuberculosis or silicosis. But they kept saying, "If we do have tuberculosis it is a peculiar kind, because we remain, other than for respiratory problems, difficulty in breathing, we give all the appearance of being healthy. We do not have this sallow complexion, we are not losing weight, and then all of a sudden we die, our people die a very agonizing death within a matter of a few weeks." Eventually, and the great crusader down there was the late Rennie Slaney, a trade unionist, a miner, like a man crying in the wilderness, nobody listening to him, after all, he was not a professional, who is going to listen to him against the opinions of the researchers and the medical doctors? He kept insisting that there was a wrong diagnosis. There was also another very significant fact; that every time a miner came in and if he allowed himself to be opened up, a biopsy for them to have a look at his lungs, that was curtains! He was gone within a short time. And this is still a battle today where doctors say, "We would like to have a look inside of the man so we can diagnose his condition." Dr. Brian Hollywood does not have to look at all. He has more experience, more exposure than any doctor in North America to this kind of disease.

But in any event, Mr. Chairman, I am getting ahead of my story. In 1959, 1960 thereabouts a gentleman named Dr. Devillers from the National Health and Welfare, came to St. Lawrence and he had working with him Dr. David Parsons who practiced medicine in

Mr. Hickman:

St. John's now, and who was then a medical student, He is a native of Harbour Grace. And in 1960 they made a startling discovery, that the mines in St. Lawrence were radioactive, and then they knew it was not tuberculosis at all. The miners were right. It had never been tuberculosis.

MR. NEARY: Was it the union that got him down there?

MR. HICKMAN: It may have been. This I do not know, because I was not involved in public life. But I was still spending a great deal of time in my home town in Grand Bank, which is not that far away from St. Lawrence, and the people on the Burin Peninsula were not aware of what was going on in St. Lawrence. They would hear about somebody dying, but no one was appreciating the real tragedy that was unfolding, The government of the day was most assuredly and this Legislature not aware of it; the people of Newfoundland were not aware of it. And then when the discovery was made there were certain amendments made to the Workmen's Compensation Act, They appeared to be very startling for the day and revolutionary, but they did not go any more than a third of the way they should go to try and compensate the disabled miners and their dependents.

But I found when I came into public life, and I came straight into the administration of the day, that within that administration - and I am not saying this, and I do not want the hon. gentleman opposite from Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) to get annoyed at this, but I think he will admit it is true - that the government of the day was on the defensive, and they were on the defensive because all of the experts within the building, who from time to time had been asked about this, were on the defensive, and there was this great reluctance to admit that really things in St. Lawrence were as bad as they said they were. I had the frightening, traumatic experience during my first election campaign in Little St. Lawrence to speak to a man the day before he died, and saw what was happening. It is an unforgettable experience. And there was no doubt in my mind that the tragedy had not truly unfolded, and most assuredly was not being met head on, and was not being dealt with.

MR. HICKMAN:

And then I, in my endeavors to try and get some change of policy, some renewed activity and concern for St. Lawrence, I had an aide, help from a person who I had not anticipated receiving help from. That was the late Mr. Justice Harry A. Winter. He had retired from the bench and he had been appointed by the government of the day under the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act to make the review that is required every five or ten years.

During that hearing Rennie Slaney came before him with a very compelling brief. Mr. Justice Winter, in his report which had to be tabled in the House, dealt with the matters within his terms of reference and then went a step beyond - I am sure hon. gentlemen recall this - and said, "This is totally outside of the terms of reference of my committee. But the submission and the story told by the late Rennie Slaney was so compelling that I feel that the St. Lawrence is indeed a national tragedy and one that requires a royal commission.

MR. NEARY: Was he not a union leader?

MR. HICKMAN: Originally, yes. Now the reaction; I was new in politics. I was very new in politics. We had a Fall session. So it was in about November, I think, the Winter report was made public and I had only been in two months. The first morning after this had been made public - the press had picked it up - I heard the then Minister of Mines say that he had heard the report but there was nothing new, government was fully aware of the problem in St. Lawrence and there was no need for a royal commission. That struck me as being a rather unusual position for a minister to make this kind of statement without consulting his colleague who happened to represent the area. But, you know, I was not that familiar with the way the political scheme worked. So I said to myself, "I guess this is the way it is done."

The next day the Minister of Health made a similar statement. The third day the Premier of the day made a similar statement, and I am sure that he has regretted it since. He referred to Mr. Justice

MR. HICKMAN:

Winter's report as "historic sensationalism." None of this was helping me. The union then had passed into other hands. Well, be that as it may, we finally got the royal commission appointed and they sat and they did a magnificent job, make no mistake about it. It was under the chairmanship of Mr. Fintan Aylward who is a native of St. Lawrence, who had a good knowledge of the problem; Dr. David Parsons, one of the discoverers of radio-activity down there; Dr. Bliss Murphy, who had read more X-rays from St. Lawrence than he cares to mention, and the other was Mr. Fred Gover who was then the Deputy Minister of Mines.

MR. NEARY: From Bell Island originally.

MR. HICKMAN: From Bell Island originally. They took three years to do it and the report was presented to government in September or maybe late August, 1969. About a month thereafter I departed the government. There were some very strong recommendations made. I do not want to sound political but I was not that impressed with the approach that was used today by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. Because shortly thereafter that report of the royal commission came in I found myself in Opposition. The hon. gentleman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will remember that time after time I would rise in my seat and ask the hon. the Minister of Health or the then Premier when would be get an indication from government that the recommendations of the royal commission in St. Lawrence would be implemented.

Eventually the then Minister of Health, now the Leader of the Opposition, presented to the House, I think he called it a white paper, and he took each recommendation one by one and a very high percentage of them had this comment, "There will be further study." I was appalled. I just could not believe what I was hearing. Here was this commission that had gone into the greatest detail. The hon. gentleman will remember there was a recommendation which said that the government should put in a monitoring technician. On that thing, as I recall it, was that we believe this is the responsibility of the company. And maybe it is. There was a subsequent change of policy

MR. HICKMAN:

on that in 1972. There was a change of policy in 1972 and there was a government technician appointed. But maybe it is the government's responsibility.

AN HON. MEMBER: The special fund -

MR. HICKMAN: Now, the special fund, we will come to that in a minute.

In any event - this applies as much to the problem say, in Baie Verte or St. Lawrence or any other mine - when you have a history of tragedy, of health hazards in a mine, which creates suspicion and fear between the employees and management, imposing a regulation saying that the company shall do it, no matter how honest, no matter unbiased or fair or competent that monitoring technician is from the company, you will not find acceptability for his work from the union. They will not do it.

I am concerned about a statement made by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) when he was making a sweeping condemnation of the mines in Newfoundland as it relates to St. Lawrence. The history of St. Lawrence is beyond dispute, the hazards beyond dispute. Since the discovery was made pursuant to directions from the various ministers of mines, and the readings that take place hourly or daily in the mines, and the installation of ventilating equipment, the readings today show that the radio-activity is below the acceptable level. It has got to be watched very carefully. All you need is a miner to go down some day wanting to use the phone; he is in the mine and pulls off the fan to go and make a phone call and then walks away and forgets to turn it on and the radiation can shoot up very quickly.

