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> PRELIMINARY UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FOR THE PERIOD: 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1978

The House met at 2:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

DR. T. FARRELL:

Mr. Speaker, a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER:

A point of privilege, the hon. minister.

DR. T. FARRELL:

Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point

of personal privilege in connection with a document which has been laid on the table of the House by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), and this is the earliest opportunity I have had to rise on this matter for personal reasons. Now, Sir, I examined this document in question, which is a mixture of lies and half truth, cunningly concocted in an attempt to bring discredit upon me personally me as a Minister of the Crown and upon the Government of the Province. I wish to point out that it is not alleged in the document that I or any member of this government was bribed, but the document attempts nonetheless to cast

upon my integrity as a person and as a minister. I am gravely concerned about the possible motives of the maker of this document and I cannot understand why a document designed to cause personal harm should have be referred to in debate by a member of the House of Assembly. In order to clear my name and put the sordid allegations to rest, I have asked the government to initiate a full investigation by the RCMP of all aspects of this matter. I know full well that there has been no wrongdoing on my part and I am confident that the results of such an investigation would prove to this House and to the public of Newfoundland that no wrongdoing took place on my part, and that the wrongdoing in this case is the unscrupulous making and publishing of unfounded allegations. I wish to make the following matters clear: I have not bribed anyone, I have not intimidated anyone, I have not peddled influence and I have at all times conducted myself properly as a member of this House and as a minister of the Crown. I have asked for the broadest DR. T. FARRELL:

possible investigation to

decide this matter once and for all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Before recognizing him I would draw to the attention of all hon.

members that the hon. gentleman to my left spoke on a matter of
privilege and the authorization for that is in May,page 343,

"In regard to the explanation of personal matters the House is
usually indulgent and will permit a statement of that character
to be made without any question being before the House." And
then there is a second part, "No debate should ensue thereon, but
if another member is involved in the personal statement he is
generally allowed to give his own view of the matter and to say
whether he accepts it or not." I point it out so that our rules
of procedure are absolutely clear on this point,

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. W.N. ROWE:

Sir, I am not involved in

the matter anymore than any other member of the House of Assembly except as Leader of the Opposition. I will say very few words on this, Sir, not by way of debate but merely by way of comment and question.

We are delighted, Sir. - I

hope that the Minister of Justice accedes to the request of his colleague to have this matter fully investigated by the RCMP and any other police department in the Province, the matters which were alleged in a document forced onto the table of the House by Your Honor under the rules of the House. So that maybe the Minister of Justice, Sir, could indicate whether in fact he asked for a police investigation and when if he has when he instructed such an investigation to take place. Secondly, Sir,

MR. W. ROWE: either the minister who just spoke or the Minister of Justice might indicate to the House whether one Terrance White, referred to—or who allegedly wrote a letter signed in his own handwriting and is signed by him—is still on the payroll of the Provincial Government, whether he is still the minister's Executive Assistant, and if reports which were mentioned in one of the news reports lunch time are in fact true, that apparently he has left the country or left town? I am only going by what I heard or was reported to me as being reported by,I believe, Q Radio lunch time today.

AN HON. MEMBER: On CBC as well.

MR. W. ROWE: On CBC as well. Perhaps some hon. minister opposite could answer all of those questions which I have raised in response to the hon. minister's point of privilege.

Before calling the next item, Statements By Ministers, I feel it incumbent upon me to make a brief statement to the House with respect to the tabling of documents. There appears in the media at least to have been some misunderstanding of the involvement of the Chair, the chair, in the person of the Deputy Chairman of Committees and in the person of myself. The inference from some of the media reports I saw or heard could tend to suggest that the Chair has the discretion of authority, which it does not have at alland that the Chair being aware of a document then decides whether it should be tabled or it should not be tabled, or whether it is in the public interest to table it or not in the public interest to table it. And I think that it is important to have affirmed what precisely is the role of the Chair in the tabling of documents. And it is specifically and exclusively to enforce the rules of the House of Assembly. The specific references in Beauchesne which were made at that time, and not necessary that they be repeated, and they are that all documents cited must be tabled unless they are personnal letters or unless they are state papers, and state papers are ones in the possession of the Crown. And that is the role of the Chair in every instance of tabling documents, to enforce the rules of the House of Assembly.

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Mr. Speaker: I say that because the media comments upon it where at least ambiguous and would tend to attribute to the Chair a role that the Chair does not exercise and does not have authority or jurisdiction to so do.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER: The hom. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have this morning received the advice which I sought from the Deputy Minister of Justice and the Director of Public Prosecutions concerning an alleged affidavit, with a purported letter annexed thereto, which was tabled in this Hon. House by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) on Tuedsay, April 25, 1978.

I have this morning directed that there be a full investigation by the Poyal Canadian Mounted Police into all matters referred to therein and all other matters in any way associated therewith, and all persons or persons who may, whether mentioned in the affadavit or not, have been associated therewith or in any way affected thereby. Whilst the investigation will be prompt, vigorous, and unimpeded, and under the sole and exclusive direction of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police who will investigate all matters, as they always do, that come before them and which they may come upon during their investigation. For the information of the hon. House they will be investigating, and having assessed the affidavits and enclosures or attachments thereto, possible intimidation, threats, bribery, or blackmail or anything else which may constitute a crime or crimes under the Criminal Code of Canada including the matter of publication of sworn affidavits and perjury as a result thereof.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for LaPoile

MR. NEARY:

To that point, Sir, or to that Ministerial Statement,

I wonder if the hon. gentleman would add one thing to his list of

things that he wants investigated? Could the hon. gentleman add

taping telephone conversations to his list?

MR. HICKMAN: The RCMP will investigate anything in the Criminal Code of Canada.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is giving the RCMP instructions,

Sir, to investigate certain things. The RCMP are quite capable of

carrying out their own investigations, they need no guidance or counselling

trom the Minister of Justice. But I would like for the minister to add taping

telephone conversations to his list. Would the minister add that to his list?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please: I cannot permit debate under

Ministerial Statements and the hon. gentleman has made some comments

and was asked a question -

MR. NEARY: I have asked a question, Sir. Would he -

MR. SPEAKER: -but that is as far as I can go.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, may I repeat that the Royal Canadian

Mounted Police have been instructed to initiate a prompt investigation

by me. I do not instruct them as to how they carry out the investigation

or the matters that they investigate, I do know that they will be

investigating inter alia, amongst other things, and I will repeat what

I just said, intimidation, threats, bribery, blackmail and anything

which constitutes a crime under the Griminal Code of Canada -

MR. NEARY: But this may not be a crime. If the Premier tapes a conversation that is not a crime.

MR. HICKMAN: - and a crime under the Criminal Code of Canada, for the benefit of the press, Mr. Speaker, includes a breach of the secrecy provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada and also the question of perjury. Any matter, as the RCMP always do, that they come upon that is in the breach of any law any law, not just the Criminal Code of Canada-they will investigate it, and they will do it unimpeded and in their own manner and in their own way.

MR. NEARY: To that I say hear, hear! Not without any interference from the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The non. Premier.

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MR.HICKMAN: There will be no interference from the minister.

PREMIER MOORES: Mr. Speaker, I was away unfortunately when this unfortunate matter came before the House. I came back and, obviously, as I think anybody in my position or any other position in this hon. House, I was upset because we had witnessed the tabling of a document which now will be thoroughly investigated by the police and the blame go where it may. When I came back I obviously talked to the Minister of Industrial Development, whom I have known for many years, He has assured me that no money was paid to bribe Mr. Davidson or anyone else, nor was any money received from Mr. Davidsor or Mr.

Doyle or anyone else, and I have accepted that.

The fact is, Sir, that no member on this side of the House, to my knowledge, in the Cabinet, has ever lobbied or backbenched, or on the other side for that matter, has ever lobbied to me or the Cabinet on behalf of Davidson or Doyle. I do not think, Sir, anyone can say that we have given undue benefits to Mr. Doyle.

But now we have to have an absolute and thorough investigation, as has been said, where any person, any person! - whether he be amongst the general public or whether he be any member of this House, if there is any criminal act that has been involved in this House then the courts will deal with it. There will, Sir, be a totally full and complete investigation.

I would just like to make a few comments about the gentlemen who are involved in this particular allegation.

Mr. Andrew Davidson's track record is one, Sir, that anyone who is familiar with it or has heard about it -

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has come up.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour knows full well, and the Minister of Justice has been lecturing to us in this hon. House for the last ten years anyway, since the hon. minister has been Minister of Justice, that while there is a police investigation going on it is morally wrong for any member of this House to try and prejudice that investigation

MR. NEARY: or influence it in any way, politically or otherwise,

And the hon, gentleman now, Sir, in his remarks, which are going to be

quoted widely outside of this House, could very easily prejudice that

investigation. Now what does the hon. Minister of Justice think of
that?

<u>PREMIER MOORES</u>: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to prejudice the investigation but the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) does seem a bit sensitive on this subject.

MR. SPEAKER: I think I do have to deal with the point of order now. The claim was not made that the matter is sub judice and it is not to my knowledge sub judice. I am not aware of a parliamentary authority which would inform me that I must order hon. members not to refer to matters which might be under police investigation. I am not aware of an authority which would require that.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Justice keeps telling -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Minister of Justice may say at times,

^{&#}x27;I am not going to comment on that, there is a police investigation,'

MR. SPEAKER:

somebody else might say it. But with all due respect, I do not concoct the rules, nor do I enforce their interpretation depending upon any member of the House, And the only convention that I am aware of analogous here would be sub judice, which means before the courts - it means a bit more than that, it does not mean only that - but that is the prerequisite, the first requirement. And this is not sub judice and I am not aware of any authority which would require me to order an hon, member not to refer to something which might be the subject of a police investigation. If any hon, member is aware of such an authority I will certainly consider, but I am not aware of it.

The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of privilege has come up.

MR. NEARY: In the course of his reply there, Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Premier made a very snideremark. And I predicted, Sir, that the hon. gentlemen would try in this matter, as they have tried before, to smear me, to attack my character, to try to undermine my credibility. The hon. gentleman said that the member for LaPoile seems to be awfully sensitive about this matter. It is not about this matter that I am sensitive, Sir, and this is my point of privilege, that remark was made for a purpose. It is not the police investigation, because I have been the one who has been asking for two and a half years for a very broad police investigation into this matter and I welcome this investigation finally. But, Mr. Speaker, it is the snide remark that the hon. gentleman made, Sir, that I am concerned about, and I would like for Your Honour to give a ruling on whether or not that is parliamentary.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the reason I was, as the Premier said, sensitive was because of the statement that the Premier made that nobody in his Cabinet had accepted anything from Doyle or from Fr. Davidson.

Now, Sir, that is an untrue statement and I challenge the Premier to put up -

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

MR. NEARY: - to withdraw that statement, or I will put another

document -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! I cannot allow any hon. members to suggest to hon. members if you do this I will do that and if you do this I will table that I cannot allow that. The point of privilege which the hon. gentleman raised essentially is that the allegation of sensitivity —

MR. NEARY: The point was simed, Sir, at the untruth.

MR. SPEAKER: - is unparliametary. Order, please!

I cannot accept one how. member saying of another that he is sensitive on this or that does breach his privilege. Obviously if there is an imputation of motive, but there has not to this point so been, so I think that disposes of that matter.

PREMIER MOORES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

No, Sir, as I was saying, to the member's point, to my knowledge there has been no payment to any ministers. I do not think any ministers received any payment of which they were aware, if that is possible. But the fact is, Sir, that Mr. Davidson has been -

MR. SIMMONS: They were not included.

MR. HICKMAN: Order! Order!

PREMIER MOORES: I mean members can speak for themselves in that regard.

SOME HON . MEMBERS: Oh . oh!

PREMIER MOORES: Now, Mr. Speaker - can I finish this in silence?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please! Every hon. member

has the right to be heard without interruption.

MR. MORGAN: You must have a corrupt mind, a corrupt mind.

PREMIER MOORES: The fact is, Sir, that Mr. Davidson has been in the employ of Mr. Doyle, he has turned against Mr. Doyle, he has once again been Mr. Doyle's flunky. The fact is that Mr. Davidson's track record, Sir, is not one that we, or I certainly, put much credence in. I do not think the man is as stable as some people would like to think.

MR. SIMMONS: Headshrinker Moores.

PREMIER MOORES: The first affidavit was circulated, Sir, to

the press -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) character assassination, pure political

venom! Trying to cover up and hide -

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

PREMIER MOORES: I have not half finished yet, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is, Sir, that I have been told this morning that Mr. Davidson has gone underground. He also seems to be gone overseas. He seems to be in Central America again. I just point this out as to where the real source of this particular type of smear material is coming from and that, Sir, is from Panama and that is from Mr. John C. Doyle.

Sir, I will get to a few others later but I want
to talk first of all about the Minister of Industrial Development.
I do not care what smide remarks come from the other side of the House
or anywhere else, the fact is that I have known this gentleman for a
long time. No one in this House can say that Dr. Farrell - or the Minister
of Industrial Development in his previous vocation, or in his
public life, has been anything but a humanitarian

PREMIER MOORES: and a man who has cared for people. He has done his best to serve the people of this Province even when he became very seriously ill. He has been friend to a lot of people - maybe too many - but certainly and especially he has been to me. I believe in him and feel very sorry that he is being stigmatized by John Doyle or John Doyle's henchmen.

Mr. Terry White - obviously
the police investigation will cover that gentleman and his
charges, but I find one thing peculiar, Sir, about the
charges that Mr. White makes. It is very peculiar that
the letter happens to be an unsolicited gesture written
to a lawyer who is not just Mr. Davidson's lawyer but is
also Mr. Doyle's lawyer. How much credibility do you want
for a man in Terry White's position, unsolicited,
unencouraged to write to John Doyle's lawyer? I suggest,
Sir, that that is not a natural thing for Terry White to
have done without pressure of some sort or another.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER MOORES: Oh, yes, I am making charges.

John Doyle, Mr. Speaker, whether

the Opposition like to hear it or not -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER MOORES: - John Doyle is a fugitive from

justice.

MR. NEARY: Go outside the House -

PREMIER MOORES: I will say he is a fugitive from

justice outside the House, of course, because he is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER MOORES: The man is -

MR. SIMMONS: (inaudible) and you will

be in court -

PREMIER MOORES: The man is a criminal.

MR. SIMMONS: - where you belong.

PREMIER MOORES: Just a second, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HICKMAN: Just a second. On a point

of privilege.

PREMIER MOORES: I have -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I do have to

require the hon. gentleman to my right to withdraw the remark about being in court where one belongs. That is an impuration of wrongdoing, certainly.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I gladly, because

it is unparliamentary, withdraw it.

MR. HICKMAN: That is not a withdrawal.

MR. WHITE: That is a withdrawal.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Order, please! Order, please!

The allegation made by the hon.

gentleman to my right was that the Premier should be in court where he belongs. The Chair interjected and said the matter should be withdrawn, it was an allegation of wrongdoing. The hon. gentleman said, 'Because it is unparliamentary, I withdraw it.' The Chair is put in very difficult circumstances when matters of tone are part of a withdrawal. The literal words were, 'Because it is unparliamentary, I withdraw it. ' I think the parliamentary requirements have been fulfilled in the strict and technical sense, and all the Chair can enforce is the rules of parliament and not manners or courtesy or those things. Every hon, member on all sides have those, but the technical requirements of the rules are all that I can enforce. I cannot do anything else. MR. SIMMONS: I am not anxious to put the Chair in any awkward position at all. There will be an opportunity to deal with the Premier's charges at the

right time and expose them for what he is saying.

MR. SIMMONS: But without reservation and without hanging on any parliamentary technicalities, I withdraw the statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The matter is now disposed of.

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As I was saying, Sir, about

The fact is, Sir, that Mr. Doyle,

Mr. John C. Doyle, I find it incredible that a man with his record of involvement in this Province, his record before the courts, can still manipulate people in this country for the sake of personal vendetta or his credibility or to manipulate Javelin or whatever.

MR. NEARY: Name them! Name them!

PREMIER MOORES: I will, do not worry.

himself, does not have the credibility so he uses flunkies who have been bought and who will go to any extremes in fear of Mr. Doyle. The fact is, Sir, this government has never been a friend of Doyle's. People like that we in government would rather not see in this Province as developers, promoters or any other kind. There never has been any lobbying by any member and the public knows this. The fact is, Sir, the real issue is Mr. Doyle, of course, is not happy with this government. I suggest that he wants to arrange a situation where he either discredits us or can manipulate someone else. Sir, the rules of this House say

PREMIER MOORES:

very clearly, Rule 77, "The offer of any money or other advantage to any member of this House, for the promoting of any matter whatsoever, depending or to be transacted in Parliament, is a high crime and misdemeanur." And number 78, "If it shall appear that any person has been elected and returned a member of this House, or endeavouring so to be, by bribery, or any other corrupt practices, this House shall proceed with the utmost severity against all such persons as shall have been willfully concerned in such bribery or other corrupt practices." I suggest, Sir, that after the police investigation I would like to think that those rules would not come into play, but if they do, for any member on either side of the House, and if it is proven that that is the case, I suggest, Sir, they will come into play on no uncertain terms.

MR. NEARY: PREMIER MOORES:

What a smear artist! The fact is, Sir, the hon.

member for LaPoile ('r. Neary) says. What a smear artist, and, Sir, I will tell you, it certainly takes one to know one, I will tell you that in that particular case. He talked a few minutes ago about the lack of his credibility—he has none anyway.

MR. NEARY: You are playing the mug game,

'Frankie Baby', but you are going to get caught this time.

PREMIER MOORES: The matter is, Sir, that this whole matter stinks! One thing is for sure, when the evidence is in someone will pay the full price.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: That is right!

PREMIER MOORES: And another thing I will say,

Sir, is that this government will not be intimidated both by Doyle or his mouthpieces. This government will not be intimidated by John C. Doyle in Panama who is in touch with people here to do their work for them, people in this Province. The fact is, Sir, that public life in this Province, people have come to expect this

PREMIER MOORES:

sort of dirt and this sort

of filth and it is not good enough. I say, Sir, that we had to have some decency, some respect - and some honor.

MR. S. NEARY:

Since you took over every-

thing has happened.

MR. SIMMONS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER MOORES:

Sir, if you want to get

back since I took over, if you want to get back -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! Order, please!

PREMIER MOORES:

- if you want to get back the

transcripts that we do have -

SOME HON . MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

PREMIER MOOPES:

Sir, if we want to get back the

transcripts of what happened prior to our taking over, and if we want to get back to information that the police will have about what happened before and since, then, Sir, we will find out what the real story is. But what I was saying, Sir, is that in public life in this Province -

MR. NEARY:

You have not got a decent bone in your body.

PREMIER MOORES:

- it is unfortunate that decency, respect

and honor is not in play anymore then it is in this House.

AN HUN, MEMBER:

If you want to do the decent thing, resign!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: MR. W.N. ROWE: The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

What can one say in response to

the like of that, Mr. Speaker? The most disgraceful statement ever wade by any Minister of the Crown in this Province. Making prejudicial statements after his colleague has risen in the House and stated that a police inquiry has been nonmissioned and will be undertaken, statements prejudicial to that kind of an inquiry. Sir, the mug game-I am not going to get into that same kind of a game. It is easy to cast aspersions back across the House.

MR. W.N. POWE:

I am merely going to ask
one or two questions of the Minister of Justice now, Sir, which
I would like to have answered because they bear on this. I
would like to know if the Executive Assistant of the Minister
of Industrial Development, Mr. Terrence White is he still on the
government payroll? If he is not on the government payroll now,
when did he go off the government payroll? I would like to
know, Sir, if the Minister of Justice knows where Mr. White is
now or if the police know where he is now? If the reports on
the air that he has skipped town, skipped out of St. John's out of Newfoundland even-are in fact correct?

MR. NEARY: For his life. Rum for his life.

MR. W.N. ROWE: If he left, were the police instructed by the Minister of Justice immediately upon these allegation being tabled in this House -

MR. NEARY: Or did he stall?

MR. W.N. ROWE: in this letter by Mr. White, did the minister instruct the RCMP to immediately contact this gentleman - I believe he was around the House on the same evening, if I remember correctly - to get a statement from him on these allegation? Or was there a delay by the police or by the Minister of Justice - I am not saying deliberately - but was there a delay which has now allowed a person who can give key evidence in this case to skip out of town, out of this Province, out of this country perhaps, Mr. Speaker? These are questions which I direct to the Minister of Justice because they are very important questions. An investigation should have been commissioned five minutes after these documents were tabled in this hon. House because the allegations were that serious and apparently founded on credible people, credible witnesses. I do not know this man Davidson and I am not prepared to make a comment one way or the other. The Premier seems to be very familiar with him.

MR. NEARY: Well he was in the Premier's house several times so the hon. gentleman should know him -

MR. W. ROWE: I do not know him.

MR. NEARY: - and talked to him on the phone a mumber of

times.

MR. W. ROWE: I would not know him from Adam. But Terrance

White -

MR. NEARY: The member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells), and the Minister of Industrial Development.

MR. W. ROWE: - is the minister's Executive Assistant. Now where is he? Is he in the Province? Have the police talked to him? Have the police been instructed to talk to him? Or is he now gone? And will he be available for a police investigation or if a trial is held or anything like that? These are important questions, Sir, which the Minister of Justice has not answered and apparently will not answer.

Now, Sir, I am going to sit down, I am not going to say anything else about the disgraceful statement made by the Premier of this Province. My colleague wanted to get up immediately and reply to him on a point of privilege. I said, no,I wanted to make my few words in reply to the Premier. But my colleague, Sir, I know has a point of privilege which he wants to raise because statements made by the Premier in his statement, Sir, -

MR. NEARY: They are misleading.

MR. W. ROWE: - misled this House. And there is documentary proof thereof which my colleague would like to raise as a point of privilege, violation of the privileges of this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the hon. the Premier deliberately misled the House or not, only time will tell, but the gentleman certainly misled the House. I am raising a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, and I intend to prove beyond any shadow of doubt, Sir, that in this outburst by the Premier to try to prejudice the

MR. NEARY: investigation - and, Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge
Mr. Doyle is not the one who is on trial here. Mr. Doyle has his
own problems. And the hon, the Premier must be aware of that because
the hon, the Premier chatted with the gentleman for an hour last Fall
on the phone, and tried to make a deal with Mr. Doyle.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: And so, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I must point out that I cannot allow any hon, member in getting the attention of the House and the recognition of the Chair on a point of privilege to enter into a debate. I would ask him to state the allegation.

MR. NEARY: My point of privilege is this, Mr. Speaker.

The hon. gentleman in his remarks said that to his knowledge nobody in his Cabinet or on his side of the House had ever received any benefits from Mr. Doyle, or none of his Cabinet colleagues or his backbenchers had any dealings with Mr. Davidson, who had a very poor track record according to the Premier. Well, Sir, there is a member of the Premier's Cabinet who did receive favours from Mr. Doyle no later than July of last year. And that gentleman, Sir, is the gentleman who started this discussion this afternoon with his ministerial statement. And I have in front of me, Mr. Speaker, a document which I will read and then table in the House, Sir. It may be the first time that the hon. the Premier saw it, and that is why I say I am not sure whether he deliberately misled the House or not, only the hon. the Premier can answer that.

I have a document, Sir, from the El Panama Hotel addressed to Mr. John C. Doyle, care of the Povovia S.A. Post Office Box 951, Panama IRP - can I have the hon. gentleman's attention, please?

"Dear Mr. Doyle:

This is to confirm that we have reserved a cabana room for Mr. T.C. Farrell of Corner Brook, Newfoundland to be available

Mr. Neary: on his arrival the evening of July 3, 1977. Payment for these accommodations will be for your account. Signed the Assistant Manager."

And, Mr. Speaker, in case that is not evidence enough for the hon. the Premier, I have the bill for \$478 on one bill, and \$428 on another bill charged to Canadian Javelin, signed by Mr. Doyle on behalf of the hon. gentleman, Thomas Farrell, Canada, St. John's, Newfoundland. Commerical rate 20 per cent, Canadian Javelin. And I have the itinerary of the hon. gentleman from the time he left Canada until he returned, an itinerary from Voyagues Pentagon Travel Agency in Montreal. I would like to lay this document on the table of the House, Sir.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to my point of privilege, one other matter that I want to raise, and that is, Sir, the Premier's reference to the fact that none of his colleagues would have anything to do with Mr. Davidson. That again, Sir, is misleading the House, and I have evidence to prove that a number of colleagues of the hon. the Premier, including the Premier himself, Sir, has entertained Mr. Davidson at his home on more than one occasion, he tried to tape the hon. gentleman once in his kitchen up in Mount Scio House. But, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Industrial Development has been a close first personal friend of Mr. Davidson's up to recently, up to recent weeks,

MR. NEARY: a close personal friend. They have wined and dined in Corner Brook and in Montreal, and my hon. friend is a close personal friend. And the point I want to make, Sir, is - to clarify or to point out how the Premier misled the House - the hon. gentleman has had numerous telephone conversations with this gentleman of which I have some transcripts, and so has the member for Kilbride (Mr. Wells), a year and a half or two years ago, talking about Julien Lake to Mr. Davidson on the phone in a very friendly manner, supporting his cause and I have evidence to prove that.

So, Mr. Speaker, to prove my point of privilege.

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

I must point out that under privilege the rule is quite specific as to what an hon. member may do under that recognition. So I would ask the hon. gentleman to bring his remarks to a conclusion because I think he has strayed somewhat from the strict definition.

MR. NEARY: Well to draw my remarks to a conclusion, I can only assume, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. the Premier was completely ignorant of the facts or deliberately misled the House, and only the Premier can set that matter straight and I ask Your Honour - MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I do have to require the hon. gentleman to withdraw the latter part, "or deliberately misled the House."

MR. NEARY: I withdraw that and say, or misled the House,
Mr. Speaker, in making false and untrue statements to members
of this hon. House, and I ask the hon. gentleman now if in all
decency, if the hon, gentleman has any principle left, to get up
and apologize to the House for misleading the House in these matters.

MR. SPEAKER: I recognize the hon. Minister of Industrial Development, and I think the rubric here is the same as was operative when the House commenced. Actually I think the statement of the hon. gentleman to my right came under May 343, "a personal explanation on the matter of

MR. SPEAKER: privilege which needs a decision from the Chair,"
the hon, gentleman to my left is now under the rubric of commenting
thereon because what was stated did affact him or did refer to
the hon, Minister of Industrial Development as well.

The hon. Minister of Industrial Development.

DR. FARRELL: Sir, I am not in the habit, as I think is well known in this House, of making remarks about any individual or any person. I do not think that anybody has heard me across this floor ever use a word at any time in the years I have been here -I have missed quite a bit of it - of allegations or dirt, or slurs or remarks of any kind against anybody. And as far as these visits are concerned, I have not the slightest knowledge and made it a point prior to this, because I knew I would be in an area where I could be suspect - I am not completely stupid, Your Honour. I went through medical school - there is no way, in any way, that I would have gotten involved directly with Mr. Doyle. Maybe I was a patsy on a certain thing because I went with a company called Daycrete which is involved. And I was very sorry at one point for - and I think maybe the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) might in some lucid moment might agree with this - that there was a period that I felt very sorry for this individual. I became very friendly during my illness. I must say he was extremely good to me - and I had many illnesses - particularly in the Montreal - Toronto area where his family lives. He was very friendly with several friends of mine, one of them in a department of this government, whom I respect his opinion highly. I was going to mention his daughter, but I do not think I should so, who is a friend of mine, who worked through the Red Cross and whom I have dealt with. And over the period that we are talking about that has just been brought up, at no time, and I made that very clear, that I was to be involved in any way politically or officially, with Mr. Doyle or his group.

Now on this obviously there is something I have to check on. Hopefully the RCMP will be checking on this and how this

DR. FARRELL: has occurred, But whether I was played for the proverbial sucker or not, perhaps I was, the point about it, Sir, that I can swear on any bible, take any test, that I had no knowledge at any time that Mr. Doyle was involved in that.

MR. NEARY: You did bump into him in a hotel.

DR. FARRELL: No, I did not. I was just saying I did

not expect to -

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is quoted as saying he bumped into Mr. Doyle.

DR. FARRELL: Order, Sir. Order, Sir. I am making the point that I had no involvement or no intention

DR. FARRELL: You know, I am making the point

that I had no involvement or no intention, no knowledge that I was going to have any official dealings with Mr. Doyle. That is all I want to say. That will all come out eventually, Sir.

MR. WELLS: Mr. Speaker, having been referred

to -

MR. SPEAKER: The hon, the member for Kilbride.

MR. WELLS: -by the hon. gentleman from

LaPoile, I suppose I have to comment. Yes, this

Mr. Davidson has telephoned me on numerous occasions. He has come to see me in my office. I have never acted for

him as a lawyer.

MR. NEARY: The Premier (inaudible)

MR. WELLS: Well, why should he? If somebody

telephones me, Mr. Speaker, there is certainly nothing incumbent upon me to get in touch with the Premier -

MR. NEARY: Would the hon. gentleman like for me to

table -

MR. WELLS: Table?

MR. NEARY: - what the hon. gentleman thinks

of his colleagues?

MR. WELLS: Table? Absolutely, because -

MR. NEARY: Very interesting indeed.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WELLS: I am speaking, Mr. Speaker.

The man would telephone me from time to time. Long discussions

would ensue in which I listened and Mr. Davidson talked.

MR. NEARY: And made no comment? The hon.

gentleman made no comment.

MR. WELLS: Now whatever we said, I would be

MR. WELLS: interested in seeing. But the trouble is in these things - you wonder, it is interesting you know, that apparently now you cannot even have a telephone conversation when somebody calls you without taping it.

I guess that is the kind of society we live in. I would be interested to see the conversations. I think you would find -

MR. NEARY: Very, very interesting. The hon, the premier would be glad to see it too.

MR. WELLS:

- 99 per cent talked by the gentleman concerned, Mr. Davidson, and monosyllabic remarks for the most part, I would say, by myself. Fortunately, he paid for the calls when he called me. A couple of times when he left his number I called him back and I guess I paid for the calls. So thank God that is so, Mr. Speaker.

 $\underline{\text{MR. NEARY}}$: The hon. the Premier would be interested in the hon. -.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. W. N. ROWE: Sir, I can only repeat the question I asked the hon. the Minister of Justice on two occasions this afternoon so far and he refuses to answer for some reason beyond me. But the question I want to ask is with regard to this gentleman whom I do not know.

I think I have seen him wandering around the House every now and then - one, Terrence White. Is he the executive assistant of the Minister of Industrial Development or not? question number one.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

MR. W. N. ROWE: Question number two, Is he on the payroll? Well, I want to ask the Minister of Justice because my final question is directed to him and that is the most

MR. W. N. ROWE: important question of all.

Is he still on the payroll or has he been laid off or fired or did he quit? And finally, Sir, did the Minister of Justice take the elementary precaution of asking the police to interrogate Mr. White once these allegations were placed on the table of the House?

Has he been interrogated by the police? Does the Minister of Justice know that? Did the Minister of Justice ask that that be done?

MR. SPEAKER:

Before the hon. the minister replies, I would like to welcome to the House on behalf of all hon. members some visitors in the gallery from the community council of Tilting in Fogo district, and they are the chairman, Mr. Roy Dwyer, and the members, Mr. Fergus Follett, Mr. Clem Dwyer and Mr. Gerard Green. I know hon. members join me in welcoming these gentlemen.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon, the Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: I have no hesitancy at all in answering the question by the hon, the Leader of the Opposition. I did not answer it arising out of other

ministerial statements by other ministers.

Number one, I do not know whether Mr. Terrence White is still employed with the Government of Newfoundland or not.

MR. NEARY: The minister should know.

MR. HICKMAN: I have checked with his minister and he informs me that he has not been told - yesterday, as you know, the hon. the Minister of Industrial Development had some other difficulties - by anyone that Mr. White has terminated his employment. And the hon. the Minister of Industrial Development tells me that as of now he has not

MR. HICKMAN: terminated Mr. White's employment.

DR. FARRELL: I have not seen him.

MR. HICKMAN: And he has not seen him to do it.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I do not instruct the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as to whom they should interrogate or as to whom they should not interrogate. I would hope I do not,

because that would be the kind of -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. HICKMAN: I beg your pardon?

MR. NEARY: Sit on the evidence.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister just decides

to do the evidence and give it (inaudible)

MR. HICKMAN: That is right. I let the Director of Public Prosecutions make the decision and he will prosecute anyone against whom there is sufficient evidence.

MR. SIMMONS: - how he decides politically or otherwise.

PREMIER MOORES: That is unbelievable you know,

it is incredible.

MR. HICKMAN: Now, Mr. Speaker, am I permitted

to - Let me report to this House, as I did yesterday, that

immediately, at the earliest opportunity, which was

MR. HICKMAN: nine o'clock yesterday morning, I delivered to the Deputy Minister of Justice the alleged affidavit and the purported letter annexed thereto that was tabled in this House by the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and asked that he review it with the Director of Public Prosecutions and any other person connected therewith. I do know and I have been advised by the Deputy Minister of Justice that on the next morning—on that same morning that he together with the Director of Public Prosecutions met with the commercial crime section of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

AN HON. MEMBER: When was that?

MR. HICKMAN: Yesterday morning. I am not going to comment, and I repeat I will not comment, on the manner in which the Royal Canadian Mounted Police conduct -

MR. NEARY: What about White? What about White?

MR. HICKMAN: I have no idea where Mr. White is, I have no idea, Mr. Speaker, where anyone who may be wanted for questioning by the RCMP, where they are, I do not ask them. The RCMP are given documents, they are taking instructions from the Director of Public Prosecutions, and they go out and they conduct their investigation.

MR. NEARY: What a stall. It is all a stall.

MR. HICKMAN: I do not think it will be a stall, In fact, I

will assure this House that it will be a very prompt, vigorous investigation,
quickly and with all the manpower that the RCMP deem appropriate and
necessary.

MR. NEARY: Yes, when we were looking for it for two years.

MR. W. ROWE: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. W. ROWE: It sounds suspiciously, Sir, like there was a delay to me, I am not saying a deliberate one, but a delay in going after the people who were making allegations. Let me ask the minister, has the minister fired or talked to or sought out his executive assistant, Mr. White? Where is he? Is he in town or is he out of the Provine? Is he gone? Is he here? Is he down in the department? Where is he? The

MR. W. ROWE: minister's Executive Assistant, getting what? \$19,000 a year of public money.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

DR. FARRELL: I had some other difficulties yesterday which occurred, and believe it or not, I did not have any knowledge of what had occurred in the House the evening before. And there have been certain rumours and allegations going around about that. And I did not -

AN HON. MEMBER: Ha, ha, ha! Tell us another one.

DR. FARRELL: Excuse me, Your Honour? Does the hon. member feel

that I am lying?

MR. PECKFORD: He said tell us another one. You said tell us another one.

DR. FARRELL: Tell us another one.

AN HON. MEMBER: I did not say he was lying.

MR. HICKMAN: Well, what does that mean?

DR. FARRELL: What does the member mean?

AN HON. MEMBER: Tell me another one.

MR. PECKFORD: Like what?

DR. FARRELL: Anyway, Sir, like I said I am not used to attacking anyone and I am not going to. But anyway, I had no knowledge of this thing. I checked with my medical man who asked me to rest up for the day, I had some chest problems and had some smoke problems, and I rested for the day. This morning I was hand delivered a letter from Mr. White which I have not had time to really study. We were discussing some other things because a lot of this stuff has just come to my knowledge and I was trying to get the transcripts and the whole bit and piece. At the moment I believe Mr. White has terminated his appointment with me, to my knowledge at the moment, that is as far as I know.

MR. PECKFORD: Has he or has he not?

MR. HICKMAN: Did you say has or has not?

DR. FARRELL: As I said to my knowledge I feel that he may have.

MR. PECKFORD: But will he? Are you going to or what?

DR. FARRELL: As soon as I see him he will be terminated.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) down to cancel the loan.

MR. W. ROWE: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MIR. W. ROWE: What should be a very simple point, Sir, it seems a sname to be wasting the time of the House: What is the minister telling us? Has his Executive Assistant quit or has he been fired or what? What is going on here? Here is a man who has made grave allegations against his lord and master. Now is he fired, is he still on the government payroll, does the minister know if he is in town or gone? Do you know anything about him?

DR. FARRELL: I thought I explained that to you.

MR. MEARY: And has the minister got the letter there in front

of him?

DR. FARRELL: I abve not seen him, Your Honour, and when I do I shall be informing him that his time is terminated as far as I am concerned.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

IR. NEARY: Is the hon. gentleman telling the House that he has

a letter of resignation from Mr. White and now -

DR. FARRELL: I said I received a letter, that is all.

AN HON, MEMBER: He had not read it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, he has not read it yet.

PREMIER MOORES: (Inaudible) table it in the House yet.

DR. FARRELL: It will be at some time or another.

MEARY: Well, does the hou, gentleman have the letter with aim, in front of him or is it in his office? Can the hon, gentleman send for it and have it brought to the House?

DR. FARRELL: Why?

MR. NEARY: Why?

MR. Neary: because we want the information. We want to know -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: - if Mr. White has resigned or if he is still an employee of the government? Or has he been fired? We would like to know.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has come up

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. HICKMAN: The hon. gentleman asked a simple question of the hon. Minister of Industrial Development, whether or not Mr. Terrence White, who has been in his employ as an Executive Assistant, is still in his employ.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Right.

MR. HICKMAN: If I may repeat what the hon. gentleman just said was that he has not seen Mr. Terrence White, that he has received today a hand delivered letter from Mr. Terrence White, which he says, is not—and he was asked if it was a letter of resignation—and he said it was not. So therefore it is not relevant to this question, and he does not know whether Mr. White has terminated his employment with the Government of Newfoundland or not, but that he, the Minister of Industrial Development, when he next sees Mr. White will tell him that he intends to terminate his employment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Why?

MR. W. ROWE: A supplementary?

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementray, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. W. ROWE: Why is the minister going to terminate Mr. White's employment? Does he know whether these allegations that were laid on the table of the House were they in fact from Mr. White?

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

DR. FARRELL: Because the allegations made by Mr. White were untrue.

MR. W. ROWE: Oh, I see. They have already (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Justice, Sir, has been referring to alleged affidavits and alleged documents. Now the hon. gentleman is firing his Executive Assistant for making certain charges and allegations. Is the hon. gentleman confirming that indeed these allegations were made by Mr. White in his own handwriting? MR. WHITE: Say something.

MR. W. ROWE: Come on boy say, something will you?

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary.

MR. W. ROWE: Somebody answer.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. the member for Burgeo-

Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the Premier in speaking to this matter earlier, I believe, in a Ministerial Statement, earlier in the sitting this afternoon, indicated that he was of the impression that Mr. White's letter might have been written and signed under some pressure. Now since that is certainly a possibility, I put it to the Minister of Industrial Development, is it not premature for him to decide that he would terminate the employment of his Executive Assistant? Is it not possible, would he not agree, that it is possible that Mr. White has been a victim of circumstance, possibly, if the Premier's thesis is true that he might have done so under duress or under pressure? Would you not want to

MR. WHITE: Why fire him?

MR. SIMMONS: - hear what his case is before deciding whether
he indeed is anything but an innocent victim? Has the minister— am
asking the Minister of Industrial Development a question. I am
asking does he agree, has he decided to terminate the employee's
contract without finding out the facts of the case? Or does the Minister

Mr. Simmons: of Industrial Development already know the facts of the case, and are the facts such that would dictate that he terminate the employment of Mr. White?

MR. NEARY: The king of the smear artists.

PREMIER MOORES:

Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon, the Premier.

PREMIER MOORES:

Mr. Speaker, I understood from the minister - and

I have talked to him about it - the reason Mr. White has not been fired is because he has not seen him to talk to him about it, just that very point. The fact is if Mr. White did write such a letter, no matter under what conditions, obviously he would fired by the minister for the simple reason of disloyality if nothing else.

AN HON. MEMBER: What kind of justice is that?

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

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Would the bon. Minister of Industrial Development indicate to the House if this is the first time that Mr. White's

services have been terminated as Executive Assistant to the hon.

gentleman?

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

DR. FARRELL: No, Sir.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. NEARY: Would the hon, gentleman indicate under what

circumstances Mr. White's services were terminated, and how many times were they terminated and under what circumstances were they terminated?

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

DR. FARRELL: Approximately a year ago, Sir, it came to my

attention that Mr. White had been involved in a business with some other people which I felt might possibly be a conflict of interest -

PREMIER MOORES: He got a loan from here.

DR. FARRELL : Pardon?

PREMIER MOORES: He got a loan from here.

DR. FARRELL: Yes, and had a loan from the Rural Development
Department for a group and I had, you know, great difficulty this was a conflict of interest - but prior to that he had - the
man,who I regard as an unfortunate individual, very serious martial
problems, I hate to be bringing this up at the time - but

SOME HON. MEMBERS: What!

DR. FARRELL: No, I am sorry! I am sorry!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order! Order, please!

DR. FARRELL: What I am saying -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. minister to please allow me?

DR. FARRELL: Sure.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to hon, gentlemen that whatever their difference of opinion, their opinions of one another, or of what a question is, or of what an answer is, there are certain basic decencies which to my knowledge

MR. SPEAKER:

every Legislature in the Commonwealth observes, and which have
to be enforced. I realize people may take strong exception to
what another hon. member says and in a period of debate this

attacked as harshly as long as it is

done within the rules, but I do have to point out to hon.

members that the rules precluding debate during Question Period

have to be observed and that the calling sort of back across

the House from one side to the other of uncomplimentary, to

put it mildly, remarks can lead to nothing but deterioration.

SOME HON . MEMBERS :

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

I interrupted the hon. minister.

I believe he was in the process of answering.

DR. T. FARRELL:

I am sorry, Sir.

This was serious personal problems which I helped them with. And I probably expressed - and I ask the excuse of the House-or the House to forgive that slip because it was not meant in any harmful way

There are serious personal problems He found it difficult to follow his work patterns. He was not able to operate very well.

He had griefs. Now I find it hard to explain problems, but -

just say it was personal problems.

DR. T. FARRELL:

PREMIER MOORES:

Personal problems which

You do not have to explain,

actually I helped him with and on this one I felt-and I know it has been used in this so I will not go into it as it is being used in his documents that I discarded him or let his services go at that time and said try and work out your problems and we will see in the future how it works out and that is exactly how it happened.

MR. NEARY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I am glad the hon.

gentleman retracted that remark, Sir, because if hon, gentleman are going to talk about marital problems certainly hon, gentleman on

MR. NEARY:

the other side of the House

know all about it because they have their share of problems according to these transcripts that I have. So the hon, gentleman should not drag personal matters into this House and the hon, gentleman has done it and the hon, the Premier has done it. Character assassination —

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

MR. NEARY: Sir, what I am asking the hon. -

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

AN HON. MEMBER: Sit down!

MR. SPEAKER: I must rule on the term of

character assassination. People may think what they wish but in the House, in the Legislature, cannot allow certain terms and that will be one of them. I will ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw.

MR. NEARY: I withdraw, Sir , and I will ask the hon.

gentleman now if the hon. gentleman had taken the trouble when Mr. White went in business to check with the Auditor General to see if indeed Mr. White was in conflict of interest.

Why the minister forced Mr. White off the payroll? Why he threatened to fire the gentleman? Why did he not check with

the Auditor General? The minister is a Minister of the Crown.

The gentleman is remning-the Deputy Premier next to the Premier himself, the number two man in this Province, why did that gentleman not pick up his telephone or have somebody pick up the phone and call the Auditor General to ask him if Mr. White was in conflict of interest? I am sure the Deputy Premier, the President of the Council, the number two man in this Province could have done that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister.

DR. T. FARRELL: At that time, Sir, I had

doubts about it and I did not want my executive assistant be involved in any business, outside business, personal business. He

DR. T. FARRELL: was dealing with me and that was the point I was making, Sir. I certainly did not-I did not think it was my place to go and check with the Auditor General. I felt that this is the way I wanted it at the time, and that is why.

MR. NEARY:

A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, will the hon.

gentleman tell us what the relationship between Mr. White and the hon, gentleman has been over the last several months since Mr. White was taken back on the payroll? And under what circumstances. When was the hon, gentleman advised that he was going to be taken back on the payroll? And how has been their relationship over the past several months?

DR. T. FARRELL:

Glad to do it.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister.

DR. T. FARRELL:

It was brought to my attention by

friends of Mr. White, colleagues etc., that he was going through an even rougher period and I myself was starting to come back to, hopefully, full health. Late in the Fall I had some words with Mr. White and said if I went back to a very active post I might have a position available for him. In the interim I discovered through a family doctor who called me personally that Mr. White had a very serious eye condition, which looked like total blindness, called retinitis pigmentosa. it is a congenital disease which, thinking back over the past and our early days together I got extremely worried about it. I made a point of trying to get in touch with him, which I had great difficulty doing. He was living in the Stephenville area. I was on my way myself for a checkup on my own eye problems to one of the better eye surgeons in Canada, and I felt that the only hope, because there was no center in Canada for this particular condition at that time that I knew of and that

 $\overline{\text{DR. T. FARRELL}}$: he might k_{now} of I brought him with me to have a checkup on the eye problem which turned out to be not this particular condition, luckily, and was treatable by laser treatment. And in the process I felt that

he had had such a rugged time and had gone through such a

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...

DR. FARRELL:

nervous state over this eye problem that when I went back into a full department I would take him back with me, and that I did, Sir.

MR. SIMMONS:

A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary. The hon.

member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Speaker, a question for

the Minister of Industrial Development. In the last few minutes he has obviously indicated to the House that he knows Mr. White quite well and has considerable confidence in his ability and certain compassion for his personal problems. Now, Mr. Speaker, I put to him the question I attempted to put earlier; why has the Minister of Industrial Development decided to terminate the employment of Mr. White before he has talked to him, before he knows whether or not the letter which he signed was signed, as the Premier suggested, under some kind of duress or pressure? Why is it the minister has decided - from something he said a moment ago - why has he already decided to terminate the employment of Mr. White? Has he sufficient evidence to come to the conclusion that Mr. White was, in signing that letter, aware of what he was doing? Can the minister enlighten us on that point? I cannot understand, Mr. Speaker, why it is he has decided already to terminate Mr. White's employment unless there is something we are not hearing from the minister.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of

Industrial Development.

DR. FARRELL:

Sir, I have not seen Mr.

White. I am waiting to see Mr. White.

MR. NEARY:

And you are going to fire

him when you see him.

DR. FARRELL:

Not necessarily. I am

going to try to find out exactly what is behind these

DR. FARRELL: certain allegations. How

can I do it until I talk to him? I have not had the opportunity to see Mr. White and until I do so, I am not going to make any decision.

MR. SIMMONS: A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. SIMMONS: For clarification, Mr.

Speaker; the minister then is retracting a statement he made about fifteen or twenty minutes ago which went almost word for word as follows: "When I see him I am going to fire him." Now the minister, I understand, is now retracting that statement and is willing.

DR. FARRELL: I would fire him right now

if he did indeed write this.

MR.SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of

Industrial Development.

DR. FARRELL: Excuse me! If he did write

this under pressure, I said, I am certainly going to fire him, you know.

MR. W.N.ROWE: It is like a Reach For The

Top team. A supplementary, Sir. They are like a Reach For

The Top team over there, conferring on their answers, Mr.

Speaker. As my hon. colleague said, Bob Cole should be over there.

MR. PECKFORD: (Inaudible) more than

confer.

AN HON. MEMBER: You reach for the bottom.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. W.N.ROWE: Oh no, Sir, if I wanted to

reach for the bottom I would reach across the House.

MR. NEARY: We are looking right across

at the bottom of the barrel now.

MR. W.N.ROWE: We are looking at it, Sir,

from here now.

MR. NEARY: I have been looking at it for

MR. NEARY: six years.

MR. MORGAN: You are going to the bottom

fast.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. W.N.ROWE: Ah yes. Yes. Going to the

bottom fast. That hon. gentleman! What about if the hon.

minister never -

MR. NEARY: Come over, boy, until I show

you some transcripts.

MR. W.N.ROWE: - sees Mr. White again which

seems to be more and more the likelihood, Sir, from reports outside the House and radio stations. The fact that the minister has not seen his own executive assistant, which is an unbelievable, incredible circumstance in itself, what does he intend to do? Is he going to - what is he going to do? Does he have any idea now where he is; for example? Has any knowledge come to the minister as to where his executive assistant is at this moment?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of

Industrial Development.

DR. FARRELL: Mr. Speaker, I have been asked a series of questions there - if I see the executive assistant again. Hopefully I will see him again, Sir, and if I do not see him again I will appoint another executive assistant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, a week ago today

in this House, the Minister of Tourism informed the House that he had made a helicopter trip to Chelsea in the district of Trinity - Bay de Verde on a Sunday afternoon, August 14, I think. I want to ask the Minister of Tourism, the former Minister of Transportation and Communications, how many people did the minister plan to meet there on that day? Was there a delegation? And what was the reason for that flight?

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MR. SPEAKER:

The hon, the Minister of

Tourism.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, very gladly.

The request for a meeting came from a Mr. Phipps. If I recall - I forget his first name - he was a former engineer who worked with the Department of Highways at one time. He requested a meeting, he came into St. John's to meet with me personally and the department staff, therewere letters from him asking me to travel to the area. I recall his request very vividly because he requested me, and he mentioned two officials he did not want to come along because he felt the officials were the obstacle in not getting the work done.

I explained to him that I would like to take the officials with me.

MR. MORGAN:

It was on a Sunday afternoon.

For at least two weeks in a row I could not find time during the week because of very heavy commitments, and I recall on Sunday afternoon taking a helicopter, flying out to the area, meeting with Mr. Phipps and a number of other people from the same area who have had a problem with a road which was marked as a local road, but he felt it was not a local road and he wanted some upgrading and reconstruction carried out.

MR. CALLAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering would

the minister have the common decency to inform the member for the district of Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) that he was going out there and also invite him along so that both men would be filled in on what the problem was?

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

MR. MORGAN: I hope, Mr. Speaker, I do have common decency in all matters pertaining to government.

And I would say, last year in my travels as Minister of Transportation it would be quite difficult for the members

of the Opposition to catch up with me.

MR. CALLAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, the minister has indicated that he had gone out there on a Sunday afternoon at government expense to investigate a local road problem. How does the minister, Mr. Speaker, the former Minister of T. and C., rationalize making a special trip to see one individual, or two or three individuals about a local road problem when on numerous occasions that same minister refused to meet delegations who were prepared to come in to

MR. CALLAN: this city at their own expense and the minister refused to meet these delegations, or the minister refused to go out and see delegations out there about major road problems. How does the minister rationalize that?

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

MR. MORGAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the hon.

gentleman is inferring that the persons I met with were friends of myself or anybody in the department -

MR. CALLAN: I am not inferring anything,

I am asking this question.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Phipps, I met with him once here in St. John's. I did not know of him before that only from correspondence. In connection with delegations I think the records will show - and records have been kept - the Department of Transportation last year, in one year I met in the office of T. and C. 217 delegations from across this Province and I take strong exception to people saying I did not meet delegations.

MR. CALLAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A supplementary.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker, on that helicopter

that Sunday afternoon, there was a gentleman friend of the

minister's. I want the minister to tell us, Who was that

gentleman friend? Was he the special assistant, the

former P.C. member for that area before the redistribution?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, one of the hon.

gentlemen who accompanied me was my executive assistant.

MR. CALLAN: Thank you.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: The hon. the Minister of Justice here yesterday misled the House in an answer that he gave and the hon. gentleman promised the House to get some information in connection with an agreement, a fee schedule that was worked out with Scrivener (Newfoundland) Limited and then Scrivener (Newfoundland) Limited was absorbed by SNC who are now the project managers over at Memorial University. The Minister of Justice told the House that he thought that the bond had been called. Mr. Speaker, the hon, gentleman said 'he thought' and the hon, gentleman undertook to check it out for me, to get me the information. In my research that I did overnight, Sir, I understand that there was no bond, that you do not have bonds - project managers are not bonded, and so there was no bond to be called. And I want to ask the hon. gentleman now if he has the information for the House that he promised to get yesterday in connection with this whole sordid affair? MR. SPEAKER: The hon, minister.

MR. DOODY:

Mr. Speaker, regarding that

matter, I took it on myself this morning to ask the officials

in the Department of Public Works to try to research the

matter for me. I had scribbled hastily what appeared to

me to be the substance of the question that the Member for

LaPoile had asked. It is a complicated matter and one

which I feel would have been better placed on the

Order Paper because I do not want to give any incorrect

information to the House. However, I will pass along what

I have been able to get together so far and if this is not

sufficient we will get some more information for the hon.

member.

MR. DOODY: Scrivener (Canada) Limited were the parent company of Scriviner Projects (Newfoundland) Limited who had the original contract for the project management of the Health Sciences programme. This contract, I understand, was awarded sometime in 1971 by an Order in Council. There was no contract as such. There was a proposal by a gentleman named Harvey South who eventually together with two other partners, a Mr. R. H. Scrivener and a Mr. R. Beatty, formed a company who subsequently took on the management of that huge project. It was not until sometime later, I think it was sometime in 1973, that a contract was eventually entered into. Scrivener (Canada) Limited eventually went into receivership and all the branch companies, which included Scrivener Projects Limited, were accordingly affected.

The only asset of the company
here in Newfoundland was their contract with the Government
of Newfoundland to finish the Health Science complex for a
fee that was established.

MR. NEARY: To finish the Health Sciences Complex, right!

AN HON. MEMBER: A maximum fee.

MR. DOODY: That is right. The maximum fee,
which they called the offset, was written in subsequent to
the original agreement. There was no maximum in the original
arrangement with Scrivener in 1971.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes there was.

MR. DOODY: Well, it was written into a contract later on by a subsequent group of people who dealt with Scrivener.

So the Scrivener Projects Limited assets were made available by the receiver, but one of the clauses in the management contract precluded their transferring that asset to another company without the permission of the Government of Newfoundland.

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MR. NEARY: Why were they not taken to court?

Why was Scrivener not taken to court for not fulfilling

their contract?

MR. DOODY: Because there was no point in

it, apparently.

MR. NEARY: Well, why let them get off the

hook?

MR. DOODY:

Anyway, the receiver asked the Government of Newfoundland's permission or authority or concurrence or agreement to transfer the contract to another company called Cominack, which the Government of Newfoundland was not happy with. Subsequently they came in with another idea. They had learned that the company called SNC - Surveyor - some long involved name. It is not important anyway - had bought many of the assets of Scrivener on the Mainland.

MR. NEARY: Well, they had nothing but the contract - the minister just told us they had nothing but a contract.

MR. DOODY:

No, I said they had bought many of the assets of Scrivener (Canada) Limited on the Mainland. Subsequently they were contacted by the engineers of the department here to see if they were going to become involved or were interested in becoming involved in the Health Sciences Complex since they had taken over most of the personnel in the holding company, Scrivener (Canada) Limited. SNC thereupon came down, looked at the project. here and offered to take it over.

MR. NEARY: Why was action not taken

against Scrivener?

 $\underline{\text{MR. DOODY}}$: Relative to a fee schedule which was inquired about yesterday, I made the same inquiry on behalf of the hon, member and $\overline{\text{I}}$ was told that the fee

MR. DOODY: schedule which SNC eventually

settled with was essentially the same as that of the

Scrivener Projects Limited -

MR. NEARY: Why was Scrivener not taken

to court for violation of contract?

MR. MORGAN: He answered that question.

authorization was given for the hiring of one additional

staff member.

MR. NEARY: No, the hon. minister did not

answer the question. The hon, gentleman has no axe to grind.

MR. DOODY: As I said in the beginning,

Your Honour -

MR. NEARY: Go out and look after Ocean Breeze.

MR. MORGAN: Stop interrupting.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DOODY: If the hon, member for LaPoile

(Mr. Neary) and the hon. member for Bonavista South

(Mr. Morgan) would just restrain themselves for a few

minutes, I will try to give the House the benefit of what

little information I have on this subject.

As I said in the beginning

it is a relatively new area for me. I asked our people

to look at it this morning. They

MR. DOODY:

provided me with some of the information. I do not pretend that it is all here. I know it is a far more complex and detailed area than I am outlining here at this time. I have undertaken to give the House the information that I have here and I would be only too happy to provide additional information as requested or as required. It is a complex area and it is one of which I do not pretend to have any personal expertise but in which I have every intention of finding out from those people who do.

MR. NEARY: Why were they not taken to court, Scrivener?

MR. DOODY: Well we will certainly check on that and ask them. You

know everyone to his own hobby, apparently, You know, there are courts and courts.

MR. NEARY: Like ask my father if I am a liar.

MR. DOODY: He would probably say you were. I do not know.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. DOODY: That is just an assumption and a guess and I really do not know. It is another area in which I do not have any expertise.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day.

MR. DOODY: The question is over. I am sorry, Your Honour.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that I leave the Chair.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order.

MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, before you leave the Chair there is a very important point of order that I would like you to clear up.

The kon. gentleman for LaPoile has been referring to his research —
that is the term he uses for the documents which he has on his deskand he has already tabled a fair amount of stuff. But he has also
referred to recorded telephone calls and all sorts of evidence that

if he were to table it it would be extremely damaging. Now I say
this, Mr. Speaker, that I do not know and I do not really care what
he has there at the moment, but I think the principle ought to be
firmly laid down in this House that a person cannot get up and wave
all sorts of supposedly incriminating documents and say, "Oh, if I

MR. J. CARTER: table these the hon. gentleman would blush." I think that the person, once he mentions that or once he alludes to them and certainly once he waves them physically ought to lay them right on the table of this House.

MR. NEARY: Be careful you might have to table your
MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, I think that this is a very important
rule and ought to be clearly laid down once and for all. And in support
of this -

MR. NEARY: Come over and I will let you read them
MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, in support of this particular point of
order I have a citation from Beauchesne, number 159, subsection 3.

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

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, on that point of order. While you are looking up the esoteric legal reference given to you by the learned member for St. John's North, Sir, that is not a point of order as Your Honour well knows. The rule has been referred to and laid down time and time again that you must quote from a document. Sir, the remarks of the hon. gentleman from St. John's North would have been better directed towards the Premier, his leader, and the House Leader on the government side who today consistently, and yesterday, got up, Sir, and made references, veiled references, quasi-intimidating, threats and so on, we are going to have an investigation and the hon. member will not like what comes out of that and this kind of thing, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member's remarks should be directed to his own House Leader and the Premier of the Province. As far as the authority is concerned, Sir, I believe it is clearly laid down by precedents of this House as well as the rules that you must quote from a document in order for that document to be tabled.

MR. J. CARTER: Further to that point of order - You are still not finished?