The mines in St. Lawrence are still not the most pleasant place in which to be employed. But there have been substantial improvements from a safety point of view. But that town still has a long way to go before you get the kind of unified spirit amongst everyone in that town that is so necessary for a town of that size to survive. One of the things that we did as a government in St. Lawrence was put in a new water system. The people of St. Lawrence had been getting their water from artesian wells. A dentist, by the way,

MR. HICKMAN:

would starve to death in St. Lawrence. Tooth decay, tooth cavity unknown in St. Lawrence. The people of St. Lawrence kept insisting that water had something to do with conducting the radons and that they wanted surface water. Tests were done by the Department of Health, comparisons made between the water in Grand Bank, St. John's and I believe Carbonear and St. Lawrence came out as being, you know, safe water.

But there was no way that the people of St. Lawrence would accept it. Particularly when up in the managers row, where there are six houses for management, they were getting their water from a small pond behind and would not hook into the artesian well. So, you know, when you reach that position - and this is the sort of situation that I hope my hon. friend from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) will never find himself in - when you reach that situation you need something more than facts and studies to dissuade the people of the area that everything is all right. At a cost of, I think, between \$600,000 and close to \$1 million, a new water system was put in St. Lawrence even though every study said that the original water system was safe. That had to be done. And more has to be done. The people of that town in St. Lawrence are entitled that more be done.

I am not a great admirer of the Alcan enterprise. These companies went into St. Lawrence and found a situation quite different, say, from Labrador City or the City of Wabush or Buchans. The town was there. They were not called upon to provide municipal services. They never had to assume any obligation to provide housing for the people employed in the mines and the people who would move in. Their tax rate, their municipal tax rate, in my opinion, has been much too low. They finally agreed to make a contribution after the first recreational announcement in 1967, they agreed that they would put up twenty-five per cent towards the cost of a recreational facility.

MR. NEARY: A building?

MR. HICKMAN: No, a

Mr. Hickman.

recreational facilities. That is what they have there. That is their contribution. So, you know, I cannot get uptight and start screaming and shouting and defending the company.

MR. ROBERTS: Fifty per cent of the fund.

MR. HICKMAN: The fund? The recommendation on the fund - that fund still, Mr. Chairman, has not been set up the way that I would like to see it - the recommendation was that it would be a four-way fund. There would be four contributors; twenty-five per cent of the Government of Newfoundland; twenty-five per cent of the Government of Canada, because it was a national tragedy and still is; twenty-five per cent Alcan, and twenty-five per cent Siebert. But that latter recommendation was a waste of time.

MR. NEARY: I was trying to negotiate but I could not wait for the Government of Canada or Siebert to move in.

MR. HICKMAN: But that forth recommendation with respect to the Siebert family was a waste of time. I do not know why it was in there, but it was there. There is only the widow left. Obviously their history in St. Lawrence indicated that they would not respond to any request.

MR. SMALLWOOD: I thought she may not have had any money.

MR. HICKMAN: And she may not have had any money.

But the Government of Canada, to their undying shame, have never responded. I would suggest that in the files in this building - and representation was made by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) as acting Minister of Labour - that the only response from the Government of Canada is a letter of acknowledgement that he has from the executive assistant of the minister saying that your letter will be brought to my minister's attention. And we have started again. We are going back again to ask the Government of Canada to make a contribution, because this fund, as we have changed

Mr. Hickman.

the Workmen's Compensation Act, today anyone in St. Lawrence who has been employed with Alcan, be it on the surface or anywhere, and who comes down with not only carcinoma of the lungs or respiratory diseases but cancer at all, qualifies for Workmen's Compensation, and this has been retroactive. There has been over \$3 million in the last two or three years, additional money.

MR. NEARY: I got one that I am working on now.

MR. HICKMAN: Now as these people come on to the payroll of the Workmen's Compensation Board, they are entitled to be covered by the fund. And this means that it has got to be renegotiated, but as more people come on the amount being paid to each individual family is less, and still we have - and I know some hon. gentlemen say, you know, we should always be nice to Ottawa. Well here is an instance where we have always been nice to Ottawa. We have written them polite letters. They have never responded. They have to be aware of the national significance of St. Lawrence. It was been the subject matter of many articles by national journalists and writers, television programmes galore. But being nice, being friendly, pleading is not paying off. Nothing is happening. So we are starting again.

MR. NEARY: But you have to admit that you did the right thing by going ahead.

MR. HICKMAN: Oh, yes. There is no question about it. But we are starting again. And for the record we will be nice and cosy and diplomatic for a little while, but this is Ottawa's last clear chance as far as I am concerned to continue to ignore their responsibilities to the people of St. Lawrence and the miners from that area who have worked underground or worked in and around that mine. And I for one do not intend to allow Ottawa to assume from our silence, our public silence, that we approve of their attitude of neglect and lack of concern.

Mr. Hickman.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that if the same situation existed in the -

MR. NEARY: Excuse me. That was a wrong direction based on the commission's report.

MR. HICKMAN: Oh, yes, and the commission's reports were sent to Ottawa. The Department of National Health and Welfare have the reports. The member for Burin-Burgeo has the reports. And the ministry that is involved has the reports. And there never has been a recognition, never been an indication, never been a sign that they care. But I would venture, Mr. Chairman, that if the same situation occurred in the mining areas of Ontario, or even more so Quebec, that the ink would not be dry on the report before you would see regiments of public servants being instructed to get out of Ottawa and get down and find a solution.

So I say to the hon. gentleman from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) that apart from continuing his meaningful discussions with the Minister of Health - you know, I really do not think that this \$5,000 to this very learned doctor is that germane. The gentleman is going to do the work anyway. And I do not even think there is a principle involved when the man says, "I am going to do it anyway." Because I do know this, that the Minister of Health and the Minister of Mines and their officials have been spending a great deal of time on both Baie Verte and Labrador City. As a government this Fall we had a submission made to us, a very good submission, not an emotional one, a very factual one by the Steelworkers, where they came in without publicity, without great press conferences, without pointing fingers at anyone, without making any accusations, but in an effort to assist and work with government, made some very good recommendations as to the kind of regulations that should be studied and hopefully brought in by government, and my opinion is - but I say this subject to correction - that it can be done by regulation -

MR. R. MOORES: Are you talking about the one that was submitted in June, 1975?

MR. HICKMAN: I am talking about the one they submitted in November or December of 1975, after the last general election whenever that was.

MR. R. MOORES: That was submitted in June, 1975.

MR. HICKMAN: Well, not to the cabinet.

MR. H. COLLINS: The latest one was in December.

MR. HICKMAN: In December.

And then in either December or January we had another similar well-documented, well-researched brief presented to us by the CNTU on behalf of the miners of St. Lawrence. And at that time they were given a very firm commitment by the hon. Premier that he would instruct, which he did forthwith, the Minister of Mines and Energy to ask his officials, his experts, to go through these proposed amendments to the regulations and to bring back to cabinet firm recommendations as to what regulations can meaningfully be implemented and approved. And this is in the process, as I understand it from the hon. Minister of Health, and from the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy of being worked on right now. If legislation is needed, if amendments are required to the Mines Inspection Act or to the Department of Health Act in order to implement these, then I have no hesitancy in saying that that legislation will come before this House. But I believe we can do it without additional legislation. There is one thing that I know my colleague, the hon. Minister of Health is looking at very, very carefully indeed, and the Minister of Mines, and I suspect the hon. Minister responsible for the Environment is that various groups tend to grow up in government with their own little - I will not say empires - but their own areas of influence and their own spheres of responsibility. And another question that

Mr. Hickman.

we are looking at now and that has to be resolved is whether or not the total responsibility for mines safety, including health hazards in the sense of radiation or asbestos, should not come within the one department. Right now the Minister of Mines is responsible for mines inspection, and safety the hon. Minister of Health is responsible for the health of all Newfoundlanders, including miners, and the hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs has responsibility to try and protect the environment against pollution.