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

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, what I had in my mind now is intimidated right out of my mind, Sir. I have to sit down. When I saw that hon. gentleman's

MR. F. ROWE: physical presence in all its grandiose entirety, Sir, I decided I better sit down.

MR. J. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, further to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. John's North.

MR. J. CARTER: As usual the Leader of the Opposition is wallowing in error. The point that I was making was that these were physical, actual documents that the hon. gentleman not only referred to but physically raised above his head and waved in the air and threatened that they were incriminating and contained all kinds of serious allegations and if he were to table them it would be all the worst for the hon, member concerned.

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think it is a matter which requires an immediate decision - obviously it requires a decision - and I will give one certainly later today.

The motion is that I leave the Chair.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise a point of order.

I do not think it is a matter you can deal with right yet, but yesterday during, I believe, the Question Period, the Minister of Justice in answer to a question from me quoted from a document, a letter he had from his department. I was not sure he had actually quoted until I checked the transcript and there is no doubt that he did quote from the document. As I say, it is probably not a matter Mr. Speaker can dispose of right now but I would ask him to hear my point and then rule on it at an appropriate time later.

I submit that having quoted from that document, Mr. Speaker, yesterday in answer to a question from me and in accordance with precedents already established in this House that the minister ought to have tabled the document yesterday. I was somewhat in error in not having caught it yesterday but I wanted to make doubly sure that he had been quoting and not just referring

MR. SIMMONS:

in general terms to the document. A check with the transcript will indicate that he did indeed quote from the document. He should have tabled it at that time and I would submit that Mr. Speaker ought to ask him, having checked the Hansard to determine that what I have said is the case, he would then ask the Minister of Justice to table the document as he is required to according to the rules and precedents of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: To that point of order. If I did indeed quote from a document, it would obviously-I presume and assume that the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) is referring to a line of questioning with respect to an investigation that is ongoing in my department. Then obviously any communication from my department to me falls clearly and absolutely within the definition of Crown documents.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if I may.

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

MR. SIMMONS: - again, there is no question about that and the rule was established earlier, the precedent, that if the Crown document, not that if it is a Crown document, but if that document is not in the public interest - that is the operative point, I believe, - and the real point I want to make in raising this, I do not particularly want to see the letter personally because I know the letter he is talking about and I have seen the letter. That is not my point. The letter that I think the minister was reading from is a letter that I have a copy of and therefore I know what is in the particular letter. But my point, Mr. Speaker, is that it seems to me that members on the government side - and here is my reason for raising this point of order - are now beginning to take advantage of this question of state documents. We are in the situation where because we are not in government and by and large we do not have state documents, we nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, have documents which if tabled may not be in the public interest, as we demonstrated the other night.

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MR. SIMMONS:

People in government, on the other hand can get up and have what is technically a state document and then hide behind the guise that it might not be in the public interest or that it is a Crown document or a state document. That is the essential point I raised, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps at the appropriate time Mr. Speaker could rule on it.

MR. SPEAKER: I have heard these matters and since although quite distinct from it, it is obviously related to the former point in that they both deal with the citation of documents, entailing of documents. I will give both decisions at the same time.

The motion is that I leave the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Heading 1005-01.

The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. COLLINS: Before we adjourned on Tuesday night, I was in the middle of a response to two questions, one asked by the hon. member for Baie

Verte - White Bay, and one from the hon. member for St. George's

(Mrs. McIsaac). With regard to the question posed by the member for Baie Verte-White Bay, which dealt with the pattern of practice, a term I like to use, concerning a doctor who is now in place in La-Scie and the relationship with the Baie Verte hospital, I can only tell him publicly, this is a public forum, that my deputy minister was into Baie Verte and Lacie late last week. We have received some complaints and I would suggest possibly to the hon. member that he might want to come down and discuss that with the deputy minister or with myself for that matter. I would prefer to say very little else at this particular time other than to make sure that the hon.

member is kept advised as to what might or might not happen there.

With regard to the question raised by the hon. member for St. George's (Mrs. McIsaac) with respect to a doctor at Jeffrey's, we have been having some problems in terms of finding a replacement for a doctor at Jeffrey's who resigned, I think,

MR. COLLINS:

last Fall. That particular practice, Mr. Chairman, comes within the ambit and the jurisdictional responsibility of the Hospital Board at Stephenville. Of course that does not mean that the department does

MR. H. COLLINS:

not have an interest too, but it is the responsibility of the Board to recruit a replacement and we certainly give them all the help we can. There is a doctor now in place in Jeffreys but, as the hon. member said, there is a possibility that that doctor might be leaving again in June in which case, of course, we will have to find a replacement. The Board at Stephenville are aware of that and so are the people in the department and certainly we will give them all the assistance we can in order to find a replacement if, in fact, that doctor does leave, and it looks like the doctor might be leaving in June.

I do not know how many other members, Mr.

Chairman, might want to make a contribution in the debate so after answering those two questions I will resume my seat and make notes as other hon, members speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon, member for St. George's.

MRS. MCISAAC: There is something I would like to ask the minister, if he would go a little bit further and give me the information on whether or not drugs will be dispensed in the area or if people still have to travel that fifty-odd miles with a prescription.

MR. H. COLLINS: I will certainly look into that.

On motion 1005-01 through 1005-02-02, carried.

MR. NEARY: On (03), is there a new doctor's residence

this year, could the minister tell us?

MR. H. COLLINS: I am sorry.

MR. NEARY: Is a new doctor's residence going to be built

this year?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, not to my knowledge. Generally speaking, for the salaried doctors in medical practice around different areas of the Province it is the practice that the housing requirements are taken care of by the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation generally through a rental process because very often we find that doctors going into those areas are not inclined to stay there for the rest of

MR. H. COLLINS: their lives, but I certainly do not know of any new residences that are being built but I can make a note of it and find out.

On motion, 1005-02-03 through 1006-03,

carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: I just slipped out for a moment - we are on

1006?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1006-03-1.

MR. LUSH: Well it is okay. I wanted to speak to the

ambulance air service, Mr. Chairman. There is no -

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is -

MR. LUSE: Is that okay? Could I have the Chairman's approval to speak to that, or does that come under 05? Is that the air ambulance under 05? If it is, then I can go on to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that would be under 05.

MR. LUSH: Okay. All right.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister of Health to tell us now how the department purchase their drugs. Do they call public tenders or do they have a list of companies in their office, in the office of the Department of Supply & Services and in the various hospitals and they just invite tenders or do they advertise in the newspaper, and are tenders called for all kinds of drugs? Could the Minister give us a little information on this Heading?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. minister.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I do not have that detailed information here but my officials are outside and I will certainly get it from them.

MR. NEARY: Well get them in the House, get the officials

into Committee.

MR. H. COLLINS: I will decide whether the officials come into

Committee or if they do not come into Committee, Mr. Chairman, and my

MR. H. COLLINS: officials are outside and I will get the information for the hon. member. We will keep away no information which the hon, member needs and which we can supply to him. What I was about to say is that a number of hospitals around the Province do their own purchasing as they are permitted to do under the Hospitals Act and the various acts under which they operate. There is a central supply division within the department which is located at Pleasantville, and I will certainly get that information for the hon, member in a few minutes.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman -

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Hon, member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY:

- I am not satisfied with the hon. gentleman's

answers. The hon, gentleman is obviously proving once again that he is incompetent. If the hon, gentleman does not have the information

MR. NEARY:

to provide the Committee then the hon. gentleman can call his officials in on the floor of the House and get the information. The hon. gentleman is asking us to pass this subhead without answering the questions that I put to the hon. gentleman. How many hospitals are ordering their own drugs? Give us a list of the hospitals. Are public tenders invited? What procedures are used? Can the minister get some information for the Committee or bring the officials in on the floor of the House. The hon. gentleman took off, Sir, like a scaled cat.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1003-03-01

MR. NEARY: No, it is not going to pass, Mr. Chairman, I want to get some information from the hon. gentleman, Sir, and I will stay on my feet until I get it. I want to know, Sir, I want to know what procedures are used in the purchase of drugs for the various hospitals, medical clinics scattered throughout this Province and I ask the hon. gentleman, and I am still waiting for an answer, Sir, and I do not think - I will tell you what I will do, Mr. Chairman, I will move that the subhead be deferred until such time as the hon. gentleman can bring his officials in on the floor of the House and give the Committee the information that I am asking for. I move that we defer that particular item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman has pointed out, which is quite the practice in this House, that any hon. minister, if he needs a bit of information or technical advice from his officials, will go out and get it. But that is certainly not grounds for deferring the item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! For the information of hon, members the only motions that can be entertained are motions to amend, to pass or reduce. There cannot be entertained a motion to defer once discussion on a subhead has been entered upon, and we have clearly entered upon discussion of 1006-03-01.

The hon, member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, does the hon. minister have the

question? In connection with drugs, Sir, sold by the

government -

MR. H. COLLINS: To save time and to relieve the House of this misery, let him take his seat and I will answer the question.

 $\underline{\text{MR. NEARY:}}$ Well, I have been the last five minutes trying to get it, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: The hospitals across the Province, Mr. Chairman, which are operated by hospital boards are represented as a group by the Newfoundland Hospital Association.

Those people have a listing of all the people across Canada who supply drugs and their purchasing is done on a bulk basis after inviting proposals from the people who supply drugs. In terms of hospitals which are operated by the provincial government, the Department of Public Works and Services, through their purchasing agent, purchasing agency, also have a listing of all those people and proposals are asked for and the best possible prices are obtained.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, in connection with drugs, Sir, that are sold by the government to out-patients in hospitals and drugs supplied to cottage hospitals through the Central Pharmacy and drugs sold generally by the government, through the Central Pharmacy or otherwise, on what basis, Mr. Chairman, does the government set its selling prices? And what is the general differential between the selling prices set by the government for selling these drugs in medical clinics and out-patients and so forth, what is the general differential between the selling prices set by the government and retail prices in drug stores in Newfoundland?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon, Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: I am reasonably sure, Mr. Chairman, that the mark-up which Central Supply has is in the order of twenty per cent. I will get that confirmed in a moment. Cost plus twenty per cent which is confirmed by the Deputy Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon, member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, in connection with this subhead, Sir, would the minister indicate to the House if the government will consider a proposal put forward by the senior citizens clubs, by the Newfoundland Association for the Aging, and for all the clubs that have membership of senior citizens in this Province, and the sixty club and over, would the minister indicate if the government intends to accede to the wishes, the requests of the senior citizens in this Province who are now, a good many of them, suffering because they cannot afford prescription drugs and medication that they need? Does the government intend to introduce a programme to help these people get their badly needed drugs, especially those, Mr. Chairman, who have to pay out huge sums of money every month for prescription drugs and for medication?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Health.

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MR. H. COLLINS:

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Mr. Chairman, I responded

to that question maybe in the name of another hon. member on Tuesday evening. The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) knows a delegation from the senior citizens met with my colleague, the Minister of Social Services, I believe it was last week and presented government with a brief dealing with, as they see it, the need for government to at least subsidize the cost of drugs to the senior citizens of the Province. We have a lot of sympathy for the predictment which those people find themselves in and that their incomes are just about stationary, fixed. And of course we all know the cost of drugs is increasing and we also know that a lot of senior citizens by virtue of the their age and possibly some ailments are required to take a considerable number of drugs from time to time.

I would indicate to the Gommittee, Mr. Chairman, that across Canada various provinces have different arrangements in terms of the manner in which subsidies are provided. Nowhere across Canada is that done

by a Department of Health. It is a social services matter and my colleague has received a brief and I am sure that he will be making the necessary recommendations to government.

MR. NEARY:

The answer then is no.

MR. H. COLLINS:

I did not say that.

On motion, 106-03-01, carried

On motion, 106-03-02, carried

R. CHAIRMAN:

Shall 106-03-03 carry?

The hon. member for Baie Verte -

White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, I wonder would

the minister care to take a minute or two and explain to us what this rural physiotherapy program is. What does it encompass? What parts of the Province is it operating? What is it all about? MR. RIDEOUT:

That is 1006-03-03.

MR. H. COLLINS:

Rural physiotherapy. There is

a small amount there, Mr. Chairman, which is \$5,300 and it is provided

for the part-time employment of physiotherapist and for the purchasing of equipment and supplies. The physiotherapist are paid on an hourly basis. There are presently two employed under this program. They are located at Woody Point and Trepassey.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman, in connection with

physiotherapists, Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that the minister's department or some of the hospitals that come directly under the Minister of Health that are not under a board have had to go on recruiting trips. Has the hon, minister disappeared?

The hon, gentleman has evaporated into thin air!

MK. HICKMAN:

He was listening to you.

ME.S. NEARY:

No,I am not talking to an empty

seat, Mr. Chairman. That is the height of ignorance, contempt for this House, arrogance on the part of the minister, Sir, and I am not going to talk to a vacant seat. If the hon, gentleman cannot answer the questions, if the hon, gentleman is so incompetent that he cannot answer the questions, then I suggest that the hon, gentleman bring his officials in on the floor of the House.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Send the Premier in.

MR. S. NEARY:

Or send the Premier in to answer

the questions. The Premier is supposed to know what goes on in all departments of government.

MR. J. CARTER:

Sit down and give someone else

a chance,

MR. S. NEARY:

Does the hon. gentleman want the

floor?

MR. J. CARTER:

No.

MR. S. NEARY:

I want the minister, Sir.

MR. J. CARTER: There are other hon. members wanting the floor.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, do we have to do

like they do at hockey games. We want the minister! We want the

minister! We want the minister! We want the minister!

MR. DOODY: Wherever you feel more comfortable.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) zoo.

MR. NEARY: Well, if I were at a zoo looking

at the hon. gentleman I would feel very comfortable, to see these little animals that swing from their tails.

MR. J. CARTER: You are supposed to address your

remarks to the Chair.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, what I want to know

about this matter, Sir.

AN HON. MEMBER: You are wasting time.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, is it doing Your

Honor a discourtesy, is it being discourteous to the House, is it contempt for the House, Sir, to have the hon. gentleman, while we are putting his Estimates through the House the hon. gentleman

does not have the interest to sit down, Sir?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. S.NEARY: Gone outside in the corridors for

a draw or out in the backroom somewhere for whatever else goes on over there.

MR. J. CARTER: What is it you are suggesting?

MR. S. NEARY: I am not suggesting anything, Sir,

but I am going to ask the Minister of Health before we are finish with his Estimates to bring in the breathalyzer into this hon. House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

I do have to call it to hon. members'

attention that in Committee remarks do have to be directed fairly directly

MR. CHAIRMAN:

and clearly to the subhead

under discussions or it does place the Chair in a position of having to interrupt and make a ruling if the Chair feels that this is not being done. Now I know this does present difficulties at times but I just do bring it to hon. members' attention.

MR. S. NEARY:

Well, Mr. Chairman, it

would be a very interesting process to bring a breathalyzer into this House especially when the House meets at eight o'clock

in the evenings and I would like

MR. NEARY:

to see the breathalizer brought in on the floor of the House and also on the tenth floor of Confederation Building, and maybe one or two physiotherapists too, Sir. I know this is rural physiotherapy we are talking about here, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to know if there is a shortage of physiotherapists in this Province. I would like to know how many times the recruiting team have gone over to Ireland and England and Scotland in the last year or so to recruit physiotherapists. And I would like to also know from the minister why we do not have trained physiotherapists in this Province, why we cannot put Newfoundlanders in these jobs, why it was necessary recently, for instance, for an Irishman from the Waterford Hospital to go back to his native Ireland, to recruit some of his buddies who were physiotherapists to bring them over to Newfoundland. Why is this necessary, Sir, when we have record unemployment in this Province? Why cannot we send our own people off, men and women, Newfoundlanders to be trained as physiotherapists as well as send people off to be trained as health inspectors? Why? Perhaps the hon, member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) can set a poor old ignoramus like myself straight. Why is it necessary to go to the hon. gentleman's native soil to recruit - although I consider the hon. gentleman as a Newfoundlander, That is not meant as an insult to the hon. gentleman. Why is it necessary when we need physiotherapists to either go in the rural parts of Newfoundland or to work in our hospitals here in St. John's and if we need health inspectors or if we need technicians of any kind, why is it necessary to always have to go overseas or to send a recruiting team across Canada? We have record unemployment in this Province. We are spending one-third of our budget on education, We have this fantastic university, we have the College of Trades and Technology, we have eighteen vocational schools and every time we need a physiotherapist or an X ray technician - no maybe not so much an X ray technician now - health inspectors, we have to send off a recruiting team at public expense to recruit foreigners, to recruit CFAs. Now, Mr.

MR. NEARY:

Chairman, why is this necessary? Why does the minister not plan far enough ahead? Why do not the officials of the minister's department have sufficient foresight to be able to tell what the need will be for physiotherapists and health inspectors? Why is it necessary to send these recruiting teams off at great expense to the taxpayers, living in posh hotels and eating at the finest bistros in Europe, Maxim's and so on? Why is this necessary?

If we have to, if we cannot train them here in Newfoundland, why do we not send them out of Newfoundland to be trained in the various training centers and under the programmes in other provinces and in other countries rather than import Come From Aways to fill these jobs when we have record unemployment in this Province. Now that the minister, Sir, has returned to his seat, perhaps the hon. gentleman could give the Committee that information.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Exploits.

DR. TWOMEY: The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) was kind enough to ask me a few questions and to wonder if I could shed some light on these questions. I know quite well that there are not full provision for training of physiotherapists in Newfoundland. The main centers are Toronto, Montreal, Halifax and Western and out to B.C. I know very well that there are many who have asked me if I could intercede in their behalf to get them a place in university and as with all universities the admission requirements are extremely strict and they are again province orientated. It is much easier to get into a university in your own province than to move from one province to the other. And I think particularly in Quebec and in the Province of Ontario these governments are very definitely giving strict priority to students who apply from these provinces. That is number one.

Number two, why cannot we not get them out into the rural areas? I wish that I had that panacea for that because they are a requirement, a requirement not alone to help the patients

DR. TWOMEY:

but also to help us who want to advance our knowledge in physiotherapy, to help the nurses in the hospitals to advance their knowledge . And even the few occasions that we have had the opportunity of having a physiotherapist, the doctors , the nurses and the patients have learned much.

Again there is the problem of isolation,

DR. TWOMEY: working alone. They prefer to work in a group where they can exchange information just the same as they do in larger clinics or in hospitals. These are some of the problems that we face. It is extremely difficult no matter where they come from to keep them in the more isolated areas of Newfoundland. I believe all the ports, both in the larger centres - St. John's, Gander, Grand Falls and Corner Brook-have not that much of a problem in getting physiotherapists.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the House Leader.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, if I may. I did serve on one occasion for one year as Minister of Realth and the difficulty in getting physiotherapists for this Province is indeed a very acute one. It is, as I recall it, a very difficult course, one that requires a high degree of scholarship. I do not think there has been any change in the entrance requirements in Canadian universities for physiotherapists. I know one lady who had completed her first year at Memorial University three or four years ago and she and three others from Memorial made application to one university, and all three were either straight A students or close to it, and only one was accepted to, I think it was Queens, and it is then a four year course after. Now it is my understanding, and the hon. the Minister of Health can correct me on this, that if a Newfoundlander is accepted in any Canadian university in the discipline of physiotherapy that such person can then, if he or she decides that they need the money, make application to the Department of Health and a contractual relationship is entered into under which the Government of Newfoundland pays a certain amount of money per year to the physiotherapist and that when he or she graduates from university they must return to the

MR. HICKMAN: Province and work in a post assigned by the Department of Health, or at least work within that discipline within the Province, for whatever number of years are specified in the agreement. If they do not serve the number of years that are specified, then there are certain penalty clauses and rights of recovery from the person to whom the money was loaned. It is, Mr. Chairman, I believe, the same good policy that was followed by the Government of Newfoundland prior to the opening of the Health Sciences centre and the establishment of a school of nursing at Memorial.

MRS. McISAAC: (Inaudible)

MR. HICKMAN: Pardon?

MRS. McISAAC: That plan (Inaudible) .

MR. HICKMAN: Well, if the policy has been done away with - I know it was not done away with up to two years ago, because the young lady that I am familiar with told me that she was under this kind of contractual relationship and when she graduates, which I believe is this year, will be returning to somewhere in Newfoundland. I would assume that the only way it would be discontinued is if our own School of Medicine finds that they have the money to hire the additional staff, and it would require, I suspect, a fair number of additional, highly trained, expensive, competent staff to introduce that course at the School of Medicine. But certainly, no matter how you cut the cake, physiotheraphy is one of the very difficult disciplines to which one can gain admission.

Secondly, it is a long, long course. It cannot be compared with sending someone away for a year's training as a health inspector. It is a highly professional, five year course.

MR. HICKMAN: I think there are an increasing number of Newfoundlanders going into that vocation now and going to university, at least I seem to meet more of them all the time. And I cannot concur with the comment by the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) about recruiting people abroad. May I remind this Committee that when this -

MR. FLIGHT: Why are you up?

MR. HICKMAN: Well, a few minutes ago hon. gentlemen were complaining because there was not enough discussion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: We want to talk to the minister. Is he allowed to speak?

MR. HICKMAN: There was a great cry went out

a few minutes ago, Mr. Chairman, that they wanted participation
in this subject of rural physiotherapy.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right.

MR. HICKMAN: And I happen to represent a rural district and I happen to know something about the work that is being done by physiotherapists in this Province. And I am complying with the request that came from across the floor in my own modest, short, concise way. And I am being harassed by

MR. HICKMAN: the hon, the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight), and I do not like being harrassed and if he would only remain quiet for one second I could very precisely and concisely finish my few modest comments. And that is, Mr. Chairman. I want to remind this House, because we should never forget it, that we have a very strong debt of gratitude to the physiotherapists who came from the other side in the 1950s when this Province was stricken with polio. They were the ones who responded to the call, did tremendous work under the leadership of Dr. Shapter and I for one would not concur in any comments or suggestions that it would be wrong to recruit any of these great people. MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, before that item passes, and I thank my colleagues for their contribution, under our bursary programme there are four Newfoundland students now undertaking training at different universities outside Newfoundland in physiotherapy. We are hopeful that more and more people will become involved in that particular field, especially today in Newfoundland when we are trying to enlarge and increase the various specialities and services and so on.

We have an agreement with all of the hospitals.

If any hospital in the Province is desirous of engaging, employing a physiotherapist and they can select a person who is qualified to take the training, we will give them a guarantee of a salary when that person is trained and we also provide, as I said, a bursary to the student in order to be able to undertake the training. I might also add, Mr. Chairman, that negotiations are now underway with the Memorial University Medical School in terms of putting in place a physiotherapy training programme in our own medical school and university and please goodness that will take place pretty soon.

The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) also alluded to what he says is a fact that numerous trips are made outside the Provice to recruit different types of medical people. There has been no one in my department since I have been there who has made any

MR. H. COLLINS: trips overseas to recruit anyone. I do recall that not too long ago a doctor from the Waterford made a trip to Ireland in search of one or two psychiatrists and while he was over there he also made it known that there was a need for physiotherapists in the Province and were he able to find one he might have tried to encourage him or her to come to Newfoundland. But that is what he is alluding to, nothing unnatural about it, nothing different from what was always done in this Province. And as my colleague from Exploits (Dr. Twomey) has mentioned, we have been fortunate in Newfoundland in being able to attract some good doctors, good nurses and others from overseas and particularly from Ireland. And we should all be thankful for them and not criticizing them as the hon. member has done.

On motion 1006-03-03, carried.

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

1006-03-04

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I want first of all for the minister to tell me how we are spending this \$80,000 - National Health Grants, where they are going and for what purposes they are going? I may have a few words to say after I find that out.

MR. E. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, the \$80,000 which we received from the federal government as a National Health grant is provided for assistance to persons training in the various public health disciplines and the public health employees to further their educational qualifications. Health inspectors, dental hygienists, speech therapists, are trained from these funds, also post graduate training is provided for nurses in public health, for university graduates in the health services administration.

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

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, if I understand the minister correctly, this is a grant directly from the federal government to the provincial government,

4250

MR. RIDEOUT: for the purpose which is outlined. So it is not provincial dollars for any specific purpose then.

MR. H. COLLINS: A federal grant.

MR. RIDEOUT: Okay.

On motion 1006-03-04, carried.

1006-03-05

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon, member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Thank you. I want to direct a question or so to the minister respecting the air ambulance services. Specifically I would like to know the air ambulance service, to whom are they available to and on what kind of a basis or what kind of a regular basis? And I refer specifically to cases where patients have to be transferred from one hospital, let us say from a regional hospital or a cottage hospital whatever, a hospital not equipped to deal with the particular illness that a person may have and the person may have to be transferred to a hospital here in St. John's where they can deal with that kind of illness, where they have the necessary equipment to take care of the patient concerned.

My understanding is that the air ambulance service right now available with respect to transferring patients is conducted, let us say at the very least, on a very ad hoc basis, a very erratic basis that is not available to all. It is only available when the government air craft is available and I wonder if the minister can verify that. But that is my understanding, that it is not available to everybody and this seems to be very discriminatory, not discriminatory in the sense that some individuals are taken and some are not, not discriminatory in that sense, but discriminatory

MR. LUSH: with respect to its availability. A person having to be transferred from one hospital to another because there is not sufficient equipment in that particular place to handle, that seems very unfair that a person would have to be transferred, number one, but that is a fact of life because all of the hospitals in the Province cannot be equipped as well as those in St. John's. But is seems unfair to the extent that at one point a person in this community can get transferred for nothing and then the next day another person has to be transferred and has to pay the total cost because the government air ambulance service, the government aircraft, is not available. I have know of cases, Mr. Chairman, where a particular person being transferred not only having to pay the air fare from Gander to St. John's or wherever but the patient concerned has been required to pay for the wages of an attendent to go along. It might have been a nurse and they have had to pay the nurse's salary for that day. They had to pay for any equipment that was necessary. Like for example, I can recall one case where a person had to be brought in in a wheel chair because they could not walk properly and that person had to pay for that wheel chair, had to pay for a taxi from the airport in St. John's to the hospital and the taxi back again. So all of these additional expenses in addition to the air fare itself they had to pay for the nurse who accompanied them, having to pay for the wheel chair and then a taxi to and from the airport concerned. That seems to be grossly unfair when today they say that one person can get it and then tomorrow the person living next door or in some other part of the community cannot get that same kind of a service and we are punishing people really for being sick if you will and not being able to get the services near their homes and having to be transferred.

Now I would expect that the minister's answer would be that since we cannot provide it on a-or make it available to everybody then we are doing the best under the circumstances. But, Mr. Chairman, that certainly is discriminatory and unfair and unjust to the people MR. LUSH: who cannot get these services. It seems to be a matter of luck, the luck of the draw:if you happen to be sick the day that the aircraft is there then you can get it. Now that is my understanding of it and the minister can clarify that situation. It has been suggested that if that is the case, if the government aircraft cannot be available why cannot the government make some arrangements with the other air services, for example EPA, and have the cost paid. But it does seem unfair where in one instance a person has the whole shot paid for whereas another person is burdened with the total bill of the air transportation, of the air fare, plus the cost of the nurse or the escort that might go along with the sick patient, plus any equipment that is necessary. Again if an ambulance has to be ordered for the person from the aircraft, they have to pay for that.

So maybe the minister can elaborate on that point maybe as to the substance of what I am saying, the accuracy of it and so on.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The non. Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, one of the first things should be understood here is that the air ambulance to which the hon. member refers and to which we refer in our estimates is an emergency air ambulance. Now the hon. member or any hon. member might question, well, what does one mean by emergency? Generally we will find that people who use the emergency air ambulance service are people transferred from one hospital to another, or certainly from one medical practice to another, and what is not an emergency is determined by the doctor at the hospital where the patient is residing and the hospital to which the patient is being transferred. In consultation between the two doctors it is determined if in fact this case is an emergency for the purposes of an emergency ambulance service.

MR. H. COLLINS:

I hope I have made myself clear on that. There are a number of people in Newfoundland who are transferred sometimes from the James Paton Hospital in Gander to the General or the Janeway, from the Central Newfoundland Hospital in Grand Falls to the General, or from a point in Labrador to the General or the Janeway, or from the Janeway to the Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto. And unless it is of an emergency nature, of course, the people are responsible for their own transportation costs and also responsible for the cost of an escort if in fact an escort is needed. And very often the people themselves decide if an nurse as an escort is needed to go along.

But the emergency air ambulance service to which
we are devoting our attention now, whether it is an emergency is determined
by the doctors in consultation. And having determined that it is an
emergency for those purposes then the King Air which is owned by the
government will be dispatched and that is the primary use for that
aircraft. I can state a number of times when the aircraft has been
destined to take ministers or others to different places and they
have been pre-empted by a call from my department on the basis of a
request from a hospital across the Province that the plane is needed
for the emergency evacuation from whatever hospital to St. John's or
wherever.

experience about three weeks ago, to try and tell the Committee to what extent we are providing a good service in Newfoundland and to the great extent that we are providing it free of charge.

I had the occasion of a person, one of my own constituents who called me one night and indicated that they had a child at the Janeway and it looked like they were going to have to take the child to the Children's Hospital in Toronto. He asked me what assistance we could provide. And I outlined to him that I would check it out and see.

I did check it out and the child did not qualify for the air ambulance. It was not of an emergency nature, at least not sufficiently to qualify for that. So they bought three seats from an airline and took the

MR. H. COLLINS:

child to the Children's Hospital in Toronto, and they understood that.

But the point I want to make is the child was in that hospital, I think, for twelve or thirteen days. And that family received a bill of \$5,140 from the hospital in Toronto. Had they been living in Toronto, Mr. Chairman, they would have been required to pay the \$5,140, or at least they would have been required to pay this enormous health premium which is in place in Toronto.

We picked up that bill minus three dollars because we do have a charge, as everybody knows now, in our hospitals at ward level for three dollars. So we picked up that bill under our hospital services. So while it can be said and some members will say that we should have a free ambulance service, you know, to move people around wherever they want to go, my goodness, you know, I have some figures here which might be interesting.

For instance, Mr. Chairman, in 1949-1950 the total cost of health care in Newfoundland was \$4,429,000. Now jump on a few years now to 1972. In 1972 the total cost of health care in Newfoundland rose to \$78,000,711. I am going in the wrong direction.

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you?

MR. H. COLLINS: No,I am not. That is right. 1971-1972, \$71,271,000.

In 1974-1975 that figure almost doubled. It rose to \$115,830,000.

Now this year, Mr. Chairman, 1977-1978 we are budgeting for \$227 million in the Department of Health which is, as I alluded to in my opening remarks, the second largest spender. Now, you know, there are some things which any government can do and there are some things we cannot do because we do not have the funds to do it. But

MR. H. COLLINS:

I want to reassure the hon, member and the Committee that in terms of free services, free health services, there is no province in Canada with a better service than we are providing in this Province. And our air ambulance service, in addition to the "KING AIR", we have a number of helicopters stationed around this Province which are used for other purposes, forestry, agriculture, wildlife, and so on and so forth, but the first call on the helicopters stationed at Pasadena, at St. Alban's, two at Gander, one here in the City, and one in Labrador, the first call is emergency air ambulance services. So I believe, Mr. Chairman, with the services we are providing that there is no need for us to be ashamed of them and I am sure that the people in the Province appreciate them, too.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Another question, Mr. Chairman - I do not know if probably I am misunderstanding something here but the minister mentioned that you could not have a policy of moving people around for free to wherever they wanted, and that was not my question really, my question was in the matter of people having to be transferred because the particular hospital would not have the facilities to be able to cater to the illness of the particular person concerned. So that it is my concern as well. It is relating to people who have to be transferred because the hospital does not have the facilities to look after this particular patient so they have to transfer him to St. John's or wherever. Now, apparently, according to the minister, whether the person gets free air travel, or not, is contingent upon whether this is an emergency situation. All right, the question to the minister then is this; with respect to emergencies, with respect to patients that have to be transferred on an emergency basis, do all the patients in this Province now meeting that requirement get the free ambulance service? All of the emergency situations in the Province, do they get this free ambulance service?

MRS. MCISAAC:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Hon. member for St. George's.

MRS. MCISAAC:

I would like to go a little bit further on that one and I wonder what the situation is with, not the air ambulance, but what would be the situation with ground ambulance? Now I was in hospital a couple of weeks ago, and while I was there, there was a young girl brought in and, of course, this was air ambulance now. She was transferred from Burgeo with a ruptured appendix and she had to be brought in by helicopter. From what I could understand, her father had to pay the expense, and then when they got to the hospital, of course, there was this Three Dollars a day bit, and then he had to have the extra Forty-five Dollars to whack down in order to get her in the hospital.

On another occasion there was a lady from along the coast somewhere, she was a diabetic, and she was brought in in a very bad condition, and it cost her Fifty-odd Dollars to get an ambulance to bring her into hospital on a Sunday; then, when she got to the emergency entrance, again she had to have Forty-five Dollars to whack down before they would even look at her, which seems to me a little bit unfair, if it is an emergency, it is an emergency. A ruptured appendix and a diabetic who is in very bad shape seems to me to be two very, very serious conditions. I am wondering about the fact that - this lady now, for instance, if she did not have Fifty Dollars to pay the ambulance and did not have the Forty-five Dollars to pay for her admission in advance, what could have happened to her? And then she sat there and had to wait until they came up with the Forty-five Dollars to pay her admission fee Now this Three Dollars a day bit, and I may be speaking - probably there is another Heading that I can bring this up under, maybe I have missed it, but I am quite concerned about that Three Dollars a day fee because if you are there for fifteen days it runs into Forty-five Dollars. There are people who are admitted on several occasions during one year, and maybe other members of their families also, and it is quite costly. I am wondering - I asked the minister shortly before the Easter recess what the situation was and if this Forty-five Dollars would be a maximum per year or if it would be a maximum per admission. If it is a maximum per admission I can

MRS. MCISAAC: see where the poor person or the person in the low income bracket is just in some cases going to have to neglect themselves or some of their family because of the fact that they do not have the forty-five dollars to pay.

And while forty-five dollars may not seem like an awful lot of money to some of us who are making fairly good wages, it is certainly an awful lot of money to the person who is in a low income bracket, probably making \$5,000 or \$6,000 a year.

And certainly, to have to pay in advance when you get to a hospital, to my way of thinking, is ridiculous. You are not going to a movie, you are not going to the hospital because you want to go, you are going because you have to go. And this bit about having to have your money before you are admitted seems to me a backward step. In anybody's imagination it has to be a backward step, because there are people in low income brackets. And certainly in my district where we have very, very low employment and people are living on - well, the people on social assistance are probably in a wonderful position because they do not have the money, they do not have to have the money to get in. If you are on social assistance you are admitted automatically regardless of how serious your illness may be, It may not be anywhere as serious as a diabetic or a ruptured appendix, but yet, if you are in a low income bracket you just have to have that money to get in hospital, and this does not seem fair.

Anywhere else but in hospital I can see paying in advance, and I am wondering if there is not something that the minister can do, or the administration can do to wipe out this fee in advance. I mean, if you do not have the money, regardless of how sick you are, you are just going to have to die and prove that you do not have the money. This is one thing that I would like to see wiped

MR. MCISAAC:

out completely.

Sure, bill them. If they

have to pay the three dollars they have to pay it. I do not agree with it, but I certainly do not agree with having to pay it in advance because I know that a lot of people across the Province and a lot of people in my district right now are suffering because they cannot afford to whack out forty-five dollars, they do not have that much left over in the run of a month. I would like for the minister to comment on this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. H. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, I hope that
members understand what I said about the emergency nature
of the air ambulance service. The term emergency is
determined by the doctors in consultation, which is the
best way for it to be done, of course, there is no
interference from anybody at all. If the doctors decide
that any patient requires transportation, if it is of an
emergency nature, then there is no problem about the
government air ambulance service becoming involved.

The hon. member also made some reference to our road ambulance service. This programme, Mr. Chairman - I will read some statistics here - this programme this year is in the amount of \$900,000 which is pretty close, of course, to \$1 million, whereby we provide assistance to municipal councils and community groups in the purchase and operation of ambulances to provide accident victims and seriously ill patients with an efficient method of transportation to and from hospital, and from hospital to hospital.

The existing ambulance programme was introduced in September 1974, and the programme provides for payment by the government of fifty cents for each mile travelled on authorized calls to community groups, municipal councils and private operators.

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MR. H. COLLINS:

And Number two, a payment by government of \$100 per month for each ambulance service operated by private operators; and a payment of 75 per cent of the replacement costs of ambulances to municipal councils and community groups.

Patients are required to pay the ambulance operator a fee of ten dollars where the travel distance does not exceed fifty miles. So it can be seen, Mr. Chairman, that that is a highly subsidized service. A fee of twenty dollars is required where the travel distance exceeds fifty miles.

The summary of the 1978-1978 budget is that the annual ambulance grant of \$1200 is made to forty private operators for an MR. COLLINS: an estimated cost, or not an estimated cost, a cost of \$48,000. The estimated annual mileage for sixty-one ambulances works out to 475,000. The replacement of approximately twelve ambulances which we have to replace \$108,000. Provision of approximately three new ambulances \$36,000. First aid training \$6,000 and so on and so forth. We have ambulances today, Mr. Chairman, and we are providing subsidies to ambulances in Pasadena, in Gambo, in Renews, Cappahayden two. in Burin two, in Marystown three, in Old Perlican two, Trepassey one, Brookfield one, Botwood two, Norris Point two, Port aux Basques three, St. Alban's six, because of the requirements in St. Alban's with people coming in from around the Coast and on to Central Newfoundland Hospital, one in Hawkes Bay, four in Bonavista, one in Sunnyside, one in Happy Valley, one in Grand Bank and one in Baie Verte, Lewisporte, Harbour Breton, Englee, Winterton, two in Cape St. George, one in Glovertown, one in Lawn, Deer Lake, Point Leanington, Harbour Grace we have two, St. Lunaire, Bay L'Argent, Adams Cove one each, Roberts Arm two and one at each of the following places Mose Ambrose, Placentia, LaScie, Badger, Springdale, Port Saunders; Burgeo, Hermitage and Jeffrey's. MRS. MCISAAC: Did you say Jeffrey's?

MR. COLLINS: Jeffrey's, that is what I am told here by the people downstairs who should know.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who is responsible then?

MR. COLLINS: Well, in some cases the ambulances are operated by community councils, in some cases they are operated by service clubs such as the Lions Club and in a number of cases they are operated by private operators.

MRS. MCISAAC: You said Jeffrey's, you did not mention Stephenville did you?

MR. COLLINS: I am not sure. I mentioned so many. I mentioned almost every place in the country I think.

MRS. MCISAAC: I do not think you mentioned Stephenville but there is an ambulance in Stephenville and I know and I have seen it there. In fact, I received a bill for one for \$50.00 from Stephenville to Corner Brook

in Stephenville? That is another bunch which I have not mentioned at all. The ambulance in Stephenville is attached to the hospital. I have not mentioned all the ambulances attached to the various hospitals across the Province but the one in Stephenville is no doubt attached to the hospital and not mentioned here.

MRS. MCISAAC: Well, Mr. Chairman, why would you have to pay \$50.00 then for an ambulance from Stephenville, for instance, to Corner Brook if it is one of the ambulances that is attached to hospitals? Would you say that this is legal, this \$50.00 fee to transport patients from, for instance, St. George's to Stephenville?

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has asked me a question now which I am sure she cannot expect me to have the answer to.

MRS. MCISAAC: Yes I do expect you to answer it.

MR. COLLINS: I have given the way the programme works where there is a payment by government of fifty cents for each mile travelled on authorized calls. The patients are required to pay the ambulance operator a \$10.00 fee where the travel distance does not exceed fifty miles and a fee of \$20.00 is required where the travel distance exceeds fifty miles.

MRS. MCISAAC: Okay then, I will ask the minister one thing. Is there any programme or any information programme, we will say, to make people aware of the fact that they have to pay just a certain amount for ambulance services? Now is the individual to know that they are only required to pay probably \$10.00 instead of the \$50.00 that they are paying? Along with that, to go further, another question I would like to ask is when you go to a hospital and you go in on an emergency basis, or you enter as an emergency, while the doctor who examines you and may admit you is not sure that it is an emergency you still have to pay your \$45.00 to get in there. It is not that easy to determine whether it is an emergency unless they do some tests but still you have to have that money there, It may be a real emergency and while the

MRS. MCISAAC: doctor does not recognize it as an emergency if you do not have the money you do not get in. So you go back home and you may very well die an hour later just because the doctor who examined you, or happens to be in outpatients or emergency, does not recognize your illness as an emergency.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, the only thing I can do here is outline the policies and the programmes which are in place. If the hon, member knows of a case where, obviously, some person has not been treated properly

MR. H. COLLINS:

or has been charged too much or whatever, certainly I would be interested in knowing about it and we can certainly look into it. But these are the programmes as they are in place and supposed to be made available to all the people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Harbour Grace.

MR. YOUNG: I would like to say a few words concerning what the member for St. George's (Mrs. MacIssac) brought up there because -I am an operator of a private ambulance. I own an ambulance and I may say that we are licensed under the Board of Public Utilities Motor Carriers Act and as stated by the minister we are not allowed to charge any more, like he said, under fifty miles, ten dollars, over fifty miles - I can leave and go to Port aux Basques, if need be, and that patient has to pay no more than twenty dollars. In your case, what you are stating there. I feel it should be brought to the Sttention of the Public Utilities Roard as J am sure there is something illegal going on there. We get paid - I operate my own ambulance. They are very strict now. It cost me something like \$1,500 - the new act came in when we went under the Motor Carriers Act_to further equip my ambulance. And I fail to see why that patient had to pay the fifty dollars. They could go to St, John's, go anywhere for twenty dollars. That is all we ever charge and we are fully equipped. My ambulance driver is trained by the Department of Health. And it is very, very strict now because I am sure that some of the equipment we have to put - I am a bit annoyed by some of the equipment we have to put in this ambulance because I am sure that some of the RNs really do not know how to use the equipment. Our ambulances in the bay now, I feel sure, are fully equipped to cope with any emergency.

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

MR. LUSH: Are the ambulances operated by hospitals?

MR. YOUNG: Ambulances are operated by hospitals. The Carbonear ambulance is operated by the Carbonear Hospital, but that ambulance does

MR. YOUNG:

not go except in the case of an emergency. They will call us people in. If the Carbonear Hospital sends a patient to St. John's, the hospital will pay that bill, that twenty dollars. it is not out of the patient.

MR. RIDEOUT: That should apply to Stephenville.

MR. YOUNG: That should apply to Stephenville. So somebody is -

MRS. MCISAAC: Well this is the thing it is all wrong.

MR. YOUNG: Definitely. If that is a private ambulance operator he should lose his license to operate that ambulance.

MRS. MCISAAC: I have a copy of the bill for fifty dollars. It is not paid yet.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Chairman, I wanted also to speak to the ground ambulance - that is what we call it, as opposed to the air ambulance - but I sort of thought this was not the appropriate heading. It seems as though - I will start all over again, Mr. Chairman. I also have some questions about the ground ambulance service as opposed to the air ambulance service, but I thought it came under another heading. We are now under 1006, special programmes, provision of drugs, medical appliances, air ambulance service etc., and it would probably cause some confusion if we talk on this here because there are other related things. For example, the St. John's Ambulance that I want to speak to if no one else does, so I think we are under the wrong heading if Mr. Chairman can make a ruling on that.

MRS. MCISAAC: It says ambulance service there under that heading.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is it? 1006?

MR. LUSH: I think we are discussing 05. More appropriately, Mr. Chairman, it should come under 1007.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Probably the minister could explain. Would that come under 1006-03-05, ambulance escort?

MR. COLLINS: It could. The reason I mentioned the road ambulance, the hon. member for St. George's (Mrs. McIsacc) and rightly so, mentioned

MR. COLLINS:

the road ambulance service. The road ambulance service does appear in a grant further along.

MR. INSH: This one is general service.

MR. COLLINS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Probably we can pass that one and bring it up at

a later date.

On motion heads 1006-03-05 and 1006-03-06 carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 1007-03-01 carry?

MR. LUSH: We are on to 1007, Mr. Chairman, now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1007-03-01, Canadian Red Cross Blood Bank.

MR. LUSH: Okay. All right.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1007-03-02, community ambulance service.

MR. LUSH: Is this where we speak to this, Mr. Chairman, under

the community ambulance, under the road service?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes. Okay.

MR. LUSH: 1007-03-02, is this the one that we were talking about previously? Yes. Okay.

Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of points

I want to make about the ambulance service under this heading.

One, as it relates to the ambulance services being placed under the Public Utilities Board. Now I do not want the minister to feel that I am against that because I was one of the hon, members that certainly felt strongly about that, that the ambulance service should be put under the Public Utilities Board, and I firmly believe that is the right place for it. And it is going to make the ambulance service much more efficient, and going to prevent a lot of unnecessary competition that was going on previously and iron out a lot of problems related to the ambulance service throughout the Province. But there are just a couple of things I would like to comment upon with respect to the ambulances going under the Public Utilities Board.

Number one - I do believe that the regulations were too stringently applied too quickly. For example, there are areas in the Province where there were no complaints, that people were operating an ambulance service, though not in accordance with the present regulations, and they did not have the regular ambulance. But I can think of a couple of operators who have been operating a very effective ambulance service, as effectively as you can without the proper ambulance - I do not know what they call them, just wagons, the car station wagons they have been using - and they have been providing a fairly adequate service. No complaints from the residents that these ambulance operators were serving. So in that event, I think that the board should have given the people a little longer time to mull the thing over as to whether or not they wanted to carry on into the business and convert to the new ambulances which represented a much larger investment, I am sure, going to the proper type ambulance as opposed to using a station wagon.

MR. LUSH: So I think in areas where the government was not receiving any complaints about that, maybe they should have given these operators, long time operators in particular—and I can think of a couple of operators who were operating this ambulance service for upwards to twenty years and efficient people—so I believe that they should have been given a little longer time to make up their minds as to whether or not they wanted to go into this service, now under the new regulations, which represented a greater outlay of money.

I am not sure what the time was but I believe it was either sixty days - sixty days I think probably that was the time - two months is not a very long time to give an operator time to mull over whether he really wanted to go into the ambulance services as stated by the regulations. I do not disagree with the regulations, I think they are basically good regulations. Maybe a few a little too stringent, and I will comment on that, but I think this one with respect to time maybe should have been a little more flexible, particularly where you had long time operators, good operators, efficient operators, a little longer time to give them the opportunity to make up their minds whether or not they wanted to change over into the new system. I believe that maybe the board acted a little too quickly, a little too rashly in situations like that. But the regulations themselves I think, one - putting them under the Public Utilities Board is a good thing. I do not disagree with that. Many of the regulations there are good but I would also, Mr. Chairman, bring this to the attention of the minister to see if he has received similar complaints.

It has also been brought to my attention that some of the regulations with respect to the equipment demand people with paramedical training almost. And operators — the way we are right now. A lot of the operators cannot fulfill these obligations. Not to say that we should not meet the requirements, the regulations, not to say we should not have them, because I believe that an ambulance

MR. LUSH: operator should have some paramedical training. But in addition to that, many times you need an attendant. The driver cannot administer the kinds of services that are needed because he has got to drive

MR. LUSH: and sometimes the patients will need somebody with them while being transported to a particular hospital. So what has been brought to my attention is that the regulations are in some cases a little difficult to follow because you need trained people to be able to use the equipment that is demanded. So I think we should look at that. If we cannot enforce the regulation in that respect we should probably hold back until such time as we can. But nothing wrong with the regulations, Sir. I think that is where we should aim, for that kind of thing where we are giving people travelling to hospitals on emergency cases - that they have all the care and attention that they can be given but it is probably a little futile to have regulations that we find a little difficult to enforce at the moment. And to break one regulation - if we break one we may as well break the others as well. So maybe we should hold off on enforcing certain aspects of the regulations until we have the trained personnel to be able to carry through on that particular regulation, whatever it might be.

So my main point is that

I think with respect to ruling people out or getting
them out of the business - people who have been longtime operators - I think we should give them a little
breathing time to decide whether or not they want to
continue on in the business. Because they have been in
it for a good while, they have given good service and particularly in areas where there are no complaints
- I would not want the minister to think that I am now
objecting to this, I have stated that quite specifically.
I think the Public Utilities Board are the right people
to control the ambulance services in this Province, but

MR. LUSH:

I would just ask that with respect to the time element which is sixty days now, that there would be a little more breathing time so that long-time, efficient operators could think the thing over as to whether or not they really want to branch into the new type of service required.

One other point, and this an important one. With respect to raising fares, raising the transportation cost. It is my understanding that the Public Utilities Board cannot rule on this. If an operator of an ambulance service deems it necessary to raise the transportation cost with rising prices in oil and gas, or whatever, and the cost of the equipment that is necessary, in order for that particular ambulance operator to raise the transportation cost it has to be a decision of government. Now I have talked to many people and they felt that if ambulances are under the Public Utilities Board then they should be there in their entirety, not only with respect to meeting the operation regulations, this sort of thing, but also with respect to fair charges. If they want to hike their prices then they should be able to appear before the board and give their reasons for it and to be granted or not granted. So I think also that is a good point. If we are going to put the ambulance operators under the Public Utilities Board let us do it, the whole bit, and give the board the complete authority of controlling the operation, deciding what equipment they should have, this sort of thing, and also making decisions relating to the transportation costs - the fares.

MR. WOODROW:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. the member for

Bay of Islands.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman. looking at the gross

approximately \$227.5 million. I think it should certainly make all of us in this hon. House realize that it is not an easy department to administer. And I would like to say first of all that the minister deserves congratulations. He must have many sleepless nights trying to administer -

MR. FLIGHT: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! A point of order

has come up.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I understand we agreed that we would go head for head on this, that once we got off the minister's salary there would be no point made in debate, compliments to the ministers, criticisms of what went on. I understood that to be relevant we have to stay with the head. And the hon. member, although I respect him - I respect his speeches here, but it is a misuse of the time right now. With an hour left we want to get down to the heads and we do not want any wide-ranging speeches. The time for that kind of speech was there, for complimenting the minister for a good job, it was there when we were on the minister's salary. And that is the point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PECKFORD: I do not know whether the hon.

member for Bay of Islands had a chance to be wide-ranging or narrow-ranging, you know, he just began his few remarks and I think the hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans is just being kind of supersensitive about it. I do not know what the point of it all is.

MR. PECKFORD: I do not think that he had a chance to utter enough syllables, Mr. Chairman, in order for anyone to rule whether he was in or out of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Hon. members do understand that the remarks had to be pointed directly at the head. I am not aware that this has been violated to any great degree by the hon. member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) as yet but this will be the duty of the Chair to make sure that remarks are pointed at the head under discussion.

The hon, member for Bay of Islands.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman, I would like to say to the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) that I am just as much a part of this House as he is.

SOME HON, MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: And I have interest in my district. Not because I am on the government side I am not allowed to speak in this House.

MR. F. ROWE: Learn the rules.

MR. WOODROW: You learn the rules yourself.

Mr. Chairman, I think it proper that we should pay a bit of homage or something, or congratulate the minister on his staff, what I was coming to was this, that sometimes we forget in this Province the people who are working in our hospitals.

Now I, in fact, have occasion in the city of Corner Brook to visit the hospital often. In fact, I visit it on a weekly basis and I must say that I find the staff to be congenial, not only to me but to the patients as well, and that is important, that is a part of their job to be kind and congenial to people.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Chairman, a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order has come up.

MR. F. ROWE: Sir, I believe we are on heading 1007-03-02.

Is that correct, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Right. Correct.

MR. F. ROWE: Which deals specifically with community ambulance service.

MR. FLIGHT: That is right.

MR. F. ROWE Now with all due respect to the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), he is not relevant to the topic at hand and we on this side of the House, as I am sure most members on the opposite side, are most anxious to deal with the estimates head by head, and subhead by subhead and the member for Bay of Islands is talking about hospitals in general now -

MR. FLIGHT: Congenial staff.

MR. F. ROWE: - and the congeniality of the staff and this kind of a thing. Now, Sir, everything he is saying is true but he is not relevant to the particular subhead that we are speaking to and I have asked the Chair to -

MR. FLIGHT: He is breaking the rules of the House.

MR. F. ROWE: - I would ask the Chair to simply ask the member

for Bay of Islands to be relevant to that specific head.

MR. PECKFORD: To the point of order, Mr. Chairman, I mean if the hon. gentlemen opposite would just, you know have a little patience, I mean they are provoking the hon. member into being irrelevant. Now if they would just be quiet I am sure the hon. member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) will restrict his remarks strictly and technically to the ambulance programme. But I think they are being awfully impatient and are trying to be extremely technical on this point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! The remarks under the subheadings in regard to the Health Head have been more than just narrowly related and the Chair is aware that this cannot be allowed to go too widely. But nevertheless I think that other remarks have just as much latitude up to this point in time for the hon. member for Bay of Islands. But I would expect the hon. member to bring his remarks into relationship to this head as quickly as possible.

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman, I just want to mention before going into some specific remarks, the extended care unit in the city of Corner Brook which was the former Western Memorial Hospital. This, in fact, has sixty beds and I think it is doing a wonderful service to the West Coast of the Province.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what I think I am allowed to speak about is the emergency air services, are we still on that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Community ambblance services.

MR. WOODROW: Community ambulance services - well, really what I was going to ask the minister before I was so rudely interrupted by the member - in fact by the two members, you would think, in fact, they owned the House - what I was going to say, Mr. Chairman -

MR. F. ROWE: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order has come up.

MR. F. ROWE: I will ask the hon. member for Bay of Islands —
I got up on a technical point dealing with the rules of this
House of Assembly at Committee stage. The member was not rudely
interrupted. We are not acting like we own the House. We were
getting up strictly on a point of order, according to the rules of
the Committe, and I would ask the member for Bay of Islands
(Mr. Woodrow) to withdraw the statement that he was rudely interrupted
because he was not rudely interrupted, he was interrupted

MR. F. ROWE:

in accordance with the rules of this House

of Assembly.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

Hon. members, of course, can arise on a point of order when they feel that order is being disregarded or otherwise interfered with, and this of course is not an interruption, this is their right. I would ask the hon. member, if this is what he meant, I am sure he would wish to retract any words -

MR. WOODROW:

Mr. Chairman, anything for the good of the

Province.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the hon.

minister if he would happen to know how many emergency calls were made in

1977-78 by the "KING AIR", and the cost, and what also is important, Mr.

Chairman, if the "KING AIR" is not available - it could happen the "KING AIR"

could be grounded sometime - what happens then? And also, Mr. Chairman,

the number of road ambulances and their costs as well and - am I allowed

to speak of drugs, Mr. Chairman?

MR. FLIGHT:

The topic is ambulances now.

MR. WOODROW: Just ambulances, eh? Well, I am going to take my orders from the Chair in this debate, Mr. Chairman. I am going to go out and do like the member from Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) and take my orders from the Chair and not from the member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) or from Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) either.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to mention also, one case, a case that was transferred from Corner Brook to - this is a case of a brain tumor - I almost have to ask the other members, "Are we allowed to speak in this House?" - I want to mention, Mr. Chairman, the case of a patient who was transferred from Corner Brook to St. John's to Halifax back to St. John's again and back to Corner Brook. Now I think this case is worthy of mention because it shows what this Government is doing for Health in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. YOUNG:

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon, member for Harbour Grace.

MR. YOUNG: First, I would like to reply, not reply but probably say, for clarification about it and for the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) when he spoke concerning the ambulance service in this Province, I think we have one of the best ambulance services available in almost any part of Canada today.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

I know whereof I speak because I know of the MR. YOUNG: ambulance service in Nova Scotia and I am sure, as I said before, this unfortunately, our department has not been doing a good PR job on the ambulance service we have in this Province. I came under the Motor Carriers' Act, they gave me plenty of time, the only thing I was a little bit disturbed about, as I said before, the last time I spoke on it, that it cost me about \$1,500 to equip my ambulance and so forth and then the changing of the colour of ambulances to make them all blue. This, I thought, was a little bit outrageous because my ambulance was just about new and when they came from the factory we would just choose our colours, be it red stripes, orange, blue or green, whatever we would need. I wrote the Motor Carriers people and they gave me until the last of June, this was in January they gave me until the last of June to change the colour. I still feel you referred to people who were using stationwagons; I know one person in the area who was using a stationwagon and they put him off the road right away which I felt was probably justified, because in lots of cases they were using ambulances one day as an ambulance, and then to go to a funeral, and then push a stretcher in and use it as an ambulance again. That man was given ninety days to make up his mind if he wanted to go back into the ambulance business, and I feel sure that he will go back there. I understand he is ready to purchase a new ambulance.

My concern as an ambulance operator is where do we go when you make too many demands. You have to pay an ambulance driver and if you enforce the rule that we put an assistant in the ambulance this will be a great cost. MR. H. YOUNG: Also, one thing that concerns he is the long wait at the hospitals, especially the General when we go in there with a patient. I know my ambulance driver have been there for as long as seven hours waiting for that patient to be admitted and then the patient is admitted. This is a great burden on the family and so forth, they are waiting around all day and many times I have had to bring my ambulance back home again and make another trip in because the ambulance was not available in the bay.

I feel sure, Sir, that our ambulance system, like I said before, is second to none in Canada and I know the minister responsible for bringing this ambulance service in and it is just unfortunate that members of the House have not taken an interest in the ambulance service as the member for Terra Nova has. To hear the member for St. George's say today that a patient was charged \$50.00 for an ambulance service—I think that we should be familiar with our ambulance services and probably do a little bit more of a PR job and let the people of Newfoundland know what we are offering as a government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Exploits.

DR. H. TWOMEY: Mr. Chairman, if the estimates of any department in this House had increased as much as the estimates for the community ambulance service I am sure that every member of the House would express extreme concern. It is up now to almost \$1 million-\$900,000 and I have been concerned for the last few years if we have over utilized the service of this ambulance, generally speaking, and I really mean over utilizing. I wonder if it has been used as a type of a taxi service. I am sure that government, in the future, and all members of this House will be giving serious consideration to the extension of this service within the next few years. It is possibly the right time now that we should give it very serious consideration. I feel that it is a subject for debate. What are we going to do? Should it be down on one side, charge a higher fee for the ambulance service?

DR. H. TWOMEY: that are very important. I am not going to spend any time, but I bring this to your attention, to all members of this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Mon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Chairman, apparently the way the debate is going we are going to have a long ranging debate on ambulances.

I want to talk about ambulance, specifically, and I could have waited till we get to another head, but looking at the performance that I have just seen this past ten or fifteen minutes
MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! Order please! I believe the hon.

member maybe getting into the area of criticizing the Chair in this regard. I would ask him if he is going to speak on this head, that like he has advised others, he should direct his remarks to the matter under discussion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear! Hear!