MR. NEARY: And Manpower and Industrial Relations has safety responsibilities as well.

MR. HICKMAN: And Manpower and Industrial Relations, through the Crown agency, the Workmen's Compensation Board, has certain safety responsibilities as well. All of them are working. All of them have a great deal to offer in that particular field, but tying them altogether, I believe, is becoming very essential or at least apparently it is becoming more essential. And I would not want this House to conclude the debate on the hon. minister's salary. I have to admit that I am going to sustain the hon. minister's salary. I am going to vote to sustain it, there is no question about it. He is a great man.

MR. HICKMAN:

One of the best Ministers of Health that this Province has ever had is the hon. the member for Gander (Mr. Collins). Now I do not know if hon. gentlemen have noticed what has been taking place in the Department of Health under his ministry and under his guidance. He has got the common sense to be able to assess the needs of the Province. He is not so vain as to believe that he cannot learn something from the medical profession and other expertise he has within his department.

MR. SMALLWOOD: And on top of that he is a good outharbourman.

MR. HICKMAN: And on top of that he is a good outharbour man. He has one handicap. That is that he is not from the South Coast. But that is his problem and that is a problem most hon. gentlemen in this House have except my hon. friend from Merasheen and myself.

MR. SMALLWOOD: He comes from an area almost next to Bonavista Bay.

MR. HICKMAN: I realize that.

MR. SMALLWOOD: What more can you say.

MR. HICKMAN: You cannot say me no. But in my opinion we have more sensible policies attuned to the needs of Newfoundlanders in the field of health emanate from the present minister than any of his predecessors - and I was one of them. I say it is because he is prepared to rely on good advice from that very strong staff. He has got the best Deputy Minister of Health of any Canadian province. I challenge anyone to take issue with that. But the hon. gentleman himself has the right to be able to temper the expert advice to make it realistic in the Newfoundland environment.

MR. NEARY: I wish he would put the laundry back in Port aux Basques.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, may I in concluding just indicate to you and to this Committee my very strong confidence in my great friend and colleague, the hon. the Minister of Health.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Health.

HON. W. COLLINS: All those tirades at this hour in the night really does not go astray, I suppose. Now first of all, Mr. Chairman, I would like to again reiterate what I said this afternoon, and that is

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MR. COLLINS:

to assure and to reassure the hon. member for Bale Verte (Mr. Rideout) and indeed all hon. members of the House and the Committee tonight that we are leaving no stone unturned in terms of assisting Doctor Sellikof wherever we can.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLINS: In fact Doctor Colohan has been in touch with Doctor Black. Of course, Doctor Black is going to be very close to the scene, going to be very much involved in whatever Doctor Sellikof might do. We have already gone on record with those people and Doctor Sellikof knows this, that if we need some new equipment, if the hospital should need some new equipment to accommodate Doctor Sellikof and his testing we are prepared to do it. If they need the co-operation of the facilities on Harvey Road, not the building - the building down there is not too much - but all of the records, the X-rays, the whole registry is available to him. No doubt he is going to be coming in to the department, to Harvey Road and so on. Now we are - you know, \$5,000, let us forget that for a moment. That is not going to be the deciding factor as to the outcome or the quality of the report which Doctor Sellikof eventually makes. What will be beneficial and meaningful is the support which he gets from the company, from Doctor Black, from the union, from the members who work there, and they are all union members, and from the government. I think that all of us together, that we will see a good report come from that very learned and very qualified gentleman. So I would like again to reassure the hon. member that that will be done. The \$5,000, it is not going to hurt us too much. I suspect it is going to cost us a lot more in terms of providing auxiliary and ancillary equipment to do the job. But certainly the \$5,000 is not significant. As I indicated to the hon. member we are leaving our options open on that. Certainly we will do whatever is necessary to insure that this particular problem is properly studied, proper information given to us. I believe then in line with what my colleague, the hon. Minister of Justice just said, that as a result of the enormous amount of work which

MR. COLLINS:

has been done by the inner departmental committee of Provincial Affairs and Environment, of Mines and Energy, of Manpower and Industrial Relations and the Department of Health that by the time that report is done, and maybe before it is received, we will be ready to move as we were never ready to move before in terms of dealing with the occupational health problems of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, there have been a lot of questions asked.

The hon. member from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), he has asked a lot of questions. He has made a lot of suggestions, he says. One of the first ones, I think, which he dealt with this afternoon or this evening was about nurses, whether we were receiving applications from nurses for employment in Newfoundland. I have done some checking on this. We have received no communications from any nurses, no applications from any nurses in the department. But there are a number of hospitals across the Province - now this is where the applications would go, of course - who have received applications from nurses outside. Those applications are coming from Ontario and from Nova Scotia primarily. The hon. member inquired as to what the position was with regard to nurses in Newfoundland, were we over-staffed, were we short or what. There are a few, a very few - how many, I have not got the exact figure - a very few nursing positions vacant in the Province. Where there are vacancies, it is mainly in what this official refers to as unpopular locations. I suppose what he means by that is -

MR. NEARY: Is there a surplus now?

MR. COLLINS: I would not say there is a surplus. But we are pretty well off apart from in some of the more remote places where sometimes it is a bit difficult to get nurses to go. There are a few vacancies. There are a few vacancies in specialist nursing positions. Other than that we are in pretty good shape.

MR. NEARY: We are in better shape than we have been in years.

MR. COLLINS: I would say so. The hon. member also drew attention to the very real problem, the very serious problem of alcohol abuse. That is a concern for all of us, not only in Newfoundland but all over, certainly all over the western world. Certainly in Newfoundland, Mr. Chairman, it is of great concern to us. There is a fair amount of work being done on it. Statistics are not available for the simple reason that time has not elapsed yet whereby statistics would mean too much. We do know for sure but we cannot prove it statistically that there has been a decrease in the number of motor vehicle accidents since the R.C.M.P. began the so-called crackdown on driving. We know that coincident with that there has been a reduction in the number of injured people entering the hospital system. Just what the figures are, statistics, as I said, are not available.

There are a lot of problems posed by this, Mr. Chairman. At the meeting in Ottawa last week we reviewed the situation across Canada. Each province had an input into this. Last July or August - I am not sure which - but last Summer there was a committee established, a federal-provincial committee to look into ways and means of coping with the problem, first of all establish what the problems were. The hon. member must have read the report, I think, because some of the real problems are the problems as they relate to impaired driving, problems relating to teenage drinking, the problems relating to alcohol violence, related to alcohol, alcohol's effect on the worker on the job, on production and of course, maybe one of the most important ones of all, the effect on the native population in Labrador. Mr. Chairman, that is a very real problem which we are wrestling with now and trying to find ways and means to do what has to be done. But let me assure the committee that this working group, federal-provincial group while they have decided now upon the - we did last week - decide upon the approach from here on, and we also gave the committee notice that we want a report from them within three months so that then the machinery -

MR. NEARY: What are their terms of reference?