MR. G. FLIGHT: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I intend to speak to the head and I will leave it to the Chair as to whether I am in order or not. I want to talk about the reduction by this government in the St. John Ambulance grant this year reduced from \$85,000 last year down to \$50,000 this year. Now, Mr. Chairman, all the speakers we have heard up to this point have been throwing bouquets on our ambulance performance in this Province. The hon, member for Exploits just indicated an increase in some ambulance vote but the Department of Health decreased by \$35,000 the grant to the St. John Ambulance. Mr. Chairman, the St. John Ambulance have indicated, documented for the administration that they, in 1973, instituted a programme, a firstlevel health care programme that provided training in first-level health care and trained people to deal with accidents occurring, wherever they may occur, and as a result of that programme - not only was that programme so successful, Mr. Chairman, that it covered ninety-nine isolated communities and involved over 6,000 peopleactually the figure is 1,300 people were certified as instructors in these various courses - the course became

MR. FLIGHT:

a model for Europe and

Third World countries.

Hundreds of small communities in Newfoundland have requested that particular service, that training from St. John Ambulance, and, Mr. Chairman, it has been documented that of 70 per cent of people involved in accidents who received first aid treatment prior to being taken to hospital, only 30 per cent of those people will require further medical attention and only 24 per cent have to be hospitalized. But for those who do not receive first aid treatment at the accident scene, 70 per cent require further medical attention and 75 per cent of those are hospitalized. So in view of the performance of that programme, Mr. Chairman, funded up to this point as I understand, by provincial grants and sponsored by the St. John Ambulance, in view of the success of that programme, I would like to hear the minister indicate, in these days of ever escalating health costs in this Province, why it would be that the department would see fit to reduce the grant from \$85,000 in 1976 - 1977 to \$50,000 in 1978, and that in view of the fact that St. John Ambulance requested \$106,000 to carry on the programme that they have so ably proved to the department and to the administration that has been so widely accepted in Newfoundland and has paid such dividends.

Now, Mr. Chairman, if anyone here is wondering why I am concerned about the St. John Ambulance, I want to point out that I am very well aware of the service and the programme laid out by St. John Ambulance as, number one, there are two St. John Ambulance divisions in my district, Buchans - Badger, and the Provincial Commissioner of the St. John Ambulance

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MR. FLIGHT: is a constituent of mine resides in Buchans. And it would seem to me to be very difficult - the minister may be able to explain it it would seem to me very difficult when the minister stands up and explains the ever escalating cost of health services in this Province, how he can reconcile cutting the funds from a programme, taking away, reducing the funds to an organization that in effect was saving money for this Province. And again, Mr. Chairman, as the minister knows - he is not in his seat right now, the Premier is in his seat - as the minister knows, St. John Ambulance have documented the facts that I have just given the House, that every one dollar - they have established, I would think, to the satisfaction of the minister, that for every dollar spent in that programme there is a return of approximately three dollars in health care costs - a reduction of three dollars in health care costs to this Province.

Now if you let these facts,

Mr. Chairman - when the minister returns I would like
to hear him justify the reduction in the St. John

Ambulance grant for 1978.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 107-02-02

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I have not used my allocated time and I will stand here talking forever until the minister comes back and answers my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I understood **

the hon, member had taken his place.

MR. FLIGHT: No, I have not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I understood he had. If

I am incorrect I will certainly recognize him, but I

understood - and I was going to therefore recognize

another hon. member.

MR. HICKMAN: Anyway, Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Chairman of Committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of

Supply have considered the matters to them referred, have made progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

MR. SPEAKER: It being 5:00 P.M. I am required to inform hon. members of matters of which notice has been

given to me for debate at 5:30 P.M. I have received notice of one matter from the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans relating

MR. SPEAKER:

to a question asked the hon. Minister of Education (Mr. House) and the subject matter, the condition of schools in Badger. I indicated when I left the Chair that I would give a decision on the two points of order which were brought up before I left the Chair which deal with the tabling of documents. The two points are quite closely related and a decision on both of them will, in fact, be a decision for the House's reference to the entire rules with respect to citing documents and to tabling them.

The two points of order were first, whether when an hon. member refers to documents but does not quote from them whether, in fact, they must be tabled. The submission was made that when the rules says, the citation of documents requires their tabling, that that means reference to them rather than quotation from them. That is one. The other point of order was the allegation by the hon. member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) that the Minister of Justice in the Question Period yesterday read from a document and his point therefore that it should be tabled.

Now the authorities on the whole matter of the tabling of documents are quite explicit and I will quote them again for the record. May, page 431, and this is under the heading, Citing Documents Not Before The House, "Another rule or principle of debate may be added. A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a dispatch or other state paper not before the House unless he be prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law which prevents counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that it has not been contested and when the objection has been made in time it is generally acquiescent. It has also been admitted that a document which has been cited ought to be laid upon the table of the House if that can be done without injury to the public interest.

A minister who summarizes a correspondence but does not actually quote from it is not bound to lay it upon the table.

MR. SPEAKER:

The rule for the laying of cited documents cannot be held to apply to private letters or memoranda." That in its entirety is the rule applicable here with respect to tabling of documents. I will for the sake of completeness also quote the relevant section on the tabling of documents from Beauchesne, page 134. It is very close to what I have already quoted but so that our rules and procedures are absolutely clear.

Section 159, subsection (1), (2) and (3).

"Reference to a public document in the possession of a committee which is not taking action on it is not irregular, but reference to the proceedings of a committee or the evidence heard by the committee cannot be made in the House before the committee has presented its report.

"A Minister of the Crown is not at liberty to read or quote from a despatch or other state paper not before the House, unless he be prepared to lay it upon the table. This restraint is similar to the rule of evidence in courts of law, which prevent counsel from citing documents which have not been produced in evidence. The principle is so reasonable that is has not been contested; and when the objection has been made in time, it has been generally acquiesced in.

"It has been admitted that a document which has been cited ought to be laid upon the table of the House, if it can be done without injury to the public interest. The same rule, however, cannot be held to apply to private letters or memoranda."

I also quote from Beauchesne, Section 159, subsection (5). "The point of order, that a member should lay on the table a document which he quotes, should be taken when reference is made to the document."

With respect to the two specific points of order brought up, one, whether referring to documents requires their tabling, the answer is no. To cite is defined in Webster's dictonary

MR. SPEAKER:

as to quote from. So an hon, member has to quote from a document before he has to table it. I think that that is almost probably self-evident. A person could refer to numerous publications, dozens of books he can refer to but unless he quotes from, he does not have to table. So the ruling there is that the hon, member's reference to documents is not a quotation from those documents and there is no requirement to table.

On the second point my reading of the Hansard,

Question Period of yesterday, I am not aware that there is evidence
that the hon. minister did read or did not read from a document.

Obviously, I do not have a visual record of yesterday. I think the
point is probably mute because the rule is quite clear that when the
claim is made that it is not in the public interest and that claim
is made, then the rule establishes that it does not have to be
tabled.

To summarize therefore, the rules with respect to citing of documents are indicated in May, page 431, Beauchesne, pages 134 and 135. They are also explicitly referred to in the decision of the Chair of this House,

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MR. SPEAKER: May 31st., 1977 in the Hansard thereof. They are the three sources. The only other source that I will refer to is our Standing Order 44 (a) which states, "The Standing Orders of the House shall be observed in the Committees of the Whole House as far as may be applicable," and therefore these rules with respect to tabling of documents are rules applied in the House and applied in the Committee. I think the only other matter I need to refer to is that when the claim is made by a minister of the Crown that it is not in the public interest to table the document, the Chair does not have the authority, as courts in some instances do, to review the documentation and make its own decision on that question. The Chair does not have that authority, when the claim is made it is immediatley effective.

Mr. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker, before Your Honour leaves the Chair, there is but one debate -

MR. SIMMONS: (Inaudible).

MR. HICKMAN: No. No. No. Well I will just ask him anyway, there is but one debate tonight on the Late Show which will take ten minutes, I understand that we will have ten minutes left on the Health estimates and I was wondering with the unanimous consent of the House, if instead of Your Honour resuming the Chair at five-thirty, if Your Honour could resume it at about five twenty, which would mean that the Health estimates or five twenty-two would be complete, and we would still have time for that one Late Show debate.

MR. NEARY: The answer is no, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HICKMAN: Very good. Thank you very much.

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

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to get back to your

ruling just for clarification and I did not — I am very glad it, is not for me to comment on it as Mr. Speaker has already asked us not to, but I am very glad for the ruling because it is a document that I did not particularly want to see tabled. But I wanted a ruling

MR. SIMMONS: on the matter.

Once we get in the area of it not being in the public interest, would that apply equally to all members of the House or only ministers of the Crown?

MR. SPEAKER: The authorities, Beauchesne and May, are quite explicit that that applies only to ministers, not to private members.

MR. SIMMONS: Well perhaps it will require another point of order at the appropriate time because the dilemma that we could have been in is that I was in possession of the same document. And suppose for an instant that I had inadvertently even quoted from the same document and then had been forced to table the document which we all agree is not in the public interest to table it. There is a certain contradiction there that perhaps needs to be sorted out for the protection of members, I believe, and the protection of those that may be mentioned in documents that it is not in the public interest to make public.

MR. SPEAKER: It is certainly an interesting point the hon. gentleman brings up. Obviously, I will not give a decision on it because it has not come up in the concrete instance and I will have to wait to see if it does. My immediate reaction, and I will just say it if hon. members want to think about it, my immediate reaction, without giving a ruling, I am not giving a ruling on it, if it did come up, certainly the matter that I would put forward and ask for contrary opinion on would be the opinion as follows, that the rules seem to be quite explicit, but this refers to tabling by a minister and that a person who is not a minister, if he is citing from the same document may well be required to table it. I am not making that as a ruling. It is a position that I will put forward and ask for argument on before making a decision, if and when the point becomes a specific one.

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

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

1007-03-02.

The hon. member for Terra Nova. In recognizing the hon. member I would point out to the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) that in no way are we passing by the heading that he is interested in. But the hon. member I understand wishes to arise in further comment on 02 to which we are specifically directing our interest.

The hon. Member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: In the matter of the community ambulance service where

I was talking about the ambulances being under the Public Utilities

Board and commenting on certain regulations being applied too

stringently. Because we are not yet in a position whereby we can

meet these regulations, particularly as they require people in attendance

with patients being transferred to hospitals, requiring these attendants

to have paramedical training, and since we are not ready for that then

my feeling is that we should not be enforcing that particular regulation

even though it is a good one. There is not much point in having a

regulation if we cannot enforce it. So I think until such time as

we can enforce that then we should hold off until we get the people,

the paramedics with the proper training. But it is certainly to be

aimed for.

The other point, and this is the more important one, was the point with reference to not giving long time operators sufficient time to make up their minds whether or not they want to stay in the business in view of a larger investment, to be able to buy the regular ambulances that are required and to equip them with the necessary equipment. So my point is that I think that the regulations should be a little more flexible to give these people time to make up their minds.

Now, the hon. member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) says this is not a problem, that with respect to colours, for example, he was given until the end of June. Now I know a case where an ambulance operator who is presently in the midst of

MR. LUSH:

trying to make up his mind whether or not he wants to continue in the ambulance service with these new regulations or whether he will drop out. The Public Utilities Board have given him until May 30. Now, so here is an inconsistency in the application in the enforcement of the rules. Certainly we can say there is a difference. But certainly goodness it would not take a person very long to be able to get the colours necessary, the required colours whatever they are, blue, yellow, green. This is rather a short operation. It would not take very long to do it. So in this case they have given the hon. member for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) - and I am not only quoting him, I suppose all the others throughout the Province, until the last of June to come up with these required colours whereas in the case of a person trying to make up his mind whether he wants to stay in the business, it has got to be May 30. And I have seen that particular document, the letter from the Public Utilities Board saying that that is it. The regulation will be enforced on May 30. So here we have an inconsistency. And I am not going to comment any longer on that, Mr. Chairman, other than to say I think we should be more flexible in this respect particularly with respect to long term operators, efficient operators. Let us be a little bit more flexible in giving the time requirement in helping those fellows to make up their minds as to whether or not they want to continue on in the service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, with regard to the road ambulance service. The programme has been in effect since 1974. And we found last year that there were a tremendous number of ambulances already in service and we were also receiving a number of requests from people, sometimes in the same area, the same town where an ambulance was in place requesting our financial assistance and our subsidies to start another ambulance service. We are not equipped in the Department of Health to be able to determine always if the service is needed or not. We are not equipped in our department to be able to determine what is needed

MR. H. COLLINS:

in terms of safety, in terms of the overall safety requirements of the vehicle and so on and so forth and we decided, and I think hon. members opposite were also making representation to me on the basis that the time had come that we had enough ambulances now in service, and enough applications for further additions that somebody, some organization should be put in place or requested to regulate new entrants coming in the service. The Public Utilities Board, of course, is in place and are very qualified to that sort of thing. We approached the Public Utilities Board and outlined to them the problem and they agreed to commence -work towards bringing the operation under the auspices of the Public Utilities Board. That took some time but it was finally accomplished. As the hon. member says ambulance owners and operators across the Province were so advised. It has also been determined that there are a number of ambulance operators, all of them preferably should receive different levels-or a specific level, I should say, a specific level of training in the paramedical field. And of course that is more easily said than done because there are a number of ambulances operated by Lions Clubs, by Kinsmen's Clubs and by comunity and town councils, and very often we find that the drivers of those ambulances are volunteers. This is another reason why we can provide the service sometimes as inexpensive as it is. So how do you require or force a volunteer ambulance driver to take training? The department has been for some time working on ways and means of training them all and negotiations have already taken place with the St. John Ambulance people to devise a proper training program. We have \$6,000 in our Estimates to permit St. John Ambulance, if they agree to do it, eventually to set up the necessary criterion and so on and so forth. So we will be training ambulance operators wherever possible and in time hopefully all of them.

MR. H. COLLINS: With regard to problems to which the hon. member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) alludes about a time limit in terms of the Public Utilities Board requirements where ambulance operators must have certain things done to meet the requirement which they have laid down, They had to set a date somewhere. If till they set the date the next year, May 31st., 1979 you know there would be a lot of people still not have had all of the modifications and improvements made. So a date was struck, as the hon. member refers to, We cannot find much fault with that. But I would tell him, and for the information of all hon, members here in the Committee, that we have a very proficient gentleman administrating the ambulance program down in the department. He has got a great name - his name is John Lundrigan - and I am sure that if hon. members have problems with any individual ambulance operator that if they go down and meet with Mr. Lundrigan in the department that he will find ways and means of being able to accomodate those people who do have problems and possibly be able to iron out some things with the Public Utilities Board as well.

MR. RIDEOUT: Have you pledged your support to him?

MR. H. COLLINS: He pledged his to me.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Windsor -

Buchans.

MR. G. FLIGHT:

Mr. Chairman, I will try once more. In view of the fact the minister in his last statement indicated his knowledge and praised the program presented to them, or the program being carried out by St. John Ambulance, in view of the fact that the minister has got again documented that every dollar invested by a government in a program such as sponsored by the St. John Ambulance has got a return of three dollars in health care across

MR. FLIGHT: this Province; in view-of the fact the minister has it in front of him - if he wants to get up and deny it he can deny that the statistics are wrong-but the statistics are that for every victim of an accident in this Province -

AN HON. MEMBER: Are you still on 1007?

MR. FLIGHT: Yes, we are still on 1002, Mr. Chairman. Now in view of the fact, Mr. Chairman, -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please! Just for clarification we are on subhead 1007-03-02 which is entitled Community Ambulance Service.

I would point out that there is also a subhead 07 which refers specifically to St. John Ambulance. So we are really at this point and time considering ambulance services.

MR. FLIGHT: With the Chairman's consideration, I stood up and discussed the issue for at least fifteen minutes - St. John Ambulance as it applies to ambulances in this Province. We have had a wideranging debate on ambulances up to this point, Mr. Chairman, and I thought that having gone on for ten minutes, having put the St. John Ambulance case as I saw it then I presumed I was relevant. Since the minister chose not to address himself to the issue then I thought that I would remind him that he had answered every other question except the one that I had put. So I will be specific, Mr. Chairman. I will get off the floor and be specific. But since the minister is aware of the savings available to the Province provided he agrees with the statistics - if he does not - if he agrees with the statistic that of the number of accident victims treated at the scene of the accident only thirty per cent of those people require further mospitalization or medical attention, but that seventy per cent of people not treated at the scene of an accident, not having that kind of treatment available to them, seventy per cent requires further hospitalization and further medical attention.

Now that statistic speaks for itself. If the minister is prepared to get up and deny that that is indeed a statistic, a fact, then I would say to him I would want him to tell the House how it is

FR. FLIGHT: that he can make a decision to cut the St. John Ambulance grant, the organization that is providing this service and showing the minister how to save some dollars in health care in this Province, how it is he can cut the St. John Ambulance grant by \$35,000 for the fiscal year of 1978.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, we are ahead of the game now. We are down to 1007-03-07 but that does not matter if I can respond.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. My understanding of the matter is that the hon. member is referring to the activities of ambulances but he is also bringing in the matter of the St. John Ambulance. The two are sort of separate from one another but he is bringing one into the other. I think this is where the confusion is arising.

The non. minister.

Yes, okay, Mr. Chairman. That was the only reason MR. COLLINS: I did not respond to the hon, gentleman before, because I knew the opportunity would arise when we got down there but in any event I can do it now. I am not going to confirm or deny the statistics to which the hon. member refers and which have been provided to him by the St. John Ambulance people. The St. John Ambulance people came to us last year with some ideas in mind and we found some additional dollars for them and that is what got their grant up last year to \$85,000. This year St. John Ambulance again made a request to us for a Provincial Government grant-and I do not want to get into the process of how budgets are arrived at, how a lot of figures here are arrived at-but the grant as snown here now is less. In fact it is \$50,000 this year which we confirmed we would give them as opposed to the \$85,000 last year. Since then the St. John Ambulance people have presented us with a brief of which I believe the hon. member might have a copy. It sounds like he does as it is familiar reading to me what he is saying over there. Only yesterday morning I had a meeting in my office with Mr. John Harnum and Mr. John O'Brien, Mr. O'Brien being the

MR. COLLINS: executive director of the St. John Ambulance, and also Dr. Frazer Walsh, the medical superintendent of the Waterford Hospital who is also a member of the St. John Ambulance Organization in Newfoundland. They put a pretty strong case for additional funds and, as the hon. member says, they requested \$106,000 this year.

For the information of members of the committee,

St. John Ambulance has done a tremendous amount of good work. In

years gone by they have devoted their energies, and a lot of energy,

to some of the more remote parts of Labrador, some of the more remote

parts of the Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland

MR. H. COLLINS:

and some of the more inaccessible parts of the South Coast of the Province, filling a need in an area where the Department of Health had not been able to get in because of small places. You cannot put a doctor in every place around the Province, you cannot put a nurse in every small community, so they were fulfilling a need and providing a tremendous service in an area which we were having difficulty with in terms of finding the resources to do it ourselves.

As I said, I met with them yesterday and I arranged with them to meet with the appropriate officials in the department. I believe that a preliminary meeting has already taken place and after we have gone through the whole process with St. John Ambulance and be able to show to them what we have in mind this year, look at what they have in mind, I think that we can come to some arrangement in terms of being able to dovetail and co-ordinate the whole effort from a departmental point of view, and from their point of view. Mr. Chairman, I am reasonably optimistic that once we have gone through that exercise that the St. John Ambulance people and ourselves can come to some amicable agreement. MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for Conception Bay South. MR. NOLAN: Is it permitted to continue to say anything in reference to the St. John Ambulance, Mr. Chairman? MR. CHAIRMAN: I would prefer if it could be related to ambulance services, but if it is specifically on St. John Ambulance I would prefer for the operation of the Committee if we could pass the headings until we got down to that.

On motion heading 1007-03-02 and heading 1007-03-03

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall 03-04 carry?

carried.

MR. RIDEOUT: No, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I believe 04 is the Newfoundland Medical Care Commission and we are not about to allow \$36 million to carry without having a few words to say on it. In view of the disasterous

MR. RIDEOUT:

policy taken by this minister or this government in slapping on
the population of this Province a three dollar ward fee before they
can be admitted to the hospital - I understand from what the minister
was telling some of my colleagues this afternoon they have to pay a
certain percentage of that fee - in view of that almost inhumane and
criminal policy followed by this government, the Minister of Health
is not going to get \$36 million although there are only a few minutes
left in the Committee before he tells us why the untouchables have
not been touched. And the untouchables, of course, are the high
paid members of the medical profession in this Province.

We have seen in documentation before this House evidence of other professionals as well as lawyers or any other group, evidence where the professional doctors have made in excess of \$100,000 individually. We have seen examples, Mr. Chairman, where they have made in excess of \$100,000 and the reaction to this government of that type of blatant abuse is for the government to slap a three dollar ward fee on the sick and the poor and the lame in Newfoundland.

Now the Minister of Health is not about to get \$36 million unless we do run out of time, unless he tells us why the untouchables have not been investigated, unless he tells us why some steps have not been taken by his department to control the amount of money spent paying for medical services in this Province. I think it is time, Mr. Chairman, that the exorbitant fees being paid to those people be investigated. I think it is time that it be investigated before the little person is slapped. Who do we slap first in this Province? Not the wealthy, rich doctor and \$100,000 a year man or the \$150,000 a year man. We do not slap him. In fact we are paying almost \$2 million more this year, Mr. Chairman, to the Newfoundland Medical Care Commission so that I suppose we can pay more money to those people. Now I am not against doctors being paid. They deserve to be paid and paid well, as Your Honour will agree I am sure. But the simple fact of the matter is,

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, that before we go slapping it to or kicking it to the poor people, why do we not take a look at ourselves and why do we not take a look at the Newfoundland Medical Care Commission and see if we cannot shave \$2 million or \$3 million or \$4 million or \$5 million off that amount before we get into the business of slapping it to the pockets of those people who can least afford to pay?

The Minister of Health

MR. RIDEOUT: should almost be ashamed to implement that kind of policy before coming before this House and explaining to us whether or not a few million dollars could be saved in this Newfoundland Medical Care Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is five thirty.

MR. HICKMAN: I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Chairman.

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

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

IR. SPEAKER: It being five thirty a motion to adjourn is deemed to be before the House. Subject for debate - the situation of the school in Badger.

The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

ER. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the five minutes allocated to me I want to talk about what has to be one of the most frustrating situations in this Province today and that is the school bus situation as it applies to specific areas. Now I accept the school bus theory as it applies to rural Newfoundland or isolated communities, but there are towns in this Province, Mr. Speaker, where the children, the parents, the town is suffering. We talk about the quality of education, Mr. Speaker, when in a town like Badger today located smack on the Trans-Canada Highway eighteen miles from Grand Falls, where there is enough potential for growth as any community in Newfoundland and here is the statistic, Mr. Speaker, 190 students travelling from Badger to Grand Falls. There are only 237 students left in Badger to go to school.

Now here is where the frustration comes in,

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker. I do not want it to be said in this AN HON. MEMBER: How far?

MR. FLIGHT: Eighteen miles. I do not want it to be said, Mr. Speaker, that I am being critical of the denominational system, the DEC's role. I sympathize with the DECs as they do not have enough money to do the things that are requested of them. But the frustration comes here; the people of Newfoundland do not see the DECs as being the people who decide where schools are built. If that were so then, ir. Speaker, I would not have received a petition from Badger with eighty-five per cent of the names in Badger on it. They look to this government, to the Minister of Education to decide whether or not their children are going to have to be bused eighteen miles, grade seven to eleven. Those students in Badger, as I have said in this House before, Mr. Speaker, will know more about the town of Grand Falls when they graduate than they will know about the town of Badger. They leave home at eight o'clock in the morning and they return at five. They cannot take advantage of the recreational and extra curricular facilities in the town of Grand Falls because there is a school bus there parked waiting to take them away. They do not have them in their own schools. The recreational facilities in Grand Falls are suffering as a result of the lack of participation by their own students. The drop-out rate is fantastic, Mr. Speaker. Students are kicked out of school before the perent even knows what is happening and the Minister of Education - and we talk about this ridiculous nonsense! In a sense it is not nonsense but compared to this one it is nonsense about the quality of education.

How about the quality of education? How about the conscience? Now about the well-being of all the children in this Province who are being bused from their own homes eight o'clock in the morning and allowed to return at five in the evening? Now who is going to take the bull by the horns, Mr. Speaker, and make the decision? Who is going to suggest to the DECs or to whoever spends

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MR. FLIGHT: the money that yes, okay we give you the right to build schools but we retain the right to decide where school buses operate. You are going to have a situation, Mr. Speaker . and I will be the first one there as a parent - you are going to have a situation where the school buses are not going to be permitted to leave Badger. I mean it has gotten to a point where it is ridiculous, 190 students travelling from a town like Badger to Grand Falls. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if we are not going to have to face a situation that we have some great monuments built out there. The policy a few years ago was to build great regional schools and suddenly the movers of that, whoever they might have been, have said, My Lord, we have to keep those kids coming in here because we have to justify the millions of dollars we spent in this great building down here twenty-five miles removed from all the little communities we are serving. As a result and in order to justify that kind of an empenditure and those kinds of buildings that we are going to have to subject our children, seven to eleven, the most formative years of their life - I suppose twelve years old to sixteen travelling eighteen miles away from the town in which they were born and away from their parents and out of sight of

MR. FLIGHT: control. We talk about moral values, no control. It is a fact that the teachers do not have the same concern for students who are being bused in from other communities as they do for the students who are part of that community. That is a fact! And teachers will admit it to you. So we are wondering about the morals, we are wondering about our young people, their standards of values now as compared to ten or fifteen years ago. Maybe that is one of the reasons, Mr. Speaker. Maybe one of the reasons we have children being permitted and forced—not permitted, they are forced to leave home at eight o'clock in the morning to spend eight to ten hours a day in an atmosphere that it takes them the first year to adjust to.

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I want to hear the - I see the Minister of Education is not here - I want to hear the Minister of Education point out what sense of responsibility he has to the Torm of Badger, what sense of responsibility he has to all the children in this Province who are being bused and should not be bused. It just cannot be justified. So I want to hear the minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. HICKMAN: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, this House cannot hear the hon. Minister of Education at this time. He and I were in Stephenville last night for what the people in that area and most educators have described as one of the milestones in educational development in this Province, namely the opening of the Bay St. George Community College.

And what a warm reception we received!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HICKMAN: Today the Minister of Education is, I believe, in Corner Brook or thereabouts, opening some great educational festival, but in any event -

AN HON. MEMBER: Were the NTA friendly?

MR. HICKMAN: - and the NTA were exceptionally friendly.

Mr. Speaker, what the hon. gentleman from

Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) is asking the present Minister of Education to do and asking the present Administration to do is to unscramble an egg

that this Administration did not scramble. MR. HICKMAN: The situation is that in 1967 or 1968 the new Schools Act came into this House brought in by the then Minister of Education, now Senator Rowe, which was in response to the major recommendations contained in the Warren Commission report. That bill provided very clearly the emphasis for consolidation, and I say this not in a critical sense because there is no question at all, Mr. Speaker, that at that time the mood in Newfoundland was that centralization was one of the answers to our educational problems in Newfoundland. And it is inevitable that with the centralization that flowed therefrom that certain inconveniences, and the hon. gentleman has referred to some very real inconveniences and some very real problems. I noted it on the Burin Peninsula - I know the hon. member for Burin-Placentia (Mr. Canning) will concur with this where pupils from Red Harbour and other places in that area are bused in to the Pierce High School in Burin, that whether it is a part of the busing contract between the bus operator and the school board, or whatever, it is a fact that they do leave immediately classes finish and many of them are deprived of the opportunity to participate in lots of the extra-curricular activities.

You know, this Government and the people of this Province would certainly be relieved of one very awesome tax burden, Mr Speaker, if the school-busing was eliminated because this House, this year, through its Committee of Supply has voted the sum of \$11,170,000 for school-busing, and that is a tremendous amount of money no matter how one looks at it.

Now to deal with the other question that the hon. gentlemen raises with respect to the D.E.C. vis-a-vis the Covernment of Newfoundland. The Government of Newfoundland pursuant to the provisions of the Terms of Union make, and it has been argued and argued - there are people in Newfoundland - there are some constitutional lawyers who take issue with this, but the vast body of opinion appears to be that the Government is obliged to hand over to the D.E.C.'s on a non-discriminatory basis,

MR. HICKMAN: all monies for capital account -

MR. NEARY: Hear, hear!

MR. HICKMAN: - and that the DECs then make that decision. Now, you know, there can be a very convincing argument that the government, having the responsibility to hand out the taxpayers' money to the DEC, should have some say, some rights with respect to the location of the school. But again, may I remind the hon. gentleman from Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Canning) that a couple of years ago when a fine school that will soon be completed, I think, in Rushoon was being mooted and there was very strong feelings in two communities as to where it should go, that the then member was asked to intervene and I think was politely told that this is not the business of government. I did not make the terms of union, this House did not make the terms of union, Mr. Speaker, but it happens to be there. It is not a matter, unfortunately - and I am sure the hon. gentleman would not mislead his people by suggesting to them that it is a matter over which government can in any conceivable way assert jurisdiction. It is purely and simply a matter between the school board for the area, the parents in the area and the Denominational Educational Council.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right.