MR. COLLINS: The terms of reference - I do not know if I can find them here. There is so much stuff here that is very - well concretely the frame of reference which the Committee has been given identifies the six groups which we just mentioned, the six areas which I have just mentioned of concern. They will be concentrating on those areas which I just mentioned and give us a report as to what they consider is the best approach to take to deal with the problem. That should be available to us within three months.

Well this is the first time there has been any real effort made towards coming to grips with the problem, yes. The hon. member also mentioned bulk purchasing of drugs. Does the hon. member want to ask a question?

MR. R. MOORES: Yes. I was just upstairs doing a little research then. Is it not true that compared with other provinces in Canada, statistically at least in the number of alcoholics, that Newfoundland is perhaps one of the lowest in the nation and that it is not the number but the care and concern for them?

MR. COLLINS: Yes, I think that is a true statement, Mr. Chairman. But the other side of that coin is that it is rapidly becoming a very serious problem in Newfoundland. So while we are in a fairly favourable position now statistically in relation to other parts of Canada, that position could very well change and is changing.

The hon. member mentioned the wisdom and the possible savings associated with bulk purchasing of drugs. All of the drugs used by the cottage hospitals in Newfoundland and the medical officers around the Province are now purchased through our central supply. I was going to say all of the hospital boards -

MR. SMALLWOOD: Since when?

MR. COLLINS: Well, certainly within this past year.

MR. SMALLWOOD: Good, good.

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MR. COLLINS: Yes, within this past year. I was going to say all of the hospital boards, but I will not say that because I am not sure if they have all come in. But the hospital boards have formed a central purchasing group themselves so that they will get better prices, rather than Grand Falls going out tomorrow and Gander going the next day and Corner Brook going next weeks. They have formed a purchasing group themselves. We thought that that is a very useful first step. Maybe it is not far enough. But over and above that, both our central supply and the hospital boards' own organization are working very closely with our own purchasing agent in government, in Public Works and Services.

MR. COLLINS:

so that all three of them together will combine their efforts, combine their needs whenever that is possible so that we will be purchasing even a greater bulk and consequently get better prices. There is a good cross reference system between them.

Then over and above that after the Ministers of Health meeting last Summer, a pilot project was undertaken and it is my information, Mr. Chairman, that this is the first time this has been tried, a pilot project was undertaken by the federal and provincial governments whereby the federal purchasing agency and the federal public works did some purchasing of some specific drugs for all of the Provinces. In other words, the provinces would make a requisition to the federal Department of Supply and Services and they would go out and purchase it. That is the first time to my knowledge that has been done and it was a pilot project.

At the meeting last week we were given a progress report. And the provinces which have taken part in it - and we did - the provinces which took part in it were most satisfied with the results so far as that was determined and every effort is now being made to speed up the process whereby all of our drugs eventually can be purchased that route. There will be a small charge because for some reason - and do not ask me why I suppose there is an obvious reason in the meantime - the federal Department of Public Works purchases for really the federal departments and agencies but they do impose a charge on all the agencies. In other words, they are supposed to be doing things at cost. In other words, they will not lose any money.

MR. NEAPY: Even at that there would be a saving.

MR. COLLINS: Even at that there would be a saving. I am sure that there will be a saving for us as we go down that road.

What were some of the other questions? The hon. member asked when the Health Sciences Complex would be open. It is a bit difficult to say but the best information that we have now is that the Health Sciences Complex will be open sometime early in the New Year. That is the best information that I have from the Deputy Minister and the others.

MR. COLLINS:

Now, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the contracts—and I will say it again, I said it this afternoon and I will repeat it again — the monies for the construction of the Health Sciences Complex is in my department. I suppose it could be argued and it will be argued by members opposite that the mere fact that that is in my department, well that is the place we should discuss everything relating to the Health Sciences Complex.

MR. ROBERTS: But you as the minister ask for supply, would the minister agree on that point?

MR. COLLINS: Well that is a reasonable approach. But, Mr. Chairman, let me say something else — and the hon. Leader of the Opposition knows this — that the Department of Health, while the money appears here, the Department of Health is not in a position, certainly I am not in a position and I have no responsibility as Minister of Health — I have a collective responsibility in terms of the government — but I have no direct departmental responsibility to really know and be knowledgeable and be able to answer the types of questions which might be asked about the construction of the Health Sciences Complex. The tenders are called by the Department of Public Works.

MR. ROBERTS: Would you yield for just a second?

MR. COLLINS: I am always in a compassionate and forgiving and —

MR. MUPPHY: We should have more like you in the House.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister and I am glad to be the beneficiary of his compassion. I do not want to debate. I just want to make a point which I think is relevant to what the minister was saying. And I do not disagree with what the minister has said because the Department of Public Works are the agent — I do not use that in a legal or technical sense but as a descriptive term — are the agent of the Minister of Health or the Department of Health. The minister finds himself in a position really of being the owner and paying for it but not being the builder. But all I asked for this afternoon, and I asked for what I did ask because I think it is in everybody's interests to go at it this way instead of having all the other ways we could go at this particular question. I think it is a

MR. ROBERTS:

question which must be gone at. But all I asked for was to have made public the contracts between the government on one hand and the Scrivener firm or firms on the other hand.

I do not know whether the minister signed them or whether the Minister of Public Works signed them or whether some official signed them - and it does not really matter for these purposes - but all I asked the minister was could he make them available to us. It might well be having looked at them - and I am trying to be reasonable about this. I mean, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) referred, I think, to some documents that are circulating around that are scurrilous at best. They may or may not be true.

MR. NEARY: Outrageous.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes. I am not going to stand and read them. I could stand and read them but I am not going to because it is rotten just to read that sort of garbage. But there are some points in it that may or may not be true. I am not referring to some of the allegations. I am referring to points about the contracts. When were the fees - I have a whole list of questions. When we finish with this occupational health business I want to put some of them. You know, when were the fees settled? I have gone through all the Hansards and done a little bit of research on it.

So all I really want to do is not to hammer the minister. The reason we have come up on this in this one is we have ten hours left, I understand, when the evening finishes under the seventy-five hour guillotine rule and the odds are we will not get much beyond the Health Department. I understand the government House Leader proposes to call municipal affairs next. I understand that. Now that may change but that is the present thinking. Well with all respect to the gentleman from Green Bay (Mr. Peckford), Sir, he is loquacious as well as eloquent and once we get into Municipal Affairs my guess is that is where the Committee will end, the guillotine will fall with us still in the Municipal Affairs Department everybody

MR. ROBERTS:

has it. My friend from Lewisporte (Mr. White) is good for hours on the problems in his district and properly and legitimately so. So we are never going to get to public works. We have not got a public accounts committee. This is the fifty-seventh sitting day and no public accounts committee has yet been. So this is the only way we are going to debate it.

MR. NEADY: I have a question on the Order Paper now for a week and I have not gotten an answer.

MR. ROBERTS: Right. Back in 1972 and 1973 I was taking strips of hide off Mr. Earle. Mr. Val Earle was then the Minister of Public Works and he was saying, "Oh well we will get the contracts." Back in 1973 in February - that is three years and more gone - the government announced that the performance of the construction managers, Scrivener Projects Newfoundland Limited is under close scrutiny. So you know it has been around a long time.

AN HON. MEMBER: What was that in relation to?