MR. HICKMAN: Some people will argue that
the Denominational Educational Council have gone beyond that
which was envisaged in the Schools Act where it was simply
to look after capital grants: that they are beginning to
take unto themselves certain other policy decisions that
the old superintendents of education had with the
Schools Act tried to restrict and to some extent take away.
But, Mr. Speaker, the very real problem that has been
raised by the hon, the member for Windsor - Buchans is

MR. HICKMAN: very definitely one that does not fall within the jurisdiction of this House nor within the area of responsibility of the government of the Province, and I am not sure that there are many people in Newfoundland today who would -

MR. FLIGHT: They do not accept that.

MR. HICKMAN: Well, whether they believe it or not the hon. gentleman and I have a solemn obligation to the people to tell them what the law is, and that is what the law happens to be, Mr. Speaker, and we cannot do anything about it. And I am sure that the hon. member for Windsor - Buchans when he received that petition, turned to his people and said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, that petition has to go to the DEC, not to the House of Assembly and I will be very happy to take it to the DEC as is provided for by the Schools Act,' which as I say, was an egg that was scrambled not by this administration and we cannot unscramble it.

I thank hon, gentlemen for

their attention and their enthusiasm.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: The motion before the House is that the House now adjourn. Those in favour 'aye', contrary 'nay'. In my opinion the 'nays' have it.

Will we have Orders of the Day

or call it 6:00 p.m.?

MR. HICKMAN: We can do one of two things; we can ask Mr. Speaker to call it 6:00 o'clock, which he can only do with the unanimous consent of the House, or alternatively, we can go back into Committee where we have ten minutes left to finish the health estimates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh. oh!

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Speaker can only call it

6:00 o'clock with the unanimous consent of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. HICKMAN: There is not unanimous consent

so I move we go back into Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion is that I leave

the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Young) Order, please!

1507-03-04.

The hon, the member for

St. John's South.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Chairman, I presume you are going on the well-tried tradition of going from side to side.

Under this particular heading the hon. the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) referred to the payments made to positions under MCP, and I can understand his remarks and I have considerable sympathy with them if one looks at them superficially, but I would just take a few moments of the House to make a few clarifying remarks in that regard. And I do not think I can do a good job, because this is a complex subject

and you would really need to go into it in some detail. Very rapidly I will just read from the first paragraph of the highlights of the 1976/77 report from MCP which says: "Average gross payments for full-time positions was \$75,644. The estimated overhead i.e. cost of operating a practice was one-third of gross payments so that the estimated average net professional income was \$50,000." Now you might well say that, well, in this Province \$50,000 is still a very good income and I think that every doctor and every lawyer and every architect and many other people, every businessman and so on and se forth would agree that that is a good income. I would point out to hon, members what that \$50,000 physician doing that I think it would be useful if they referred to the salary Estimates. And you will see under salary estimates that various full-time employed doctors of the department, that is in the minister's office, for instance, the physician in charge of public health, the doctors in charge and second in charge in cottage hospitals and so and so forth, their salary is not too dissimilar from this. Now I would also point out that this is, even though it is net income, it is not a salary - and perhaps I will have to say a few words on that in a moment but it is also net income but makes no allowance for pensions, it makes no allowance for vacations, and as all hon. members in this House will realize that everyone needs vacations to be able to carry on useful work. So that if you want to compare that \$50,000 with the full-time employed physician you have to knock off what one would put aside reasonably for pension and what one would put aside reasonably for vacation. So I will just bring to hon. membersattention that when they talk about the full-time physician being reimbursed from MCP yet a more reasonable thing to do would be to compare them on a like basis with the full-time employed physicians in the Department of Health and there has been almost no comments

made that the salaries given to the Department of Health employies are out of line and I would not argue to that effect either. Now as I mentioned earlier, this is not a salary to these full-time positions. This is made up of multiple services. And if one is going to reasonably talk about the income the physicians make, you really have to go back to the items it comprises. I point out to hon, members attention that a visit to a doctors office now, an ordinary visit to a foctors office now is charged out as \$6.25'. When I was going to school, and this is in the thirties, a physician's fee was \$3.00. So the cost for a visit to a doctor's office has gone up just over 100 per cent in approximately forty years. I would ask hon, members to try to bring to mind what other item of service or merchandise or what have you has gone up 100 per cent in forty years. I would suggest that this would be very very difficult to bring to mind And if one wants to relate it to, say, an automobile, I can remember when automobiles used to be advertised out at \$777 for an automobile in the thirties. And I would suggest that you would now have great difficulty getting an automobile at much less than \$7,777. In other words, there has been tin fold increase. In the matter of clothing, in the matter of house costs, in the matter of food none of these have gone up by a mere 100 per cent whereas the most common service that a physician gives it has gone up by that amount. So the items are not out of line. Now I can agree to this extent with the hon. member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout); if you want to direct monies to certain areas of the health care plan that you think are needed, why not cut down on MCP payments? I would agree with the hon. member on that. If you cut down on MCP payments you are not going to say that those services are not going to be given. They would be given because the populace will require them but you will then say the populace will directly make payments to the giver of the service instead of MCP making it. Well that is fair enough. You will

then say that we would cut

certain services out of the free health plan, and I think certain services should be cut out. I think that much of the services given is of a personal care nature that does not

require the state to pay for. I think that many of these services given are unnecessary, shall we say, from the point of state payment. Then you would save money in MCP. Then you could direct that money saved there into ambulance services, into hospital services, into equipment, you name it. But it is a whole new ball game and I think it is a ball game that sooner or later the legislature - and we are tending to edge towards it, it is a whole new ball game - will really have to get into.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Chairman, I want to direct a question to the minister with regards to MCP. Last year the minister came very close - and we all know this and the only reason he did not do it is because of the flak be got from the Province, what would have happened had he tried it -and that was to wack on a deterrent fee. And instead of putting on a deterrent fee he sneaked it in another way. He put on three dollars per day up to fifteen days. And of course having saddled the poor people of this Province, the sick and the weak and weary and the lame -

AN HON. MEMBER: The blind and the lame.

MR. FLICHT: - with that three dollars, after having done that he did not have the nerve, he knew he could not go that far. I want to ask the minister this and I want to draw the House's attention to a situation that exists with MCP. Now the hon. member for St. John's South (Dr. Collins) just indicated that when he was going to school it was three dollars a call to a doctor and now it is six. And he indicated that is a very small increase over the years. That may well be true but we did not have MCP when the doctor was going to school. We did not have a situation where somebody goes into the hospital and the doctor takes a look, it is charged up to MCP and he is told to come back a week after and maybe a week after and a week after and every call being charged to MCP. And I want to ask, Mr. Chairman - I am aware and the minister is aware that there is an ongoing programme to try to determine misuse or abuse of the MCP programme as it applies to the patients. That is why the minister was

MR. FLIGHT:

going to have his deterrent fee in the first place. What I would like to know, is there an ongoing programme to try to determine whether or not there is any abuse of MCP by the professionals, by the doctors? Because it is -

AN HON. MEMBER: They sounded the dentists out-

MR. FLICHT: Mr. Chairman, the first time I went to a hospital after MCP became in my own town hospital, I was asked for my MCP card and I have never had to produce that MCP card since, Mr. Speaker. I go in now, the receptionist knows my number, 'just go on in and see the doctor,'Graham:' I do not have to sign a document saying that I did indeed receive treatment. I am not asked to sign a slip verifying the fact that I had a visitation to the hospital. I have no idea how many times my MCP card was used this past five years.

Now, the minister as far as I am concerned, if we are going to go nailing the poor people of this Province - or the rich or the poor, all alike, it does not make any difference to me, nailing them with deterrent fees, nailing them with three dollars a day entrance fees in the hospital, then I think that they are entitled to know that the programme is not being abused by the professional side of the thing, the doctors. I am not accusing. Some of the best, obviously some of the more respected people in this House are doctors. I have a great deal of respect for all the doctors in this Province, Mr. Speaker. But the fact is the situation is there.

I hear tell of like my hon, friend from Baie

Verte (Mr. Rideout) talked about, \$100,000 wages. How is it, Mr.

Speaker, that a doctor can earn \$70,000 or \$80,000 a year in a glorified nursing station? That is all it is. There are hospitals in this programme with the referal centers we have in this programme, Grand Falls, the Central Newfoundland Hospital is a referral center. If you have to have a corn removed you are sent by the doctor in the small cottage to the Grand Falls Central Newfoundland

MR. FLIGHT:

Hospital.

Now how is it that you can have doctors manning those small stations, Mr. Speaker, and making \$78,000 to \$90,000 a year. It is very simple. It would not have been possible without And the question is, Mr. Speaker, whether or not if we are going to have the MCP cost to this Province as escalated year after year - I think it started with \$7 million a year. It is now \$36 million. It went up \$2 million last year. And we hear the general public of this Province being criticized, the people who cannot defend themselves being criticized. They are all hypochondriacs. They are going to the doctor when they do not need to go. We are going to slap on a deterrent fee to keep them from going to hospitals.

I wonder would the minister attempt to find out how many people were called back to the hospital for no other reason than for a certain doctor in this Province to be able to send another bill to MCP? I wonder

would the minister try to indicate to this MR. FLIGHT: House what type of control? Mr. Speaker, since I have become a member of this House most of the institutions I had respect for, that respect is all gone. Since I have become a member of this House I have not seen an institution in this Province go unscathed. And so, therefore, I have a right to wonder. Certainly the medical profession is not the only one that is above criticism, because every other institution in this Province has been dragged through the mud in this House. And now it is time - if we are going to spend \$36,000,000 a year on medical health care costs in this Province, MCP, I think it is time to find out whether or not that program - because that one is wide open for abuse, Mr. Speaker, wide open. It would be interesting to know how many people in this Province today had a bill sent in against their MCP card that have not seen a doctor in the past year. Now I stand here and openly say that that is possible. I make no accusation of any particular doctor but I say it is possible, and with the Bill going the way it is going, with salaries being earned in this Province by doctors averaging \$100,000 a year, then I say, before we put on any deterrent fees, before we put on that three dollars a night, we should maybe have determined whether there could have been a couple of million dollars saved by making sure there was no abuse in the MCP system as it is practised by the medical profession in this Province today.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to ask the Minister why is it that a person can walk into a hospital now, not show his MCP card, simply go in, the doctor will treat him, he will go out, he will not have to be asked to sign a slip confirming that he was there?

Why not?

MR. RIDEOUT: There is enough paperwork for everything else.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. H. COLLINS: The hon, member might not get in the hospital

anymore if the doctors have heard him this afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: So what!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. H. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, let me say this first of all.

We have the lowest fee schedule under medicare in Canada -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. H. COLLINS:

- with the single exception of Prince Edward

Island .-

MR. FLIGHT:

And we have the most visits -

MR. H. COLLINS+

- with the single exception of Prince Edward

Island. On an average we have the lowest - the doctors in this Province on an average have the lowest income of any province in Canada.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do you hear that? Do you hear that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. H. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of general practitioners in this Province, in this City- and hon. members' comments over there are not helping very much - we have a number of general practitioners in this Province and particularly in this City who are making less than \$30,000 a year.

MR. FLIGHT:

Not on MCP.

MR. H. COLLINS: It is a very attractive clientele over the ninety miles of water and a very attractive clientele south of the border, and statements like we have heard here today are only going to make it more difficult for us to be able to attract doctors to this Province and get them to go out into the areas where we want them.

AN HON . MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. H. COLLINS:

My colleague, the member for St. John's South

(Dr. J. Collins) alluded to the fact that those average earnings - the first call upon a doctor's earnings is his overhead, and the overhead of any doctor in this Province works out to anywhere between thirty and thirty-eight per cent of his gross income. Mr. Speaker, you would not know, to hear hom. members opposite, but that all the doctors were millionaires. Now granted, there are -

AN. HON. MEMBER:

(inaudible)

Hon. members have the figures in the Medicare MR. H. COLLINS: Commission report, that is audited by the Auditor-General. There are a few specialists in this City and in Corner Brook and Grand Falls who are making a fair amount of money but how many hours, Mr. Speaker, do they work. They work seven days a week sometimes, day and night, and one of the reasons for that is that we do not have enough specialists in Newfoundland to be able to do the work under a normal forty-hour week. One of the reasons for that, Mr. Speaker, is because our fee schedule is too low. We cannot attract the specialists from Nova Scotia or Ontario or anywhere else. If our own students go to McGill or Dalhousie and get the best training in the world, when they look at the medicare fee in Nova Scotia and the medicare fee in Ontario and the great prospects down south of the border, and they look at the meagre fee which they find here, they are not coming back and this is one of the reaons we do not have the specialists.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. H. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, a lot of the comments which have been made here - obviously, members do not know what they are talking about, but I want to set the record straight and that is that a number of general practitioners are finding it difficult to make a living,

MR. H. COLLINS:

Their income is of a subsistance

nature and the specialists who are making a considerable amount of money are overworked.

MR. FLIGHT:

(Inaudible) the MCP?

MR. NEARY:

No answer, look! No answer.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The time has expired.

On motion, 1007-03-04 through

1015-04, carried.

On motion Heading X, Pealth, all items

without amendment, carried.

It now being six o'clock I

leave the Chair until eight o'clock.

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PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD:

8:00 - 11:00 P.M.

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 1978

The Committee resumed at 8:00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. HICKMAN: Social Services, Head 801, page 47.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Social Services, Heading 8, page 47.

The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to take

a few minutes to mention some of the changes that have been made since 1974 when we brought in our new welfare programme, what these changes have meant to the caseloads and also how they have proven beneficial to the people who are forced to depend on welfare payments as a means of livelihood.

The decrease in the caseload is almost unbelievable. There are reasons for it, obviously, although it is, I suppose, difficult to believe that at a time when we have such a high rate of unemployment in the Province we would have the lowest rate of welfare ever, at least since we have been keeping records. And actually there are three or four points that I would like to make with respect to the decrease and one of them is, the first one, the equalization of rates between long and short term.

Now under the old programme, before 1974, take a typical family of a man and wife and three children living in their own home, if the man were able-bodied he would receive a maximum of \$145 a month, and if that same man were sick, the same family, he would receive \$210. Now the result of this difference in the rates between an able-bodied person and a sick person I think was the result of the famous Newfoundland bad back, and everybody in the Province has heard about the Newfoundland bad back.

People naturally tried to obtain medical certificates from their doctors knowing that if they were certified to be incapacitated that the amount of welfare they

MR. BRETT:

would receive would be greater.

Equalization of the rates, that

is making it the same for incapacitated and able-bodied, had the effect of encouraging people who were clinging to long-term assistance to try their hand at remunerated work, knowing that if they did not succeed that they could always go back to social assistance.

In implementing the policy, in equalizing the rates, the government transferred all long-term assistance recipients with any employment potential at all to the short-term roles and the idea of that was the social worker could see the recipient every month and explore any employment opportunities that might be available with the hope of getting them back in the labour field. And I am very happy to say that this did work and many of our clients did find employment.

Now it is extremely difficult, and I suppose it is impossible, to fully estimate the positive effect that this change in policy had in reducing the long-term assistance caseload. All we know for sure is that, as I said at the beginning, the caseload is down considerably.

Another part of the new programme was the incentive provision of the new social assistance programme. Under the old system, any money or any income that a welfare recipient had over a thirty day period, whether it was a dollar or \$100, or whatever it was, was deducted from the recipient's assistance or allowance. And of course that meant that people were reluctant to accept either part—time or full—time employment, or even to seek casual employment.

Now under the new programme brought in in '74, people are encouraged to work and we do not take the full amount of money that they earn. For example, in the case of handicapped people, they are permitted to keep the first \$30 that they earn and fifty per cent of the next \$200. In other words,

MR. BRETT:

to sum that up, if a sick or

handicapped person earned \$230 a month then only \$100 would be deducted from his allowance.

Now in the case

MR. BRETT: of an able-bodied person we deduct 50 per cent of that person's earnings up to \$200. Anything over \$200 is deducted in full. In other words then, what I am saying is that work suddenly became more profitable than social assistance and people who work now are much better off by working. And again, as in the case of equalizing the rates, it is difficult to estimate exactly what effect this particular policy had, but I have to say that it has helped to reduce the caseloads. And the third important feature of the new programme is the relation between the social assistance rates and the minimum wage. Prior to the new programme it was commonly known that there were people on welfare who were actually getting more than if they were working. And as a matter of fact, this was true right in the Department of Social Services itself. There were actually people working on the third floor making less money than if they were on welfare. So this was changed and we have a cut off, that is to say that a person with seven children, or say a person with nine children - we have a cut off at seven - a person with nine children does not get any more than a person with seven. And that may seem unfair, but again, if we went beyond that a person with an extra large family would be better off on welfare than working, so I feel that that had much to do with reducing the caseload.

I have to give credit to the federal government for creating many short term jobs, to L.I.P. and Canada Works and, of course, we have to take some credit for our own welfare programmes, but I would like to think that there is more than that to it. I would assume that back in the late 1960s or the middle 1960s, the early 1960s when supposedly there was almost full employment that there was some reason why the short-term welfare caseload was up around 7,000 or 8,000. You know, obviously there was something wrong, and I am of the opinion that recipients came to the welfare office and it was a matter of an assembly line, there was no thought given to rehabilitation, it was a matter of dishing it out. It was too easy.

And under our new programme we have put a lot of emphasis on rehabilitation and we try to see the kinds of short-term - as I said earlier, any with any employment potential at all - see them at least once a month if we can do home visits, and rather than the dishing-out method, to explore

Of course, there are many other factors.

MR. BRETT: every avenue and every possibility of getting them back in the labour field.

There is an increase this year which obviously is not as much as the government would like to see. It is only 5 per cent. It is a help. We would like to tie it to the cost of living which is more than that, but government has to draw the line somewhere. It is interesting to note that in the four main service departments, that is Social Services, Health, Rehabilitation and Recreation, and Education, I believe, that this Province is spending over \$600 million, and in the four resource departments we are spending a little over \$100 million, which means that we are spending six times as much on services as we are in our resource department. And I do not think we can go on and on and on like that, there has to be an end to it. We will spend over \$60 million this year in the Social Services and there are a lot of new services that we would like to bring in. And as I have said on occasions - I said in the House last week - with block funding which we now have there should be more dollars available and hopefully some new services can be implemented next year, particularly as it relates to the aged.

As we get into the headings I assume there will be questions, and I will probably leave any further comments until then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Young) The hon. the member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES:

Mr. Chairman, as a prerequisite for the hon.

Minister of Tourism, who is not in the House, and the hon. member for

Grand Falls (Mr. Lundrigan) who consider it essential that any

member of the Opposition, particularly a shadow Cabinet spokesman, should

start off any of their replies to a minister by being positive,

I am prepared to do that, I certainly am, by saying that in the two and

a half years that I have been a member of this hon. House I have had

over 500 occasions to write or to contact the Social Services Department

in Harbour Grace, and Harbour Grace in this case is the regional office

through which the district of Carbonear deals, and I must say unequivocally

that the co-operation, the service, the understanding, and the compassion

that I have received from the people in that office cannot be exceeded,

I am sure, anywhere in the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. MOORES: Having said that, Mr. Chairman, as a reflection of the fact that I do not want to be personal with the minister. I do not know the man, I do not believe before I entered politics he and I ever met in our lives, so I do not know him. I have nothing personal against him - it is my responsibility as the Opposition shadow Cabinet critic to evaluate and assess that minister's performance in the provision of social assistance and related services in this Province. And on that basis and that basis alone I can only say that this minister has to be one of the worst in history for this department.

SOME HON: MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. R. MOORES:

I have been told by reliable sources within the minister's department that I have or have not dealt with that essentially this department has gone downhill, downhill in a sense that its minister does not want or never does stand up for the rights of the poor people in this Province in the Cabinet discussions that are taking place at Budget time. Let me give you examples, The minister talks about an increase in the social assistance payments in this Province. In two years there has been an increase of 10 per cent, 5 per cent each

Mr. R. Moores: year. At the same time the national inflation rate not the Provincial; they could be decidedly different— the national inflation rate alone has been 15 per cent or in excess. Therefore a 5 per cent increase given to a social assistance recipient in January is non-existent by the 1st. day of July.

So the minister cannot get up in this House and expound upon the achievement of such a fantastic increase: nothing, nothing, nothing, plus nothing is still nothing. Let me give you further examples, You see, for the benefit of members on this side and members opposite and members of the media and the general public, the minister would want you to believe by the bad-back theory that the amount of abuse in the social assistance programme in this Province is exorbitant. But the fact is, to use a clicke of the Premier's, the fact is that this social services programme has only, and not in excess of, a 5 per cent abuse rate, which means that 95 of every 100 people who are directly or indirectly in receipt of social assistance benefits is an honest, God-fearing person who does not abuse either the payments or the principles of the programme.

A financial or an economic example to better exemplify what I am talking about, because it is hard for a person to abuse nothing,

a family with two adults, that MR. R. MOORES: is to say, presumably, a mother and a father, will receive \$276 per month, plus approximately \$21 for each child, up to seven or more. The monthly expenditure for a family of two, as indicated by Statistics Canada, for food \$120, for fuel \$80, for electricity \$30, and for miscellaneous like light bulbs, Kleenex, etc., etc., \$30, for a total monthly expenditure of \$260. The remainder therefore of this grandiose payment, for the maintenance of your house, food, clothing, family, everything else, is \$16 a month. Now any decent person in this Province can understand what I am saying, the proportions of \$16 per month. And then you get \$21 for each child. Now I do not mean to be facetious, at least I do not mean to be overly facetious, Mr. Chairman, but I have a dog at home and I do not feed it too much, I do not abuse it too much, but I sat down this morning and I calculated that if I had a meal of pork chops and there was one left over, and I gave it half a can of dog food every now and then that I would spend \$19.40 approximately per month on that dog. And that is what this government, that is what this minister talks about when he says, "We did more in the last four years for social assistance in this Province than has ever been done before, comparitively."

Mr. Chairman, the Trans-Atlantic cable was laid in the 1850s and we all know the achievement of inter-continental communications since that time. So we are not going to talk about the past, let us talk about the present and what this minister is doing, what his government is saying they are trying to do for the people in this Province. When the Premier of this Province came to power in 1972 he said, "The people will become involved in decision making, that we will distribute the wealth in this Province so that everybody gets a fair share."

MR. R. MOORES: Yes, he distributed the wealth all right! A widow in this Province gets \$198 a month. And let me give you an example of a lady in my district who never in her life asked for anything from this government or any other government and her husband died suddenly of a heart attack and he had not paid into Canada Pension. They had a good house, a decent house that was well-kept, and she figured that she would take in a few borders and tried to maintain the standard of living, albeit a frugal one at that time. She found out she got \$198 a month, this is with the increase, \$198 a month; the government forced her to spend her liquid assets. She had a few dollars saved up to bury herself, which is a traditional concept of decency and respect in Newfoundland. Old people like to say that they have a bit of money to bury themselves. She had to spend that, or most of it, before she could get the widow's allowance. And then when she took in the two borders! The minister got up and almost boasted about the fact that sick or disabled people or what have you, get their first \$30. What an incentive to work, what a incentive to be personally and individually initiative. The first \$30 she got free. But after that for every dollar she earned they took fifty cents until she earned \$80,

MR. R. MOORES:

And then after \$80, which the minister failed to say, they took all of it, she got nothing. And besides not getting anything for anything above \$80, they started to reduce the widow's allowance proportionately. That is initiative, this is incentive and that is people getting a fair break in this Province!

Is the public really aware,

Mr.Chairman, are the members of this House aware what kind of a pittance allowance the people live on in this Province when you have to pay forty-five cents for a tin of Carnation milk and \$2.25 for sixty tea bags? I mention those specifically, Mr. Chairman, because just about everybody in Newfoundland drinks tea or Carnation milk or both, it is almost like a staple of our diet. My contention is, of course, if they listen to the minister they do not realize it. The M.H.A's in this House making \$12,000, \$15,000 or \$20,000 a year, Cabinet Ministers making \$25,000 or \$30,000, we lose sight of the reality of society, that for every person who is rich in this Province there must be 100 who are poor.

When this government came to power they said, "We will distribute that wealth." And the essential principle of social services in this whole nation is that a government will distribute wealth as evenly as they can. I am not promoting that this Province alone has failed, I am saying that this nation and perhaps all of North America since this economic recession has come in, has lost sight of reality, has lost sight of the suffering and the denial of basic, trivial amenities in society for people and families who cannot help it.

The minister himself just said that the case load has increased. Well, how could you expect any more when the unemployment figures in this Province are 30 per cent of the labour force?

MR. R. MOORES: Let us talk about the young, single welfare recipient, which is a sensitive point with me because on an average I get two a week, who, through no fault of their own, because of their environment, their family unpringing, their social upbringing, have failed to come up with the academic achievement in our educational system that they might have had otherwise. They come into a labour force which is highly competitive and cannot find a job, and for months and months on end, if they cannot find a Canada Works grant or something like that, they have no money, they rely on their parents who too often cannot afford to provide for them, to support them.

The attitude of this department, even in Harbour Grace, which I concede I have had a great deal of co-operation from, the attitude is, No boy, get aboard the plane and go to Alberta to the Tar Sands, Saudi Arabia or somewhere else. You are young, you are healthy, get out, get out, get out while you can and make money in other provinces better off than we are. And he says, "I do not want to, I have a wife, or a wife on the way" - one of the two - "and I do not want to leave this Province." And even if he did leave, the chances are that he would enter into a more competitive labour force than the one that he left, in terms of skills, in terms of training. And the government attitude unfortunately is highly negative, and the public again is unaware of this plight because they listen to this old guff and trash that the minister throws out every week or so in the newspapers and the media about the 'bad-back' theory and that there are young Newfoundlanders in this Province who are out taking the government for a ride, who do not want to go to work.

I agree there are some like that.

10 per cent, perhaps, of our labour force, 2 per cent, 20

per cent, but not all. Some are genuine, some cannot,

MR. R. MOORES: through no fault of their own, find work, get an income, live ordinary, sensible humane lives. The minister got up in the House last week and he said or he referred to housing of welfare recipients in this Province. Well let me tell you something. Mr. Chairman; in the two years that I have been elected I have knocked on every door in my district. Every Summer I go to my district for eight or ten or twenty weeks, whatever is required for me to go door to door, and I have been in, where there was a human being to answer the door, I have been in the house-every house in my district where there was somebody at home. I have been in welfare recipients houses that you would not put pigs - you really would not: I remember when my father had pigs at home our stable was cleaner, newer, more modern, better kept. Now part of that can seriously be attributed perhaps to the individuals themselves who do not want to better themselves, but in some cases it cannot be and it is the ones where it cannot be that I am concerned with. And one of the chief reasons for the government of this Province, who acquiesce in the promotion of and encouragement of slum landlordism, is because they do not have the courage and the backbone to say to these people, 'Look!' We are not going to put up with it. If you do not provide the services, the facilities we are taking you before the Landlord-Tenants Board.

any person on welfare in this Province acquire a sensible living accommodation on \$70.00 a month from the minister's regional or local offices? And I quote - give me one second to find it here - directly from the regulations effective 1977, 'With regard to rent, where an adult lives alone in a rented room or apartment the maximum monthly assistance that can be granted by a social worker is \$70.00.' And it goes on to say, in all fairness to the minister, that this can be increased proportionately on the part of the district administrator to \$150.00, or at the very maximum, where there is a family concerned, \$175.00.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: Where there is \$175.00 it is rare.

MR. R. MOORES: As my hon. friend from Baie Werte - White

Bay (Mr. Rideout) points out, those are rare where there is \$175.00

given. Very rare! Now you tell me, Mr. Chairman, I lived for years

MR. R. MOORES:

IM. P. 1:00RES: when I was a university student in one of the cheapest apartments in this city-owned by Craig Dobbin, by the way - one of the cheapest in this city. And the least rent that I ever paid was \$212, I think a month for a two bedroom apartment and as university students we split it we got three other guys to live with us. And this minister stands up, brazen as brass, with a gall that I have never seen before, and he says, you know, we cannot help the fact that living accomodations for social assistance recipients are not what they should be. One hundred dollars a month! Where in the name of the Lord can you get a decent living accommodation today for \$100.00 a month? Where? And sim landlordism is promoted by the minister's department. If you gave the people more money, larger allocation for rental payments, then they could afford to pay what some landlords request for sensible living accomodations. Let me reiterate that it is only, primarily, only because of the policy of this minister and his government that most welfare recipients are in the slum housing that they are in. I trust the hon, member would allow me MR. CHAIRMAN: (DR. COLLINS) to remind him he has one minute left.

One minute? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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FR. MOORES: Well with only one minute I think in all fairness to myself, because the other topics are fairly - I want to have another go or two at the minister before the three hours are up tonight.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Before I recognize the other hon, member, I would like to bring to the attention of the hon, members of the committee that we have in the gallery twenty-eight members from grade I of the Lester Pearson High School, Wesleyville, accompanied by their guidance councillor, Ir. Fred Melendy, and also by Mr. Eric House, Mr. Szeve Baker and Mr. Pearce Windsor. Hon, members, I am sure, would like to welcome them.

SOME HOW. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN: You. member for day of Islands.