MR. ROBERTS: It was with particular relation to the Carbonear Hospital. We in those days were giving the government the headline in the Telegram, Heavy Going For Supply Bill, and it was over. Poor Mr. Val Earle was finding the going heavy. It was beyond his comprehension. So we are not after the minister, not in the way I feel about this occupational health thing. I mean that is different.

All I want really - and I am grateful to the minister for interrupting and letting me make the point - but all I want is the contracts. Then when I have the contracts it may well be that many of my questions will be answered. If they are answered I would be just as happy to see it rest because the sort of trash that is in those documents - and I will show them to the minister outside the Committee. He has probably seen them. I know many hon. gentlemen opposite have seen them. And I am not going to read that sort of trash and abuse of the fact we have parliamentary protection. But some of the things in it I think are legitimate questions and I am

MR. ROBERTS:

trying to get to the bottom of them. I would rather do that. I could stand up and I could read that so-called affidavit but it would serve nobody. It would not serve this House. It would not serve the people of this Province. It would, you know, throw mud and dirt and filth.

MR. NEARY: A juicy reading.

MR. ROBERTS: A juicy reading but - I think it is a matter that all of us could take part in. These documents have been around. I know that three or four of the local news media have them. I believe members on the other side have them. The gentleman for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has had them. I have them.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will you show them now?

MR. ROBERTS: I will show them to anybody who wants them. I would not table them but I will certainly show them to anybody who wants them. They are interesting. What is reported to be photostatic copies of checks and things. You know it is frightful stuff.

AN HON. MEMBER: Give an example.

MR. ROBERTS: I am not interested. All I want are the contracts. I do not want the contract to hammer the minister. I want the contracts to see what is in them. Then depending on what is in them we will see where we go. Now if the minister will not produce the contracts -then as I said today I will be coming back with hard words because I would think that would be an unfortunate situation. But I am grateful to the minister, Mr. Chairman, for letting him interrupt him.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I did not expect to get involved in the construction of the Health Sciences Complex. I was not prepared for it. I am not prepared for it now.

MR. H. COLLINS:

I would have presumed that that would have been dealt with by Public Works which is the logical place for it to be dealt with. The only thing I can say is that I will take the hon. Leader of the Opposition's request under advisement, and I will certainly have to discuss it with my colleagues, particularly my colleague, the Minister of Public Works. I give him that undertaking, but I cannot give him any other undertaking at this time, I do not think he would expect me to do that.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know if there are any other notes - I cannot seem to find any more here.

MR. NEARY: The alcohol problem!

MR. COLLINS: There are no statistics. We would not have statistics on that. But, as I said before, the whole bit of alcohol abuse, drug abuse, I think the hon. member referred to drug abuse, an overdose of drugs and so on. And that is something, Mr. Chairman, which is of concern to us. We have had recent meetings with the Pharmaceutical Association. We have had numerous meetings with the people in our own department, the senior officials, we have had discussions with other jurisdictions to establish what they have been doing, and to see if there is something we can learn from them whereby we can control this. The worst offenders, I believe, the hon. member suggests also, may be -

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. COLLINS: - the, or the worst offenses might be occurring under the indigent drug programme.

MR. NEARY: Those with the drug cards.

MR. COLLINS: With the drug cards which is administered by the Department of Social Services. The welfare officers decide who gets cards, and they also reconcile any purchases. The funds are in my department. But that is a concern to us, and everything I can assure you which can be done is being done to try and find some way whereby we can quickly establish within a matter of days, if we can, you know, if something like that is taking place. You cannot take all of the cards or the cards on all of the people and put them into a computer every day.

Mr. Collins:

There has got to be some means whereby we can establish that there are some suspicions that some people might be doing just that, then we can feed it into a computer bank and get the information which we need. Those things are being looked at, Mr. Chairman, and hopefully we can come up with some remedial measures.

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

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, first of all, Sir, I would like to congratulate the member for Bale Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout) for the excellent speeches that he has made in connection with the problem that exists within his district. I think he has spoken with compassion, honesty and sincerity, and I think he means every word that he says, and I am sure that he has -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. ROWE: - brought to light before this Committee a problem that exists in this Province, in his particular district, but which has ramifications for other areas of the Province. For instance, it just crossed my mind when I was listening to the speech tonight that we were talking about the various mines where problems have existed. There has been a new mine opened up in Newfoundland in recent months. That is the Daniels Harbour zinc mine. Now there is not one word about that mine at this point. I do not think we have really had a zinc mine in Newfoundland for any great length of time. And heavens only knows what problems may crop up in ten or fifteen years.

MR. FLIGHT: Buchans is zinc.

MR. ROWE: Buchans zinc, I am sorry. Right, zinc.

AN HON. MEMBER: And it has its problems too.

MR. ROWE: And it has its problems. But heavens only knows what kind of problems are going to crop up in the Daniels Harbour zinc mine. And, you know, it is a very timely topic to come up before this Committee at this stage. And probably when we are looking at all these mines we should not forget some of these newly created and opened mines in this Province.

But, Sir, I did want to say how proud I was, although I

MR. ROWE:

am not an old-timer in this House, but I have been here a little longer than my colleague from Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout), how proud I was to hear him not only defend and fight for the lives of his constituents in that particular community, but the excellent way in which he defend himself following certain accusations that were made or cast at him during the course of debate.

Now, Sir, the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. Smallwood) suggests that the motion put by the Leader of the Opposition is a silly motion. Now, Sir, it depends on how you want to interpret. Of course it is silly. We do not expect for one minute that this House is going to reduce the minister's salary to \$1. In that context it is silly. But, Sir, there are several things that you can do when you are dissatisfied with a minister's performance, and we at that point were completely and totally and disgustingly dissatisfied with the performance of the minister with respect to questions that were put to him mainly by my colleague from Baie Verte-White Bay. Now we can take the minister and we can hang him or shoot him, if we are so disgusted, but that happens to involve certain legal difficulties, it is a criminal act. We can go across the floor, as has happened in this House, and give him a good belt in the jowls, but unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, that happens to be a brief of privilege of this House, or we can continue on arguing back and forth or we can demonstrate it in symbolic fashion our displeasure with the performance of the minister by reducing his - and it is parliamentary to do it, it is within the rules of the House, and it has been used once before while I have been in this House and that was when the present member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) showed his total and complete incompetence as Minister of Education, we used the same technique, we reduced his salary to \$1.45 at the time in recognition of the fact -

MR. ROBERTS: Right.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Moved?

MR. ROWE: Moved. We moved.

MR. ROBERTS: And our opinion was subsequently confirmed by the Premier. The Premier subsequently confirmed our opinion.

MR. ROWE: Precisely. We moved that the minister's salary be reduced to \$1.45 in recognition of the fact that he might have done one hour of productive work.

MR. ROBERTS: A perfectly good parliamentary motion.

MR. ROWE: And it was debated and subsequently the Premier -

MR. ROBERTS: The minister's salary, the motion is not.

MR. ROWE: Subsequently the Premier - well the motion did not go through, he got his salary - but a short while thereafter as my colleague reminds me the hon. Premier gave the hon. Minister of Education of that time the Royal Order of the Boot to the back benches.

MR. ROBERTS: Where he has morally supported the administration from time to time.

MR. ROWE: So our suspicions were more than confirmed. But I am getting a little bit off the track here now, a little bit off the track. But it is one way that we can show on this side of our House the fact that we are completely dissatisfied with the performance of the minister in respect to answering the questions put to him by particularly the member for Bay Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout).

MR. MORGAN: What guff!

MR. ROBERTS: The one thing that saves 'Jim Morgan' is they do not dare to let you debate your estimates.

MR. ROWE: So, Sir, it is not silly. It depends on how you look at it.

MR. MORGAN: Get on with it!

MR. RIDEOUT: 'Jim', you better be careful, you are getting up.

MR. ROWE: Sir, I detected -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROWE: For example, you know, the weakness of the minister was indicated in his own defense,

MR. ROWE: the nature of his own defence. When a minister does not have much to stand on, the usual tactic used by a minister is to lash out and viciously attack the Leader of the Opposition. We have seen this time and time again. And this is what happened here tonight. The poor little boy, the Leader of the Opposition, was viciously attacked by the Minister of Health, and Sir, this was an indication in itself that the minister was standing on very weak ground.

Now, the minister also pointed out, or he argued -

MR. HICKMAN: Look up the dictionary on the meaning of vicious.

MR. ROWE: What is the problem, Mr. Chairman?

MR. HICKMAN: What is the interpretation of vicious?

MR. ROBERTS: The minister is vicious. He foams at the mouth, runs around.

MR. ROWE: I would recommend the Oxford dictionary to the minister, Mr. Chairman.

MR. RIDEOUT: The Minister of Mines and Energy has a dictionary.

MR. ROBERTS: Like the Minister of Justice gets vicious from time to time.

MR. ROWE: The Minister of Health, if I can get a word in, Mr. Chairman -

MR. HICKMAN: What is he talking about?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, to a point of order, Mr. Chairman, Would Your Honour bring the Minister of Justice to order. He is persisting in interrupting this Committee with these asides and distracting my colleague, who is right dead on the point of whatever it is he is trying to say, Sir.

MR. HICKMAN: All I was simply doing was coming to the rescue of the hon. member for Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) who is being viciously attacked and harassed by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition and it is not fair.

MR. ROBERTS: Hear! Hear! Could we have a ruling please?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was very glad that he did speak as he speaks so infrequently and very seldom makes any remarks but which are completely in order and his turn to speak. I do not think that the point of order raised was one of great seriousness and I think that we will allow the hon. member to continue.

MR. ROBERTS: Well ruled, Sir.

MR. ROWE: I am one who is very easily distracted, Your Honour, as it is quite obvious to hon. members opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: We have noticed that.

MR. ROWE: And they exploit, you know, and take advantage of that.

MR. ROBERTS: They pick on you.

MR. ROWE: They pick on me, Sir, I feel very badly. I lose hours of sleep.

MR. ROBERTS: Do not get vicious with them.

MR. ROWE: But I will not get vicious, Sir. Getting back to the hon. Minister of Health, he indicated at one point that Dr. Sellikoski, is it?

MR. ROBERTS: Dr. Sellikof.

MR. ROWE: Who?

MR. RIDEOUT: Sellikof.

MR. ROWE: Sellikof?

MR. SIMMONS: No, Silicone!

MR. ROWE: Silicone, The doctor! The doctor's motive in coming to this Province was for research reasons only and it was not really out of the interest for the health of the people of Bay Verte. Now the minister did say that quite clearly, that the main motive was because of research. The doctor wanted to come in and carry out a research project, and he questioned the doctor's motives or interest in the health and welfare of the people of Baie Verte. Sir, I think that was an untimely, an unworthy comment by the Minister of Health. And the other thing that I could not comprehend whatsoever, Sir, was the minister's suggestion that any governmental support, financial support to the doctor would in some way influence the outcome of the report. That was distinctly said by the Minister of Health. Now how in the name of Heavens a vote of \$5,000 from any government, which is voted by the House, would influence the outcome of a report is beyond my comprehension, and I submit beyond the comprehension

MR. ROWE: of every member in this House!

The hon. the Minister of Health was standing on very weak ground indeed, particularly when the doctor had specifically asked - or would not accept financial assistance from the company or the union because he might find himself in a kind of a conflict of interest kind of a situation.

Now somebody came up with the idea that, and I think it might have come from the government side and I think it is a good idea, that if the company were required through legislation which was, I think suggested by somebody on this side, to vote money for research or pay money to the government for research which will be administered by the government, that might be the way around it. We will get money out of the company but the company is not paying directly to the person who is carrying out the research, so the person who is carrying out the research in no way will find himself in a conflict of interest situation. That might be a way out. If some legislation were introduced or amendment to the existing legislation that would require companies under certain circumstances to pay a - say for the want of a better term, a research fund or tax whatever you want to call it - into the government in order to carry out research and then it is a completely different quintal of fish when we come to the money that has to be spent by a company such as the one in Labrador to institute controls. Research is one thing, to find out the exact nature of the problem, and if indeed a problem exists, and then once the problem has been identified and remedial measures identified requiring the company to spend money to institute controls for the sake of the health of the people involved or working in the area is a completely different thing from having a gentleman come in and conduct a study. He has to be completely neutral, not owing to anybody whatsoever and I think this was the principle that my friend from Baie Verte - White Bay was trying to bring out and I think he did it very well, but the Minister of Health

MR. ROWE: just would not swallow it and this is why this motion has been moved to reduce the salary which can be interpreted as being silly in the sense that obviously the House is not going to carry that motion, but it is very serious when we have to use that measure to point out our dissatisfaction with the performance of the minister.

However, Sir, I did see a glimmer of hope, a ray of light at the end of the tunnel. I think it would be safe to say that as a result of this good debate tonight, I think it was a fairly good debate tonight, as a result of the debate I think the minister is yielding. He has not come across with the \$5,000. He has not made a commitment for the \$5,000. But he has indicated that he will be more than willing to lend some assistance to the doctor when he comes to the Province to carry out his research. And I would not be at all surprised, Mr. Chairman, that -

MR. MORGAN: Carried! Carried!

MR. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, you know this is disgusting. Ignorance -

MR. MORGAN: Whose performance has been disgusting here?

MR. SIMMONS: The minister's, the yahoo.

MR. ROWE: The minister is a disgusting, despicable piece of protoplasm sitting over there who does not have the guts to get up and speak in this debate but can only yahoo like a Labrador Retriever.

MR. ROBERTS: No, he is more a snipe.

MR. ROWE: Or a sniper, a cracky, a Pekinese, a wiener dog.

MR. WELLS: It cannot be parliamentary to call the member a Labrador retriever or something equivalent. I think the member should withdraw it.

MR. ROBERTS: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman, I do not see what is wrong with being called a Labrador Retriever. Members have been called worse and the hon. member for Bonavista South from time to time gives every indication of being a Labrador Retriever. Indeed it might be a good thing for this Province, for members of the

MR. ROBERTS: administration, if we made sure that we retrieved Labrador.

MR. ROWE: Exactly.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: The hon. member is not, and I am very serious about this, the hon. member is not permitted to use the language he used in the House and I am sure he knows it, and I am sure -

MR. ROBERTS: Citations.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I can give citations here but the use of language and the fact that he is forced to do it -

MR. ROWE: Show me one word that I said that I am not allowed to use in that book.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I believe it was 148, I am not quite sure at the moment. I am wrong on that one but I will get it in a minute. But in any event -

MR. ROBERTS: When you get it raise the point of order.