IR. MOODROW: Mr. Chairman, as I set out to have

a few remarks on this very important topic, very important department, I would like to make two quotations taken from the late Senator Humphrey. On the first one he says, the first quotation is on helping others, this is what he says, "Compassion is not weakness and concern for the unfortunate is not socialism." He also said on showing emotion, "A fellow that does not have any tears does not have any heart." I think that these quotations, ar. Chairman, can really apply to all of us who have anything to do, or any imput into helping the unfortunate in our Province.

pay a little bit of a tribute to the hard working class of people in our Province who are working each day to make ends meet. And I evidenced this, lir. Chairman, around last Christmas when a lot of flooding took place in many parts of the Province and it also took place in the Bay of Islands district as well. This is unfortunately what I found, and that is the reason why I had a motion on the Order Paper, put there on the first day of the opening of the House. I am not going to read the motion, i.r. Chairman, but it really meant this, that if you happen to be on social services and if your furnace was flooded out, the basement flooded or something of that nature, you could get assistance. But if you happened to be a hard working human being making maybe an average wage that poor fellow in fact

are the people I think we have to think a little bit more about also in our Province.

Now I say I suppose that social services ar welfare, or whatever you want to call them, is a sort of a necessary evil.

There are two types of people who unfortunately have to be on social services. Number one, you have the able-bodied people, and they even could be broken down into able-bodied married people and able-bodied single people as well. In some cases these people try desperately hard to find employment and they are unable to find it. I have had this experience because they come to me, many times over in the city of Corner Brook we find because maybe they are unmarried, let us say, for example, they get social assistance. I do believe, and I would like sincerely

MR. WOODROW: to perhaps remind the minister of this, and perhaps, you know, we should realize that even though a person is unmarried he is still a human being and he has a right to the necessities of life.

Now you have then, of course, you have people such as cripples, blind, and people who are suffering from other types of illness and I suppose you also have people, and you do have them, because we have to face the fact you have people who take advantage of the social system we have and they feel that the state or the Province owes them a living. I would like to say, Mr. Chairman, that I think the state owes all of us a living but we have to work hard to collect it, unless we are among the unfortunate people who are blind, are crippled or the like.

Now I would also like to make mention of the many make-work projects that took place throughout the Province last year, and I certainly have to congratulate the administration and the minister for taking such effort in giving people an opportunity to earn their living through the make-work projects. And the minister already stated that there have been increases over the past five or six years but I imagine every member of the hon. House of Assembly must feel that these increases have not been high enough. In fact, I certainly feel that the minister would have liked to have heard the hon. Minister of Finance on budget day say that the increase should be ten per cent rather than five per cent.

Mr. Chairman, I do not have to point out to this hon. House that inflation has hit every aspect of our society, especially over the past two or three years. In fact it has hit food, clothing, heat, light, social activities and everything else. And for that reason people in fact need just to be given a little more even though they are on social assistance. And I sometimes think as well-I am wondering, and it may be difficult perhaps to work this one out, but I am wondering

MR. WOODROW: if we should base the regulations on need, not to put everybody, say, in a mold, for example. If the regulations should be based on need because every case in fact today is - almost every case is an individual case and it should be judged on its own merits. I know it is not very casy to do this because perhaps you would be accused of making chalk of one and cheese of the other.

Now I think I should also

pay a little tribute to the Salvation Army, the St. Vincent de Paul,
and other organizations, and lots of general people whom in fact

I have gone to and these people have helped the needy. In
other words they have helped those who could not help themselves.

There is another point, Mr. Chairman, which I think we should bear in mind, that is that the social service offices in this Province, they should be in keeping with the dignity of human individuals. Now I for one would like to see the office on Harvey Road, I would like to see it even more becoming to the dignity of the human beings who have to go there. Nobody really wants to go to receive social assistance. We Newfoundlanders, we are a very proud people. In fact, a lot of us would rather starve than in many cases go to receive social assistance. And this perhaps also leads on to the point of the employees in those offices.

Mr. Woodrow: And this perhaps also leads on to the point of the employees in those offices. I think, Mr. Chairman, the employees in those offices should be well trained. That is important. They should be well trained. Now you have the good ones, you have the mediocre ones, and you have, I suppose, those who do not care at all. In fact, I am going to mention two names, I am going to mention the name of Pearl Halfyard over in the office on Harvey Road. She happened to come from Ochre Pit Cove. Pearl Halfyard is a very sincere person she does her job with the dignity, in fact, I do not think that anybody could be more dignified than she is, whether you are sitting down talking with her personally or talking with her over the telephone. Now also in the Corner Brook office, I speak of a gentleman who looks after the South Shore of the Bay of Islands in the person of Fred Robinson. Now I just take those two names, I just pick those two names out of the hat, not that there are not other people, as well, as good as they are but I would just like in fact to mention those two people.

And also, Mr. Chairman, I feel that it would be good for the minister to travel more often, I do not know how much he travels around the Province, I am sure he travels a lot, but I say this sincerely, I think it would be good for him to travel more often to visit the various offices in the districts, and I say this very respectfully to the minister. And also to visit some of the poor people who through no fault of their own have to depend upon social services for a living, in fact, I am hoping that - he promised me he would, that he would make a visit to my district, I hope some time when the House is closed.

Mr. Chairman, I could go on and on and speak about other things, but what I have said, I want to say to you, Mr. Chairman, comes from the heart.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: And I hope and I know that the administration will do all they can, do all in their power to help the needy because, as I said and I will end up by saying, I will end up by quoting again the late Senator Humphrey "Compassion is not weakness and concern for the unfortunate is not socialism." Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon, member for Lewisporte.

MR. F. WHITE:

Mr. Chairman, I suppose all of us in this

House could get up and say something about social services, give examples and so on of some of the abuses or lack of action on the part of various constituents because it is one of the biggest things we have to deal with and all hon. members know that.

Since I have been involved with a number of constituents, and with several people, many people who are on social assistance in my district, I want to make a few points and hopefully get some answers from the minister with respect to those points because I think and I feel strongly that there should be some changes made in the Social Services Act and the various regulations that are published from time to time. That is my feeling.

Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to say what a good job I thought that our spokesman on this matter did, the member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores), when he spoke in the start of the estimates this afternoon or this evening. I thought he did a magnificent job particularly with respect to his philosophy and intelligence in understanding social services and not just seeing it as a technical matter as I feel all too often the case. It is looked upon as a technical matter in many cases and it is a matter of looking through the regulations to see if they apply, to see if they come within the regulations, and if they do not it is a matter of saying, well, too bad.

One of the particular regulations that I want to say a few words about is the \$50

MR. WHITE:

special allowance, so-called,
additional assistance - it is regulation number six - "The
appropriate regional director may grant additional social
assistance up to but not exceeding \$50 a month to an adult
or family," and I want to read this, Mr. Chairman, because
I think it is important to read it all, "\$50 a month to an
adult or a family if, because of illness, the age of the
children in the case of a family, the lack of available
resources in the community, special education needs or other
circumstances, such additional social assistance is considered
necessary by the appropriate regional director for the
support and proper maintenance of that adult or family."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I know cases where people have applied, in my opinion, and in the opinion of other people that I know, for this particular special assistance, so-called, but it seems like you have to create a controversy, or threaten that you are going to expose it on television or radio, or expose it on television and radio, or kick up a racket about it before the regional directors will grant this special assistance.

Now we had a case since this House opened of that exact thing happening. I am referring to the lady who was on the CBC the other night, on the programme from Deer Lake -I have the lady's name but there is no point in mentioning that—who talked about the dire straits she was in and she was not getting any additional social assistance because of her illness. I asked the minister about this the next day and asked the minister if in fact the \$50 had been granted after the programme went on television. The minister said no, but in fact it was granted, Mr. Chairman, after the programme went on television—not after the programme went on television in St. John's, but after the programme went on television in Corner Brook, which was a week before it went on in St. John's. I had someone check back with the

MR. WHITE: lady and with the regional director in the area and indeed it was confirmed that the \$50 was granted after the lady appeared on TV the night before in Corner Brook.

MR. SIMMONS: What?

MR. WHITE: Oh, yes! This happens quite

regularly.

MR. SIMMONS: But the minister misled the House on that one.

MR. WHITE: No, not really. No. The

specific question that I asked was was it granted today after last night's programme? He said no, it was not granted today after last night's programme. But it was misleading me because I did not have the facts but now that I have the facts I can disclose them. And the facts are that indeed the \$50 was granted after the lady appeared on TV in Corner Brook, which was a week before she appeared on Here and Now in St. John's.

In my own district, Mr. Chairman, just after I got elected I came across a gentleman who it was recommended I go see by the hon. gentleman sitting at my left, who had seen the man in Grand Falls in the hospital. It was a tragic thing, He lived in a community in my district and his house had burned down, his child had been burned to death in the fire, he had been totally incapacitated in that he could not walk and could not use his hands. So I went to see him and he told me he had been out of hospital for eight months and he had not been seen by a social worker for eight months. And I could not believe this, of course, so I went down to see the social workers and they did in fact confirm that they had not been to see the gentleman because the gentleman had not been calling them. And he was a gentleman who had been a foreman in the lumber camp and did not particularly want to get involved with social services. And I went after this special allowance for him of \$50 because he could not

MR. WHITE: walk and he could not use his hands or anything like that but no way, Mr. Chairman could I get the extra \$50 for that man. I got \$22.50, I think, or \$23 or something extra for that gentleman but no way could we get the extra \$50. Now he is getting it now because only the other day when I dropped in to see him again - he did not call me, I dropped in to see him again - he told me he was only getting twenty something dollars and I said, "You are not getting it all?" He said, "No." And guess what was happening when I dropped in there, Mr. Chairman? The gentleman's wife was in hospital and here he could hardly walk and he was looking after three other children and he was not entitled to \$50 of special allowance so he could hire a babysitter.

Now those are the kinds of things I am talking about. You cannot always blame it on the regional director. The regional directors are given orders that they have to be pretty tight with respect to the \$50. But what I am saying is that it should be specific, it should be specific, the \$50. If a man is sick, he is incapacitated, or something like that then he should be allowed the extra \$50 allowance, not as it says here. It could be one or all of the factors here before the man is entitled to the \$50. And I do not know what it means. "Lack of available resources in the community."

Now what does that mean? Or "educational needs, or

MR. WHITE: an adult or family if, because of illness, the age of the children in the family, in the case of a family." You know, I do not know what it all means. I think the hon. gentleman should read the regulations again with respect to that. And I think the regulations should be changed so that this special allowance is not as vague as it is now and can be applied more generously across the board because the people who need this are the people who need it most. Now, Mr. Chairman, I just want to remind the hon, minister that the Ombudsman Report came out the other day, and I do not know if he had time to read it or not, but if he did not he should take it home and read it, because just about one-third of the complaints in this report by the Ombudsman deals with the Department of Social Services. And what is more, Mr. Chairman, where the Ombudsman had jurisdiction, in a lot of cases the decision of the Department of Social Services was overturned by the Ombudsman. Now it is case after case after case and I could stand here from now until twelve o'clock and read off the various cases that were overturned by the Ombudsman when they were brought to his attention - some from my own district, because I knew the complainant was in the right. I could not get anywhere with the Director of Inquiries or with officials on the minister's staff, so the only recourse was to the Ombudsman. And I can show you files that I have in my office, and right here I read the same thing and the Ombudsman has overturned it - 'suggested that the department should recommend the write-off and she was notified accordingly that her social assistance payments would be restored! The Ombudsman recommended that the department pay an additional \$109 to the complainant. 'This information was to convey to the complainant when things were worked out.' And I can go on. 'The department concurred and the result was a reclassification to long-term assistance.' Now here is another trick of the department - and I call it 'trick' because I do not know how else it can be described. It seems to me that when someone gets something on the Social Services Department in terms of getting one up on the department, the instant thing to do is retaliate by putting them back on short-term assistance, which means they have to hire a taxi and go to the office every MR. WHITE: time and then you complain, of course, and they are put back on long-term assistance again. But I did not want to get on to that specific topic because I have some more here for the minister, but I hope that he does take a look at this particular report by the Ombudsman in this Province. And the Social Services Department is the most blatant, Mr. Chairman, that is in this book. If the Ombudsman did not earn his salary in any other way than looking after the people who come to him because they were done in by the Department of Social Services, he would be earning his salary in my opinion, because there are seventy-two cases here that were brought to the Ombudsman's attention, and in most - not most of the cases, because some he did not have jurisdiction - but in a lot of the cases, and I did not count them all, they were overturned in favour of the complainant.

Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to mention a situation concerning common-law - well, couples, I suppose, or non-common-law couples. It seems to me that in a lot of cases instead of some of the social workers of the Department of Social Services performing a counselling role that they are almost performing the role of an S.S. squad or something, Mr. Chairman. It is almost like a jack-boot brigade, because it seems to me that they determine at all costs to catch somebody who is living common-law. You would not believe the times that they catch somebody supposedly living common-law.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why do they do that, 'Freeman'?

MR. WHITE: Pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Why do they do that?

MR. WHITE:

Because if a lady is all of a sudden, you know, living common-law, the Social Services Department moves in and finds out if she is or not and all of a sudden, you know, her social assistance is cut off, and in half the cases it goes before the Appeal Board and the Appeal Board throws it out immediately and says there was no evidence to prove that the lady was in fact living common-law, but it is another case. And I have a case in my own district of this right now where the social worker in the area - and I am dealing with the minister's top officials on that and I am not going to bring out the names in the

MR. WHITE: House - but the social worker in the area stated to residents of the area who have signed affidavits that he had their names down, twenty-one names down, as people who would testify in the court that the lady was living common-law, and yet when the Appeal Board met in Grand Falls, he did not produce one of them. Not one of those witnesses did he produce. Now I went back to the various

Mr. White: people in Social Services and I said the people are out there demanding to know who the twenty-one people are. And to this day it has not been resolved so I quess that is another one that goes before Mr. Peddle. The same with single mothers, I find, Mr. Chairman, that the department suspects every single mother in this Province, Any girl, any teenage or older girl who makes a mistake in her lifetime and has an illegimate child is almost immediately classified as a lady of the evening, so to speak, almost instantly, 'Why can you not give that lady an apartment?' 'Now you know what she will be doing if she gets an apartment by herself; you know. And this goes on continuously. And in a lot of cases it probably happens. But I say, Mr. Chairman, that it is downright discrimination and there should be some special counselling for those people rather than continuously putting them down.

So I want to mention that, Mr. Chairman, because I think it is very, very important. And I think the minister should look into it seriously because it is going on all over this Province, particularly within the last twelve months with the cutbacks in government spending and the tightening of the purse strings, I can feel that what is going on in the district and in other places in the Province that they are really pressing down to make sure that the money is kept back and this special allowance thing has gotten totally out of hand. In my opinion, it is almost useless from the point of its being there unless the regulations are changed so that it can relate to the special needs and the real needs of the people concerned.

I got a few more things I want to talk about, Mr. Chairman, but if the minister wants to have a word or two then I will gladly sit down.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. C. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, if I do not make some comments

there are going to be too many to get at and I will not get a chance at all. To the first speaker, I appreciate his comments on my being the worst minister. One of the things he mentioned, Mr. Chairman, was the

Mr. Brett: increase in the social assistance rates. Let me tell the hon. member that I spent ten years in the field as a welfare officer, as we were called in those days, and I know as much about welfare recipients and what they go through as anybody in this House or anybody in the Province. And I tell you right now, Mr. Chairman, that every person who is indigent, whether it be for medical reasons or for reasons of unemployment or whatever it should be is entitled to a decent standard of living. But I do not think that there is a province in Canada that is providing a complete and decent standard of living for everybody that is indigent. I do not think it is possible, You know, the cost is just incredible; it could never be done. And sometimes I wonder why - let us take a person who is, say, who has worked twenty or thirty years of his natural life and suddenly becomes sick. You know, you wonder why that person should be penalized, why he should be forced to eke out an existence on a small welfare allowance? I know it is not fair. But I repeat it is, you know, financially impossible to give every person like that a standard of living that you would like to give them, you know, that would bring him up to what he had before. It is most unfortunate.

But talking about welfare rates, and I hate bringing this up because of course you will say it is partisan, but I wonder after twenty-three years of a Liberal administration why they did not do more than they did? If you go back to 1972 -

AN HON. MEMBER: Forget the past.

MR. BRETT: Now the hon. gentleman brought this up I did not. If you go back to 1972, an able-bodied man with a wife and three children living in their own home received a maximum of \$145 a month, and if he was unable to work he got \$210. You were talking about the small increases that we gave, 5 per cent this year and 5 per cent last year. In January 1974 that same man, whether he was able or unable to work, received \$245, Now that is only two years later. And in January of 1975 it was increased to \$276. In April of 1976 it was increased to \$304. In may of 1977 it was increased to \$322. And

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Mr. Brett: in April of 1978 it was increased to \$338.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BRETT:

And this represents an increase of -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BRETT:

- 133 per cent for able-bodied cases and

60 per cent for other cases.

MRS. MGISAAC:

Did you say three children?

MR. BRETT:

Yes.

The percentage increase varies according to the size of the family, of course. It is larger in the case of smaller

families and smaller in the case of larger families.

MR. BRETT: Again as I stated in my opening remarks I think that this was achieved by equalizing the social assistance rights in January 1974.

Now to get on to some of the other things he mentioned: the abuse of the system. Now I have said repeatedly that there is not as much abuse in the welfare system as the average citizen would like to think. You know, it is funny. To the average citizen the person that they know, say a relative or a friend who is on welfare, is starving to death, he is not getting enough, he or she is not getting enough, but if they are strangers they are getting a fortune. Is this not generally what is said, you know?

AN HON. MEMBER:

No.

MR. BRETT: Yes, it is. Oh, yes. If it is a relative, if it is somebody you know, you realize they are not getting enough and you will say it. But how many times have I heard people talking about those who are abusing the system, you know, particularly people they do not know, "Look at the crowd on welfare, they got her knocked. They can spend their days in the tavern, they can drive around in big cars, "And some of them do spend their time in the tavern and some of them drive around in cars, but, I mean, let us not tar them all with the one brush because most of them cannot afford to drive around in cars and most of them cannot afford to spend their days in the beer tavern.

But anyway there is some abuse of the system but it is very, very small. It is not ten per cent. I would say it is less than two per cent.

Now the single able-bodied: and this has always been a bone of contention, To say that this government or this administration will not issue assistance to single able-bodied people is incorrect. In the month of February we had something like 3,700 families in this Province in receipt of short-term assistance,

MR. BRETT: and of that number 890 cases were single able-bodied or 23.5 per cent of the total. So how can anybody look at me and say that this department will not assist single able-bodied people? I made a statement here last year that maybe some of them who had come to the welfare offices should get a kick in the posterior, and I repeat it, because single able-bodied people are mobile. And if there is a job at the Tar sands in Alberta, you give me one good reason why they should not go. Or if they are living on Random Island in Trinity North and there is a job in Corner Brook, you give me one good reason why they should not go. Your great Liberal Prime Minister in Ottawa said they should go. He said if there is a job anywhere in Canada you should go and take it.

MR. PECKFORD: Our of Canada he wanted them, he wanted them to go out of Canada.

MR. BRETT: I think he wanted them to go out of Canada. But these people are mobile. They are more mobile than the married man who had got a family. Sometimes I can sympathize with the married man, who has a family, who does not want to leave home. In my own district, down in the Port Rexton area and all down that shore, there are a lot of people who have been doing it for years. They leave early in the Spring and they go to work on the Lake boats. And a lot of them have families that they hardly know. And I feel sorry for them and I wish it were possible to create jobs to keep these men at home with their families. But I see nothing in the world wrong with a single, able-bodied man getting his tail off this Island, go out and get a job somewhere else. I see nothing wrong with it. And I am going to argue that.

Now I know there are cases, you know, and I just pointed out in February month we assisted 890 cases. But if a man in my district - and I go back to my district, I am being parochial if a man in my district, say in Random Island,

MR. BRETT: goes to the welfare office in Clarenville, if he is single able-bodied he should not be assisted, he would get \$45 a month. I know the rate is low. However that man, if he had any gumption at all, he can take a chain saw or a buck saw and he can make that much in a day if he has any guts at all.

Now housing is another issue.

You are not going to score any political points by talking about housing for social assistance recipients, I can assure the hon. members that, because there are welfare ghettoes all over this world.

MR. F. WHITE: I am not trying to score, I am trying to help people.

MR. BRETT: Well, what do you think we are trying to do? And as long as we have people who are poor, people who are disabled, you are going to have welfare ghettoes.

I am sure that every government in every province of Canada would like to be able to do away with them, I am sure the federal government would, but you cannot. And we are causing it. And I will say this knowing that I have said it many times in the House, I am repeating myself, landlords do not want to take welfare recipients into their homes, into their spartments. They just do not want to take them.

MR. FLIGHT: Neither do Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

It is nost unfortunate, but how many times have you seen it happen? I know it does not happen in all cases but how many times have you seen it happen that you put a welfare family in and in six months the house is gone, it is neat to pieces. You know it happens and I know it happens and it is most unfortunate, but because landlords do not want them they have to go to substandard housing.

In many cases it means putting them in substandard housing or putting them in hotels. So maybe that is what the hon, members opposite would like, we could put them all in the Newfoundland Hotel or Holiday Inn or somewhere like that.

Do you have homemakers down in (inaudible) your district?

MR. BRETT: Yes, we have homemakers. That is true. Somebody mentioned, I think it was a member from this side, the working poor. That is the man that is in the middle, that is the man that nobody talks about. The people on top, the rich, I do not think they care very much if the cost of electricity goes up, the cost of a can of milk goes up or the SSA goes up or whatever because they have the woney to cover it. Weither does the guy on the bottom because the taxpayer is going to look after him anyway . So me does not have to worry about it. The government is going to pay for it. But there is this little fellow in the middle that the hon, member referred to, the working poor. The rich are squeezing him to get what they can out of him and so are the poor. le is the guy that is keeping it going, he is the guy that has to pay the school taxes, the guy that has to pay the church, the guy that does not get any help when his kids have to go to bospital or whatever. I will admit that we are not doing enough, and I do not know if anybody can ever bring in a programme. You know, you can keep on increasing the wages but I do not think that is the answer to it. That only creates a vicious circle because if fifty cents goes on the hourly rate of pay then twenty cents goes on the can of beans, so that is just a vicious circle. I am aware of the working poor and I do not know if a programme will ever be brought in to help them . I would like to think that there are ways and means that the working your can be helped . And although one hon, member over there makes fun of -

.R. BRETT: or he does not exactly make fun but he does not understand the fify dollars entra that a person can receive. I made a statement here in the House the other day that there was no person La this Province who is suffering for the went of drugs becaus they cannot jurchase thereand that is true. I do not think that there is unybody in this Province who is really nungry, whether they are working poor or welfare or whatever. What I am saying and I am talking about the working poor, the man in the middle, if things get really tough for him I suppose he can always go to see his social worker And it is conceivable that a man could be making \$25,000 a year and get welfare- that is an actual fact - if the need exists and there is nobody else to fill a financial need then the government will step in. I am nappy that some members of the House recognize that we do have that group of people in the Province and in Canada, the working poor, and they are being squeezed to death. And I do not know how much longer they are going to put up with being squeezed because they are the ones that are really keeping it going.

The hon, member for Lewisports (Nr.White) mentioned something about visits to - no that was the member on this side of the House, vists to welfare offices. Well, I got around to most of the offices in the Province last year. I could not make all of them but probably I will get to the rest of them this Summer. I would much prefer to get into the communities rather than into the welfare offices. I spent ten years in welfare offices and I do not know how long these welfare officers can stand up but we used to say back in the days when I was at it that twenty years was the life of a welfare officer because you could not take it any longer than that. The fifty dollars extra - and I do not have the regulations with me but it is regulation 6 of the Social Assistance regulations.

MR. WHITE: Want a copy?

ER. BRETT:

No,I do not want it. It is easy for any member
to get up in this House and pick specific cases and say what they could
not get. Now what do you expect? There are several thousands of families
in this Province that have to live on welfare and it is conceivable that

.C. JRETT: with all these people getting assistance

from this department that somewhere along the line there is going to be the odd slip-up. Our social workers are not Gods; they make mistakes, of course they do. The hon, member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) gets up and he picks out one case who could not get the extra fifty dollars, but I can tell you about hundreds

MR. BRETT: of cases that are getting it, maybe thousands. So I do not feel one bit upset about the one person in the hon. member's district who could not get the extra fifty dollars. I say, if he could not get it then there was a good reason for it. More than likely, there was a good reason for it. And if the welfare officer was wrong I would assume - I understand he later got it - he changed his mind for some good reason, I suppose, and the person received his fifty dollars.

The Ombudsman: Again, I did not read in total the Ombudsman's report but I saw enough of it to know that there were quite a few letters, or whatever, cases brought to him about my department. Again, this goes back to what I just said, what do you expect where there are literally thousands of people in receipt of welfare? I know the frustrations of a person who is on welfare through no fault of his own. He is not getting enough to live on and he has gone to everyone, including the minister. He cannot get anything, then he goes to sort of the last resort, the Ombudsman, and that, I would say is the reason that he is getting so many letters and he will continue to get them. And I would say that is not only true in this Province, I would say that is true in every province in Canada.

Some mention was made of punishing people by taking them off long-term assistance and putting them on short-term assistance. Well, the hon. member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) indicated that my shadow, the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores), gave quite a speech which indicated how much he knew about the welfare system. Probably he does, but it is obvious that the hon. member for Lewisport knows absolutely nothing about it. Of course, I am not surprised at that; I do not know anything about T.V. and radio and he does.

We found it absolutely necessary

MR. BRETT: and I mentioned this in my opening remarks - it had a tremendous effect on lowering the case load - anybody who was on long-term assistance, that are usually people who are incapacitated for mental of physical reasons, we found that if they had any employment potential at all it was wise to see them every month and in order to do that we put them on shortterm assistance. If they can come to the office we will ask them to come. If they cannot, then we will go and visit them. But by having them on short-term assistance it is necessary for us to visit them at least once a month and in that way if there are any employment opportunities then we can work toward rehabilitating that person and getting them back into the labour market. And I think that is a good thing. Not only has our short-term case load decreased from almost 9,000 back in 1972, 1973 or something to 3,700 in February of this year, not only has there been that tremendous - almost 9,000 down to 3,700 over a period of five years or six years, and that is a tremendous decrease.

I might also say there has been a tremendous decrease in the long-term, the number of people on long-term assistance, and the reason is that we have taken them off long-term assistance, put them on short-term assistance, seen them every month and where possible got them into the labour field.

Common-law: I do not know if
we should discuss that here or not. The church, of course,
does not recognize a common-law union. The Department of
Social Services does in that if two people decide to live
common-law then the breadwinner becomes responsible for that
family. Now, is the hon. member for Lewisporte suggesting
that if one of my workers is even suspicious, he does not
have to be sure, if he is just suspicious that a couple are
living common-law and that one of them is on social assistance

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MR. BRETT: and the other one has an income, that we should not go in there and investigate and we should continue to let the taxpayers feed that family? Are you suggesting that?

MR. WHITE: No.

MR. BRETT: That is exactly what you are

suggesting.

MR. WHITE: No, I did not suggest that at

a11.

MR. BRETT: Well, I am very proud of my social workers, that they are trying to do something about this because I think it is unfair. If a man decides to live with a woman who has a family

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and he has an income, then by all means he is responsible for supporting that woman and her family, not the taxpayers of this Province. Now the reason that a lot of them end up before the Appeal Board is this, it is one of the most difficult things in the world to prove. We recognize that and we know when our social workers go in and try to prove common-law union, we know that nine times out of ten we are going to fail because, as I said, it is very, very difficult to prove it. And now this government -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Your time is up.

MR. C. BRETT: Give me one second, one minute. This government's policy is that we will permit the welfare recipients to take their lawyer which Legal Aid pays for, in to sit on the Appeal Board with them and of course that means we are losing more and more cases. But certainly I do not think the taxpayers of this Province should be paying for people who are living common law if they have other income.

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

MP. R. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, we had hoped after the excellent presentation made by the colleague for Carbonear (Mr. Moores) and then the number of fairly germane questions raised by my colleague for Levisporte (%r. White), we had really hoped that the minister would give us a few answers and he just had the opportunity for the last twenty minutes to do exactly that. Instead, of course, not surprisingly, we heard the usual partisan tirade that all good things began in 1972 and that before 1972 it was a shocking regime and nothing went right. And then beginning with the millennium in 1972, beginning with year one everything has gone right, no problems at all. And then when he took over, things moved from good to excellent to perfect. That is the usual thing we get from the minister. We are not at all surprised. We are dissappointed for the sake of the taxpayers who sent us here because we would like to have some answers. We would like to know whether in fact it is social assistance administration by television or whether it is by need. We would like to know whether the real decisions of the departmenta minister may dismiss individual cases. I will tell you the lady in Deer Lake, whom I did not first bring to public attention, she was forced to bring it to public attention herself because she had no other recourses left. The lady in Deer Lake would not at all agree with the minister that the individual case is not important. It is the individual cases that have to buy the groceries I say to the minister.

MR. F. WHITE:

That is right, the people!

MR. R.SIMMONS: All right? Mr. Chairman, if there is only one case of need that has not been adequately met, then there is a case too many. When you hear a minister who is responsible for the department of government that must have as its top priority humanity, it must have humanity -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Instead of arrogance.