MR. ROWE: Exactly.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: - Your Honour he is not permitted to use that kind of language in the House and he knows it. Now if he had his time back he would not have used it.

MR. ROWE: I would have used it thrice over.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: It is not becoming of the hon. member. It is provocative. It is insulting for the hon. member to use that kind of language, below his dignity and he knows it.

MR. ROBERTS: Ah 'John', go home!

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I am a member who has a tendency once in a while to use hyperbole in my statements and my commentary but that language certainly does not add anything to the dignity of the House. And I can give a dozen citations to -

MR. ROWE: Well give one.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: I will give you the citations as the thing is being developed.

MR. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order. Sir, the hon. member accused me of using unparliamentary language and he was completely unable to bring up one example of page 130 of Beauchesne here and also, Sir, I chose my words carefully though rapidly and I did not use one word that is in here as being unparliamentary, and I was provoked by the Minister of Transportation and Communications and at the same time being provoked by the Minister of Justice and a number of other hon. gentlemen opposite and if I was accorded -

MR. HICKMAN: What did I say?

MR. ROWE: "Carried! Carried!" The last thing a person wants to hear when he is trying to make a point is to hear hon. members opposite saying, "Carried, carried, carried, carried, carried, carried." And, Sir, I would suggest in speaking to the point of order -

AN HON. MEMBER: Carried.

MR. ROWE: That, number one, is was not a point of order, and secondly, if hon. members opposite remain quiet and closed-mouth while we were speaking on this side that they would not feel we are using unparliamentary language although the hon. Minister of Industrial and Rural Development is still wearing his fingertips to the bone there looking for an unparliamentary word that I uttered.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please! A point of order has been raised related to

Dr. Collins:

the hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) referring to the hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications using the words, if I remember correctly, crackie and Labrador Retriever and similar terms. I have had occasion in the past to do a certain amount of research in this. You may remember that the word 'twit' came up, and I was not sure whether this was something within the animal kingdom or not. But I did do the research in this matter, and I think the sense in Beausheue is that whereas Labrador Retriever and crackie may not be mentioned, these are Newfoundlandish terms, I suppose - that the sense of 155 subsection (4) does indicate that names of animals should not be, or imputations that hon. members belong to the animal kingdom that this is unparliamentary. I assure the hon. member after a long, hard day and in the heat of debate did not mean this with any sincerity, but I think one would have to say that it was unparliamentary, and I would ask the hon. member if he would see fit to withdraw the remarks.

MR. ROWE: I will without qualification, Mr. Chairman, and I am certainly happy to see that we have such an excellent Chairman in the Chair who was able to come to the assistance of the Minister of Rural and Industrial Development. And, Sir, to be quite frank with you, Sir, I really meant the word in the sense of being a pet, you know, in this particular instance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROWE: Now, Sir, in closing, which no doubt most people will be glad to hear, I honestly feel that the minister has been informed tonight, as a result of the debate, and I think that he is possibly changing his mind slowly with respect to his original attitude towards the problem in Baie Verte. And I would not be at all surprised - I was about to say when I was interrupted - that before it is all over that we will see this government assisting the doctor in a financial manner before it is all over. It would not surprise me in the least.

Mr. Rowe:

So, Sir, I sincerely hope that this problem will be resolved and that the minister will come through with not only financial assistance but other types of technical assistance that will be required to identify the problem in Baie Verte. And probably while the experts are here they might have a broader look at some other industrial areas of the Province as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

MR. MURPHY: Mr. Chairman, I am not going to take too long on this, but I feel that I must say a few words in defense of my hon. friend, the Minister of Health, after the very unwarranted and despicable attack launched on him today by the Leader of the Opposition. Of course, that is typical. I think he is a man who gets out of bed in the middle of the night so he will have a longer day to attack someone that day. As far as Baie Verte is concerned - and may I congratulate the member and sympathize with him, because we have gone through, as the hon. member for Grand Banks says, we went through the St. Lawrence thing, and there is a lot of anguish and everything else concerned in the whole matter. But I just want to say, Mr. Chairman, this; that if anybody says that this government has been inactive and has taken no action on this is absolutely trying to mislead, not only this House, but the public of Newfoundland and particularly the people of Baie Verte who are the ones who are very, very much concerned with what is happening there. I have two files here -

MR. SIMMONS: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Point of order.

MR. SIMMONS: Up she comes.

MR. MURPHY: Oh, come on 'Roger'!!

MR. SIMMONS: I know. I am coming 'Ank'. I am coming fast. With that inspiring speech 'Ank' I am coming fast, believe me, in all means of the term.

MR. MURPHY: Between points of order now and speeches the seventy-five hours are gone.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I know. 'Ank' can you shut up just for a second, boy! Try it, for Lord's sake.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROBERTS: There is a point of order!

MR. MURPHY: Here is Education for you, you know. This is the type now, another -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir has risen on a point of order.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I know it is late in the evening and the member for St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) is probably getting carried away, but he cannot, Mr. Chairman, -

MR. MURPHY: I wish there was someone who would carry me away.

MR. SIMMONS: - under the rules of the House attribute motives. He said that anybody who suggested that this government had been neglectful well some of my colleagues have, The Leader of the Opposition has, the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) has, and I intend to when I speak in the debate to say that the government has been neglectful on this matter - that is all very well. I can safely say that. We intend to say it. But for him to stand there and say that anybody who does that is deliberately misleading -

AN HON. MEMBER: No, he said, misled.

MR. SIMMONS: Well, he did use the term, if I quote him correctly, 'trying to mislead,' and he cannot, Mr. Chairman, under the rules of this House attribute that kind of a motive to a member of the Committee or a member of the House, and I ask, Mr. Chairman, to have the member withdraw that wrong, that false assignment of the motive.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. House Leader.

MR. WELLS: In the case of assigning motives, it is true that that is not permitted under the rules, but it has to be the

Mr. Wells.

assignment of a motive, I submit, Your Honour, to a particular member of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WELLS: Therefore, if I were to say that the hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) or some other member was trying to mislead the House that is one thing; but if I make a broad statement that anyone who says So-and-So when not even specifying whether it be inside the House or out, to say anyone is too broad a statement. It does not impugn the motive of any particular member and consequently, I think, Mr. Chairman, it is in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you.

If I might say a word with reference to the point made by the hon. gentleman from Kilbride, I think in precedent and practise that is a sound statement, that if one does not name anybody or one does not indicate anybody then, you know, it is the old - you cannot libel a group. You cannot libel a group. You can only libel an individual or a number of individuals, and that is good common law, and I think it is good statute law, and I think it is certainly good parliamentary practise. But, Mr. Chairman, that is not the situation here. The gentleman from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) swayed, I know, by his belief, which I think is genuine in the righteousness of his cause, and carried away somewhat by the eloquence of his passion, distinctly said that any member - he did not use the words, who stood in the House - but any member, and the member is nodding acquiescence, he is certainly not afraid of his words -

MR. MURPHY: I do not feel that he is lying and I agree with him.

MR. ROBERTS: Right. I agree. I feel sometimes the minister lies, but I am not allowed to say so either. So I mean that is the rule we follow, and it is probably a good one. But the point is, Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Roberts.

the member from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy), the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment indicated quite specifically - without using the words, and he did not have to use the words - that he was referring in those remarks to me - he nods acquiescence again - and to my friend and colleague from Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout). And I certainly said it, and I would say it again. That being so, Mr. Chairman, the point made by the gentleman from Kilbride (Mr. Wells) falls as being relevant to Your Honour's consideration of this question and we are left only with the point raised by the member from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons), namely that the words, in that context, are improper and that the hon. member should be asked to withdraw them. I am sure he would if Your Honour asks him to. It is quite simple. He can say we have misled the House. That is parliamentary. He can say that we are mistaken or wrong, but he just cannot say we attempted or that we deliberately misled the House. It is a simple distinction, and I guess a good one, but certainly it is one that we have always followed in this Chamber, and as far as I know in all the Chambers that follow this practice. But the hon. gentleman from Kilbride's point is a good thing, but it is just not relevant here, because although the member from St. John's Centre did not name me, he made it quite specific he was referring to me, and possibly to my friend.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: He did not.

MR. ROBERTS: Others opposite say not the gentleman from -

MR. MURPHY: I said, "Any member who in any way insinuates -

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, the gentleman from St. John's Centre (Mr. Murphy) nodded in acquiescence when I put the point.

MR. MORGAN: Is he on the point of order?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, I am on the point of order.

MR. MORGAN: Well, state your point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROWE: This is the problem, Mr. Chairman. That is the problem right there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition is speaking to a point of order.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And if Your Honour feels that I am not speaking to the point of order, Your Honour will not hesitate to bring me to order.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: State your point of order!

AN HON. MEMBER: Shut up!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: It is really very difficult Mr. Chairman to make a point in respect to a point of order when -

MR. DOODY: It is very obvious -

MR. ROBERTS: Not only is it difficult to make it, Mr. Chairman, but for some hon. members it is difficult to get through to them, no matter how simple a language one uses or how -

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Is he in order?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, I am perfectly in order for the benefit of the gentleman from Grand Falls who is still searching for the citation. He will find it. It is citation 154 and 155.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: It is a great help to know that.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, there are many things the Minister of Industrial Development does not know particularly how his people feel.

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

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Either sit down or make your point of order, one or the other.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition is speaking to a point of order.

MR. ROBERTS: May I proceed?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Sir, I am trying to proceed. Your Honour is doing Your Honour's best to try to let me proceed but the gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) and the gentleman from Bonavista South (Mr. Morgan) seem to persist in interrupting.

MR. LUNDRIGAN: On a question of privilege.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. LUNDRIGAN: Yes, on the question of privilege.

MR. ROBERTS: What is it? State your question of privilege.

MR.

MR. LINDRIGAN: Mr. Chairman, look, when the hon. the Leader of the Opposition stands up, and he has got a great deal of fluency and knowledge of the rules, and every time there is the slightest little intervention from the opposite side, which is not unusual in debate, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition takes his time to carry on a little formal debate, to score his little points and Your Honour, of course, in giving latitude in this regard, of trying to be fair to him allows him to score political points. I do not reflect on Your Honour's rulings or anything like this, but the Leader of the Opposition perhaps in this House is more responsible for abusing the rules than anybody else in the House. This is typical of what can happen when a member knows the rules of the House. We all know he knows the rules of the House. That does not give him the right to abuse them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: If I may speak to that point of privilege -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

If the hon. Leader of the Opposition will permit me. The Chair has certain responsibilities to allow the House to get on with its proceedings. I think that at this hour of the evening I should just make a straight ruling. I do not think that a point of privilege that I can rule on with any certainty with the information available to me. I do not think that a point of privilege in actual fact exists. So we are back to the point of order. I would encourage hon. members to allow the hon. Leader of the Opposition to complete his comments on the point of order which I am sure he will do in short order because he has occupied a fair bit of the time of the House already.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would have occupied at least half the time if I had been allowed by hon. gentlemen opposite to proceed without the spurious points of privilege which were deliberate abuse of the rules of the House by gentlemen who should know better.

MR. LINDRIGAN: You have no right to comment on the Speaker's ruling.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I am not commenting on the ruling the Chairman has made. I thanked Your Honour for the ruling and I am proceeding to try to follow it. I am commenting on the deliberate abuse by the gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) of a point of privilege.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order, please!

I would ask hon. members to let the hon. Leader of the Opposition to proceed. I would also ask the hon. Leader of the Opposition if he can speak directly to the point of order as much as possible.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I was speaking specifically to the point made by the gentleman for Kilbride (Mr. Wells). Generally that point is well taken. In law you cannot libel a group but you can libel - while you might not be able to libel mankind, you can libel more than one person as long as it is an identifiable entity. That is the same rule which we follow in the House.

The point I would make then, since the gentleman for Kilbride (Mr. Wells) submission in my view fails to be of any assistance in helping His Honour to resolve this particular matter, we are then back at the general question, did the gentleman for St. John's Center (Mr. Murphy) make a statement which referred to certain members specifically. And he did in my view. He nodded acquiescence. I mean I took him to be referring to me because I made some remarks in the Committee this afternoon saying that in my view the Minister of Health had not lived up to his responsibilities. And what I said is on the record. I was not called to order at any point for it during my remarks in the Committee this afternoon. So therefore I think the point of order taken by the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) is well taken and I think the gentleman for St. John's Center (Mr. Murphy) should be required to withdraw and to rephrase his remarks and then have at us as he wishes with a heart and a half.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I think the point of order raised is covered by section 154,

MR. CHAIRMAN:

subsection 3 in Beauchesne which states as follows: "The imputation of bad motives, or motives different from those acknowledged, misrepresenting the language of another, or accusing him, in his turn, of misrepresentation, charging him with falsehood or deceit; or contemptuous or insulting language of any kind; all these are unparliamentary and call for prompt interference."

I understand from that that the imputation of bad motives must be specifically directed at an individual hon. member and my memory does not lead me to believe that the hon. minister did refer specifically to another hon. member. Also I believe I do not recall that he used such terms as 'deliberate' or try to make believe - I can only go by what my memory serves me - and I understood him to say that he felt that hon. members on the opposite side were misleading the House and the Province, the people in the Province. This is I believe his view of the facts. I do not think that that necessarily means bad motives. I think it can be interpreted as he understands that the remarks were misleading.

I would rule therefore that if that is a true statement of his remarks that he is not out of order. But I am sure that if my memory services incorrectly and the hon. minister himself did use such terms as 'deliberate' or 'tried to mislead' I am sure that he would withdraw that part of his remarks.

The hon. Minister of Provincial Affairs and Environment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think now that we will have the question put and see what the minister's salary is going to be.

MR. ROBERTS: No, Mr. Chairman. I have a -

MR. MURPHY: Well, Mr. Chairman, to carry on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MURPHY: There is one request I would like to make. If the Leader of the Opposition could carry on after eleven o'clock until about four in the morning when I am not here I would be the happiest man in the

MR. MURPHY:

country. Mr. Chairman -

MR. WELLS: Would the hon. gentleman make sure now that he rises the Committee in time?

MR. MURPHY: Well what time is that, my son? How long does it take the Speaker? Where is he? Flash Gordon.

Seeing that it is now approaching the hour of eleven I move that the Committee rise. Someone else said he will move we made progress.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

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

On motion report received and adopted.

On motion Committee ordered to sit again on tomorrow.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, I move that the remaining Orders of the Day do stand deferred and that this House on its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Friday, at ten o'clock in the forenoon and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, May 7 at 10:00 A.M.

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