MR. R. SIMMONS: - must have a feeling for the humanitarian concerns of people, must have a feeling for the basic humanitarian concerns of people; when you hear a minister get up and dismiss the individual case, "Oh, that is only a few cases here and there!" I do not care if it is only one case, Mr. Chairman; if it is only one case it still deserves a proper hearing. When I hear him dismiss the numbers of cases in the Ombudsman's report, I am a bit disillusioned, a bit disappointed I can understand, as he said that having gone through the system, having gone through the regional people, perhaps the deputy minister, then the minister, I can understand that it is a natural, logical progression for some people to say," well, I will try the Ombudsman". And people do it because they see him as a court of last resort. That is fine! But what the minister skated over, what he skated over is that of the sixty or seventy two cases that went before the Ombudsman, having seen the minister first , I presume if I can take his word, as he indicated a minute ago, what he skated over is that after these cases have seen him and then had seen the Ombudsman, the net result was that nearly half the cases were overturned. That suddenly when it became a matter that would be reported in a public document, then the minister was willing to listen. When it comes on television from Corner Brook, then he is willing to listen. When he sees that the Ombudsman is going to write it up in a document that will be available to the press, then

MR. R. SIMMONS:

The begins to listen, then he gets action. Now that is what is wrong with the system. That is what is rotten with the system, Mr. Chairman. When the operative criteria are Will we suffer a bad public image if we do not do something?

The operative criteria is not, Does this person need the fifty bucks?

Mr. Simmons: Does this person need some money from the taxpayers of the Province? That is not the question at all. The operative question is: If we do not do it, will the Ombudsman give us a black eye? If we do not do it, how will we look in the T.V. story? That is what is sad about it and that is what is wrong about it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the minister talks about the cases, the \$50 cases, the special allowance, we call them- I do not think there is any term on it other than additional social assistance. If the minister wants to get into a partisan argument on this one, if he wants to be on the defensive all the time, if he wants to continually take the attitude, to paraphase Scripture, "Can any good come from the Opposition?" - you hear him talk that there was never, never a sensible idea from this side of the House - would he not grant that perhaps just by accident, even by accident that once in a while we have a good idea over here and that perhaps he should respond to those ideas? But all we hear from him is the member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) knows nothing about social assistance, and somebody else has idea too foolish to You know, I would love to be as smart as he is. I would love to be as cocky, as confident as he is. I tell you what, Mr. Chairman, if I were I would hope I had more reason to be confident than he. If he wants to get partisan about it, Mr. Chairman, perhaps he will do the Committee a little favour.

MR. WHITE: Yes.

MR. SIMMONS: Would be agree to table, not the names -this will be the red herring they will bring in tonight that we want the names - No, we do not want the names, do you understand? Those even the minister understand what I am saying or will somehody over there explain it to him? I am not talking about names. I am asking will be table the totals by Provincial electoral district the totals of the amounts of additional assistance, these \$50 amounts? Will be table those by electoral districts?

MR, BRETT: No problem.

MR. SIMMONS: The minister says, "No problem". I heard that about the Rural Development grants four years ago and I am still waiting for them. I hope the minister this time will be a man of his word, because I predict, I predict what you will find is that some people in certain districts, Trinity North being one of them, which the minister happens to represent in the House, I predict that some districts will have a fairly large, whopping total, a fairly whopping total of those \$50 amounts.

MR. WHITE: Maybe not the highest (inaudible)

MR. SIMMONS: Because you see, Mr. Chairman, the minister has discretion on this particular issue. The minister will show in his figures that other districts, including -

MR. WHITE: We are asking you to look into it, that is all.

MR. SIMMONS:

- the district of Green Bay, had a sizable
number of these around August 1975, about the same time the minister
got a request from the member for that district to remove, to relocate
a welfare officer in Springdale -

AN HON. MEMBER: Ah, ha!

MR. SIMMONS: - and perhaps he would like to talk to us about that one.

MR. RIDEOUT: And 'Jerry Dinn' talks to us about Bell Island.

AN HON. MEMBER: And they talk about Bell Island.

MR. SIMMONS:

Now, Mr. Chairman, we can be partisan too if
that is what the minister wants. But what we would rather have
MR. RIDEOUT: 'Dinn' over there this two months flapping the report.

MR. SIMMONS:

— is a minister, Mr. Chairman, who was not so awfully busy putting down welfare recipients. He is so busy at it, he is so caught up in it, it is almost an obsession with him. If he were less busy with that and if he would display some basic humanity on the subject, if he would recognize that, contrary to what he thinks, all welfare recipients are not a bunch of rogues.

MR. WHITE: No they are not a bunch of rogues.

MR. SIMMONS: - in most cases they are people who through no fault of their own are on social assistance. And I would say to him,

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Chairman, we have some rogues who are welfare recipients just as we have some rogues who are businessmen, teachers, politicians, clergymen, housewives. The law of averages says that if you have a group as large as the total welfare recipient force in the Province you are going to have among them some con artists. But equally, that same law of averages says, you are going to have some con artist in the business world, in the political world. In any particular group of people we are going to have so many people who are

MR. SINMONS: intent on beating the system.

Fr. Chairman, I agree with the minister when he says that the rate of abuse is perhaps of the order of 2 per cent. I have no way of knowing whether it is two or seven or one-and-a-quarter, I do not know, but my perception from what I hear is that it is fairly low. That does not mean that the abuse should not be weeded out. The abuse must be weeded out. But, Mr. Speaker, it also should not mean that the entire framework, the entire mentality of the department should be built around weeding out abuses, and that, Mr. Chairman, I submit is very much the case right now. The mentality is geared more to the con artist approach to the welfare recipient than to the approach that perhaps there is somebody here who has a genuine need.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that brings me to the subject of what I call the mentality, or perhaps the attitude, of some of the welfare workers. I am aware, because I am aware of the forum in which I speak, that my remarks will be taken out of context and the minister at his next conference, probably over coffee or whatever, will inform his workers how this fellow Simmons has got something against all welfare workers. If I had the time I would eulogize many of them, most of them. But what I want to do instead is just address myself for a minute to the attitude of certain welfare workers, social workers. And I do not believe they can be completely blamed for the attitude about which I am going to speak in a minute. I believe they get a fair amount of that mentality from the kinds of things, the drivel we heard from the minister this evening, the attitude that all welfare recipients are a bunch of rogues, a bunch of con artists. If you hear that enough at conferences from your minister, whom you are trying to please for your own security, eventually you will begin to think it or eventually you will begin to at least overtly act on that particular premise. I will give you a case.

I had in my district a man in his late 60s - mid-60s perhaps. He had been on social assistance for anywhere from twelve to fourteen or fifteen years. And he was a legitimate case. He had a physical handicap that was quite severe - no question he should have been on long-term assistance. There was no question that tomorrow he was going to suddenly get off assistance and go back to work - that was not the issue

at all. The man was on long term assistance and would be as long as he lived until such time as he is eligible to receive a federal pension - no question about it. He had a daughter in Nova Scotia and decided to visit her. I understand when he first went, he went for about ten days. He subsequently got convinced by his daughter and the good time he was having in Halifax that perhaps he would stay over a few extra days and the visit went from ten days to two weeks to three weeks to two months and he stayed there about two and one-half months. He came to the Frovince and found out he had violated the regulations. Now notwithstanding his wife was still in Milltown with the youngsters, but since he legally was not living in the Province during that two and one-half month period he was not entitled to any social assistance, and not only that, got written a letter and told he had an overpayment. And when he came to me, I said, you know, 'This is so ridiculous, do not worry about it. I mean, there is obviously some misunderstanding here.' And then I went to talk to some people and I found there was no misunderstanding at all. They wanted the money back, and they wanted it back in no uncertain terms. Anyway, I advised the man to go to appeal. And we took the appeal before the Social Services Appeal Board, which I may say for any members who have any ideas along those lines, is a total waste of time, a complete waste of time, an absolute waste of time. The people on the board serve, as I understand it, in a volunteer capacity, or they did when I was before the board.

AN HON. MEMBER;

MR. SIMMONS: That may - but they are not full-time employees of the department is the point I make. They are outside people.

They may not be volunteers, but they are outside people. That is the point I want to make. The secretary to the board - and I hate to have to say this in a public forum, but I have said it in all the private forums I can and it seems to get no results -

NR. SIMMONS:

never in my life, never in all my
life have I seen a person with a mind so completely closed, shut
tight. We made an impression with the board, and I had the
distinct feeling from a comment that one of the members of the
board said to me during the recess that the case had a chance
of being overturned in the gentleman's favour. And then I saw
the employee of the department go to work on the board. Have you
ever seen group dynamics at work? You have never really seen
anything until you have seen that particular situation operate.
And I advise anybody who is thinking about going before the Social
Assistance Appeal Board not to waste their time under the present
circumstances, not to waste their time.

Now my suggestion for clearing up that matter, before going on, is that you ought to have a board which has no tentacles to the department at all. You give them the documentation and you say, "Here, make a decision." That is not what happens before that board at the present time: The decision is being made by one person who is not a member of the board at all.

Mr. Chairman, the man I talk about went before the board-or he went using me as his representative. He did not physically go before the board. He had his appeal turned down and he was told he had to pay the money. I think the amount was something of the order of \$600 or \$800, two and a half months, or whatever the case might have been, \$600 or \$800 at the time. He did not pay the money, by the way. He did not pay it. You know why he did not pay it? The only reason he did not pay it, he died before he got around to starting to pay it. Otherwise he would have paid it. He would have had to pay back that money. Is it not grotesque, is it not ridiculous?

Now if that is what the regulation says, if that is what it means, if that is a technical interpretation of the regulation, if it means that that fellows has to pay back that kind of money because

MR. SIMMONS: in his declining years, a man who could never work a day again in his life because of his physical condition, if he made the mistake of going off to visit his daughter while his wife stayed home and looked after the youngsters, you know, certainly Lord, Mr. Chairman, the regulations were not meant for that kind of situation.

Now the minister will dismiss that and he will say that is only one case. Yes, it is one case, but what hardship it would have inflicted on that family if they had to find that \$800 if he had lived!

Mr. Chairman, I said a moment ago I was just going to say a word about the attitude of the social worker. I get a fair number of complaints, comments from my constituents and from others who are on social assistance that they get fairly short treatment at the hands of certain welfare officers. And again the danger here is that my comments will be taken in a general way. I presmble by saying that the welfare officers are like any other group, there are going to be some rotten eggs in the basket. There are bound to be. There are bound to be some people who should never be welfare officers, like there are some people who should never be teachers or politicians or whatever. And I say it in that context. But there are some people who, perhaps they are living proofs of the Peter principle, they have reached their level in incompetence and in their particular case it is in a welfare office in some of the small communities around this Province. And they are really taking it out on people. They are really being rough beyond justification to those people and that is where I come back to what I said earlier, that while a part of the department's role must be to ensure that there is not anymore abuse of the system than possible, there is always going to be some but they must assure that it is kept to a minimum. While that is part of their role, the larger

IR. SIMMONS: part of their role has to be directed towards the question, Is it possible this man and this woman sitting in front of me at my desk now really need the money? And I find from the feedback I get that too often the welfare officer operates on the first premise, that the fellow sitting in front of me is a crook anyway and he is trying to get one over on me so I am going to get one over on him before he gets one over on me. That is sad but I have to say it because it is true in a number of cases.

Mr. Chairman, just in cluing up, there is one detail that I want to bring to the minister's attention. He talked about short-term assistance. I can understand the justification

MR. SIMMONS: for having the recipient come regularly on a monthly basis, and the minister gave the justification that in most cases it might be a person whom you need to see every month to assess his availability or his suitability to go to work - that kind of thing.

Now again where you get into the problem is with the exception to that, where you get a lady in one of the communities in my district who called me only in the last week or so, who tells me she is a widow - I am sorry, she is not a widow, she is a mother with a husband who is again incapacitated, but for some reason he is not incapacitated in any permanent way, I think he is going to be okay at some point to get back into the labour force, but certainly not in the next month, or two or three months. Now the welfare officer is in Burgeo. I am talking about a community down the coast, François in this particular case. Now the welfare officer has to get aboard the boat and physically go to Francois and hand the cheque to that particular individual. He knows and he is a fairly sensible fellow, the fellow you have in Burgeo - he knows full well the circumstances in that family, that the husband is certainly not going to be ready to go to work this week or this month or next month. Motwithstanding, because the letter of the law requires him to do it in this particular way, he does it. And I am not blaming him, perhaps he has no discretion in the matter. But certainly in that kind of case he should have some flexibility to stick the cheque in the mail. And I understand at the moment he does not have that kind of flexibility. The consequence is that that particular family got a cheque on the first week of a given month, I think the first week of February, and they were due the next cheque on the first week of March and they got it about three and one-half weeks late. They got it about the last week in March. I just put that to the minister because I can understand the reason for the rule, but perhaps there is the need for a little more flexibility in that particular area where the guy should be able to use discretion. He can see that because of weather or commitments he cannot get to François for a month or three weeks, whatever the case may be, and he should have the discretion to put it in the mail or otherwise have it delivered to the recipient. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

IR. CHAIRMAN: (Dr. Collins) The hon. the Minister of Rehabilitation

MR. HICKEY:

and Recreation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I had a few things in mind, Mr. Chairman, that I wanted to talk about. I am going to leave them for the time being because my hon, friend from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) has raised a couple of issues which I think have to take precedent over anything else, two very serious areas, Mr. Chairman - one, the matter of special needs, which to a fair degree the minister has some control over and which comes to us, I believe, as a result of block funding or the flexibility to be able to introduce such programmes as special needs, over and above the regular amount that a family or individual is entitled to under existing regulations. And, Mr. Chairman, the suggestion - and I hope I read my hon. friend wrong - but I got the distinct impression from what he said that there was some question in his mind as to the manner in which this programme was being implemented and the question of partisanship entered the whole area. Surely, Mr. Chairman, my hon. friend is not telling this House that a minister, or indeed, an official, from the highest in terms of the minister to the lowest person on the scale in Social Services in any part of this Province, will cause the dispersement of public funds on the sole basis of providing heat, clothing, food or the basic necessities of life on a partisanship basis? My hon, friend says that has happened. Mr. Chairman, I am not sure that this House has not gotten into an area where, you know, hon. members are in a kind of suspicion syndrome. Do they question now everything? Because, Mr. Chairman, this is the last straw.

Mr. Hickey: If anyone is going to try to convince anyone in this Province that when you get right down to basic food, shelter, clothing, heat, someone is going to determine or have the slightest thought as to what their politics are before the dispersements, Mr. Chairman, I am not prepared to accept that, And I say that that is a most serious inditement for any hon. member either to make, to allude to, to infer, and I would suggest to my hon. friend for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) that if he has any information to this effect, Mr. Chairman, he should table it. That is the kind of information that indeed should be tabled around here and not some of the junk that we have seen in the past few days. That is a complete infrigement on a basic right, Mr. Chairman, which is as old as time, a basic right notwithstanding what one's politics, their religion, their race or anything else, the basic things to preserve life. My hon. friend is going to suggest to me that that is now done on a partisanship basis nonsense, Mr. Chairman.

There are things which are not always so clear or certainly do not appear to be so clear in terms of understanding. It is very easy, Mr. Chairman, for one to fall into the mistake of assuming that because of what one's politics are, or because that hon. member may know the politics of that person, and might well know the politics of the officer, even if you have to go to that extreme where a welfare officer has politics which are known and I do not know of anyone who certainly makes them known in the field - as a former minister, Mr. Chairman, I can say that I at no time ever in the thousands upon thousands of cases that I came in contact with, never was this matter ever a question, because, Mr. Chairman, let us face it I do not think no time, Mr. Chairman, no time a

MR. BRETT: And your years in the field.

MR. HICKEY:

- plus my years in the field, as my hon, colleagues pointed out, I think that no one in this House, Mr. Chairman, without exception, whatever our politics are, surely no member of this House will disagree with me when I say that if there is a case where that can be proven then it is time to clean her out.

Mr. Hickey: Now the onus is on the hon. gentleman who made that statement to produce some evidence to that effect, because that cast a reflection. And, Mr. Chairman, maybe this is what this House is coming to in recent time; somebody gets up and they just wave things across, they make statements, Mr. Chairman, which reflect, in this particular case, on hundreds of people who obviously are innocent, absolute, if one can assume that the hon. gentleman has evidence on one.

Mr. Chairman, then he went on - I am not quarrelling with the hon. gentleman if he has got the evidence and if he has got the proof. All I say to him is he should produce it. If he does not want to produce it on the Table of the House, he should take it to the minister and I will guarantee him that my colleague will deal with that very swiftly. This Administration does not nor would not condone this kind of nonsense, this kind of rank discrimination that my hon. friend goes very close to suggesting.

My hon. friend for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Simmons) went on a step further in describing a case so far as the Appeal Board system was concerned. And I am not going to quarrel with anything he said because he indicated he was involved in it, went through it from start to finish, representing his client, and it is certainly not my place to question that. I am not going to for one second suggest that anything the hon. gentleman said is wrong or incorrect. All I say to him is that surely that matter could be taken to the minister. Was it taken to the minister? If so, what was the decision? And have we got all of the facts of the case?

Because, Mr. Chairman, when my hon. friend got into that particular case, to me it seemed

MR. HICKEY: that it bordered on, or was an extension of the statement, the other very serious statement, of partisanship in the disbursement of welfare funds. And I just say it again, Mr. Chairman, that is unthinkable and surely there is nobody in this House can possibly believe that. There must be a misunderstanding, there must be a lack of information, there must be some breakdown of communications somewhere. If anyone has got to arrive at the conclusion that we now have a system which is capable of producing, I say, Mr. Chairman, and I emphasize, even one person in the field charged with the responsibility of disbursement of funds and armed with all kinds of authority, as a welfare worker is, then we should get that person out of the field very quickly, if there is such a person there.

A classic example, Mr. Chairman, of how figures can be confused is a case that my hon. friend from Carbonear mentioned, and I did not get all the figures but I think he said something, or he ended up by saying that something like \$16 was left a widow or a lady to provide - well anyway some small amount of money, if it was not \$16. He made some reference to \$16 and I recall he related it to purchasing of dog food or something or other, how one would feed a dog.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say to
my hon. friend, the whole system of incentive is very clear. That
is a form of rehabilitiation, which I know something about. I
had the honour and privilege to introduce it in 1972 because
up to that time, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Rehabilitation
and Social Services was but a name in terms of rehabilitation.
There was no rehabilitiation, not one iota. It was lip-service
that was given that word, nothing more. I do not care,
Mr. Chairman, if this administration had never done anything
else to improve the lot of the individual in this Province,

MR. HICKEY: the job that was done and is currently being done in the rehabilitation area, the employment opportunities area, by the people in the field of social services, commends itself and this administration can be truly proud of that one area alone. If we did nothing else we would justify our existence in the field of social welfare just on that one point.

My hon. friend, for his information, there is something wrong with the figures that he has. Because people who keep boarders and the money or the earnings they get from boarders, as that relates to the welfare rates in terms of the incentive programme and even before the incentive programme was introduced - and, Mr. Chairman, those rates have not changed even back to the time when I was minister in '72 - and that is that, just to use a couple of figures, if a lady, for example, has two boarders who pay her \$100 a month each for a total of \$200, the charge that is made against that lady in terms of income is \$40. It is twenty per cent of the amount of board that is paid, that is classified as income. That would be \$40. In the case of that person who was getting \$198 social assistance, the incentive programme allows her to keep first of all the first \$30, now she had \$40 earnings from her boarders, she is allowed to keep the first \$30, that has nothing to do with her allowance, that leave \$10, she has \$10 left, you take half of that, which is \$5 and you take that from \$198 you get \$193. So there was something out of whack with those figures.

Mr. Chairman, our incentive programme, or our rehabilitation effort is one which was introduced

Mr. Hickey: and geared to the providing an incentive to our people to leave the welfare role and to leave it, Mr. Chairman, not in one fell swoop, not just by a decision overnight—that does not happen. People are human. It is not so easy if people are unfortunate enough to be in receipt of assistance for five years to all of a sudden make the adjustment or make the transition of going from total unemployment, total dependency, into a position. I know it is done. I am not saying it is not done, Mr. Chairman. God blesseth those people who do it. But the ones we have got to be concerned about and the ones we were concerned about are the ones who could not do it. And that is where the employment opportunities division, the whole incentives programme, the real meaning to rehabilitation, that is where it all started and that is why it all started.

Mr. Chairman, I made a note of, as I was listening to my hon. friend for Carbonear (Mr. R. Moores) and for Lewisporte (Mr. White) as they extolled the plight of the welfare recipient, and nobody quarrels, Mr. Chairman, God help us if we ever quarrelled with the right, indeed the necessity of the individual who through no fault of their own cannot provide the necessities of life. The state has an absolute responsibility to indeed provide it, and provide it to the maximum amount they can.

But, Mr. Chairman, when we start talking about the plight of the welfare recipient, I thought nobody was going to say anything about that other area which has been referred to, and properly so, the working poor. Mr. Chairman, I know there are problems in relation to individual cases. Surely my colleague the minister will never say that all of his staff are gold plated, they are perfect, they make no mistakes. How in the name of fortune could you ever employ the number of people that he has to employ, working under the conditions they have to work under the pressures, the tension, and all the rest-being human, as they are, without making some mistakes? You do not hear us, Mr. Chairman, making stupid statements like that, nor do you hear my colleague. But, Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Hickey: what has to be said is that the number of mistakes or the number of bad decisions are far, far less, I suggest to you, than the percentage of abuse in the welfare system, and my colleague just pointed out that that was something like 2 per cent. And I say to this House tonight that the number of bad decisions or the number of improper interpretations of the law, the rules, the regulations, is below that 2 per cent.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot conceive that we have anything but a very competent group of field workers in the field of social services today. We have more BSWs, more MSWs, I am not suggesting that is the answer to all ills, but, Mr. Chairman, if we are to say that there is no benefit in attending university and graduating with a BSW then we had better start taking a second look at the university and indeed all of the money we put in there. But as we all know we do not say that nor do we believe that. Education is the answer to a great many of our problems, and certainly it was the answer in making more efficient, more qualified our social workers, our welfare workers.

Mr. Chairman, the working poor, those people who are in that category, have a very serious problem, and it has been outlined in great detail by my colleague. Suffice it for me to say, Sir, is that I would suggest to my hon. friends that apart from the normal increase or cost of living increase that is provided to the regular welfare recipients, that

MR. HICKEY. before we start introducing any new programmes for those who are full-time or most of the time in receipt of assistance, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we must look at this other very significant area, the area where people still have to pay everything, where they are collected from as if they have lots of money, they escape nothing, but they are borderline, Mr. Chairman. And I will tell this committee, Mr. Chairman, that there are people in that area much worse off than those who are in receipt of assistance full-time and who do not work or who cannot work or what have you. And they are working every day. They are getting up every morning at 6:30 A.M. or 7:00 A.M. and driving long distances to work. 'For what, Mr. Chairman?' you might ask, 'For what?' when they know of case after case after case, thousands of them, hundreds of them at least, where they are better off than those people who are working. So, Mr. Chairman, that cannot be overlooked. I know my colleague is greatly concerned about it.

It has to be said too, Mr. Chairman, when we say that, you know, my hon. friends say, 'What was done in the last number of years?' Well, good heavens! My colleague gave some figures which show some of the things that were done in terms of rates. And this Province, Mr. Chairman, does have some limitations when it comes to finances. I do not think anyone would quarrel with raising the rates for those unfortunate ' people who are in receipt of assistance to the highest level, because no one quarrels, Mr. Chairman, surely nobody quarrels with the right of that individual who through no fault of his own is unemployed or in receipt of assistance. No one quarrels with the amount of money absolutely that is required. As much as we could possibly afford to pay them, we should indeed pay them. But there are limitations. But it is not enough to just say, Mr. Chairman, that, you know, there are problems within the system. I think one has to say too that there is a limit to how often or how far you can increase rates in terms of welfare. You must keep in mind the minimum wage and it is on a par with the minimum wage now, at least so I understand. And if you are going to push welfare rates beyond the minimum wage then you had better take a look at your whole system because you are telling people that it is going to pay them to be on welfare as opposed to going to work.

MR. HICKEY: And then you have to say to yourself,

'Well, how far can we push the minimum wage? What will that do to

industry and small business?' So it is just not that simple, Mr.Chairman.

I would like to hear some hon. gentlemen opposite tell us the answer to

that one, because that is a very pertinent question. Why do they not

address themselves to a) the minimum wage - how far that should go, and

also how far the welfare rates should be away from that minimum wage?

What kind of a gap should there be between the two?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Young) The hon. the member for St. George's.

Mr. Chairman, I think that the proper test for that is for the whole works of us to see if we can live on the minimum wage or on what the social assistance recipients are living on.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MRS. MacISAAC: I think that may be the test. I do not think I could do it and I do not think the minister could do it.

I certainly do not feel that the amount of money that welfare recipients are receiving is enough, not with the cost of living today. There is no way in the world that I would even want to think about having to live on what they are living on. But that is not my point. That was just in reply to what the minister said.

I only have a couple of concerns, and one of them is the minister mentioned young, single people who are able to go away to work, to the Tar Sands or wherever. Now it is fine to say young people can pack up and go to the Tar Sands or go to Ontario or go anywhere else where there may be work, but how do they get there? A lot of them have just come out of school and they have been

: NS .icIS:AC: sitting around and not earning any money because there are definitely no jobs so there is no money. Their parents are on low income, some of them are on Social Assistance - if not Social Assistance, very low income or unemployment-and those young people just do not have the money to get there. Now they have gone to Canada Manpower with the hope that they could probably get a ticket somewhere to look for a job, but unless they have a job or a definite interview Canada Manpower will not look at them and will not send them there. So by question to the minister is it is easy to say that they can go and are in the position to go away and maybe they will come up with a job if they do happen to go, but if the minister's department is not prepared to give them the money to go there, how are they supposed to get there to look for the jobs? That is one question. My other concern is for people who are on Social Assistance and who live quite a distance from the Social Assistance office. If you happen to live in Corner Brook or St. John's or some town where there is a welfare office or Cocial Services office you are in a good location; you just have to walk down the street, walk into the office and pick up your chaque. But if you live thirty-five or forty miles away from that office as is the case in my district, for instance, people from the Robinsons area, and I will go as far as the Lighlands, they have to get into Stephenville Crossing to pick up that cheque and that amounts to about forty-five miles that they have to travel to get their cheque. They usually end up paying a cab to get in there to the welfare office, and they may have to wait a couple of hours if they do not have an appointment or if it is fairly crowded they still may have to wait a couple of hours even if they have an appointment. So then they have to get back to the Highlands. By the time they get back with that cheque they probably have about \$40.00 gone in taxi fares because most of them do not have cars. This is a hardship on them and when you have to whack \$30.00 or \$40.00 off that cheque in order to get into the office to pick it up that is \$30.00 or \$40.00 that you do not have for your family for that month And when you have only got a couple

. SS LEISAAC: of hundred dollars coming in, 5200 or \$300 at the most, \$30 or \$40 is certainly going to be missed and it is going to impose a hardship on that family. I am wondering if there is not a way that maybe the social workers who visit the areas once or twice a week could probably deliver the cheques in areas such as this or maybe mail them. There must be something that can be done to save the \$30 or \$40 that is certainly needed for the children. I know of one case in particular where there is just a couple, a married couple, and the gentleman was unfortunate enough through surgery to end up in a wheelchair because he had damage done to his spine, and his wife has to leave him home in the wheelchair or pay a babysitter and travel to Stephenville Crossing to pick up that cheque. I do not really think that that is necessary and I am wondering if the minister can make some arrangements or probably contact his offices. Now I have no complaints whatever about the Social Services offices in my area, I have to say that the officers are very, very good and anytime that I have had occasion to approach them with problems I have gotten very good satisfaction and you have to speak as you find. They are very, very helpful and maybe I am fortunate to be in a district where we have good social workers. These are the two things that I am mainly concerned about and that is young people and would go to other parts of the country to look for work if they had the money to get there. Canada Manpower will not look at them. Will Social Services help them? I know Social Services will help them if

they are accepted into the Armed Forces.

MRS. MCISSAC: I had occasion only a couple of weeks ago to call the minister's department because of the fact that there were three young men from St. George's who were accepted into the Armed Forces but had no money to get there. So they got the money from Social Services on a loan basis and they have to pay it back. But the cheques are one concern and young people getting to job sites is the other one. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. DINN:

Mr. Chairman, I do not very

often get up in the House of Assembly to speak on estimates

of other ministers' departments, but I think this

particular department, being such a human department as it

is, behooves everyone to net up and say a few words about what

they think and feel, and maybe listen to other hon. members

as they go through their particular problems that they have.

The hon. member for St. George's (Mrs. McIssac) just got up

and mentioned two specific ones and I am sure the minister

if given an opportunity will address himself to those

problems.

One of the areas, Mr. Chairman, that I would like to talk about in the minister's department is the community development programme. Now the minister last year had, as I understand it, some \$3 million for this programme. It involved about 150 projects and it also involved people who had been on social assistance who were brought back into the work force, and the total I believe was somewhere around 1,700 people. This kind of thing has to be commented upon because these are the kinds of things that I feel the department should become even more involved in.

I remember one particular project that was done under this programme. The minister and myself went out to have a look at the project and it involved

MR. DINN: the water system in Phillips Head.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I happen to know that down in my department when we do a water and sewer system or a water system it sometimes costs millions of dollars, but the minister through his social workers out around Phillips Head got some people involved_ I believe it was twelve, or thirteen, or fourteen people to build a water system and put a water system in for the community. He agreed under this programme to spend upwards of about \$38,000. He came down to my department and said, "Would you participate in this programme with me and supply some monies for materials so that these people could do the water system?" I said, "Well, how much money are you talking about?" He said, "I believe that the engineers have figured out that it is going to cost somewhere around \$18,000." And I said, "It sounds like a very good idea to me and I will see what I can do. " And we got together and put about - I think we anticipated about \$54,000 and it came out to \$54,000 or \$55,000 when it was finished. It was something that has to be mentioned in this House because it is just one area in which I feel the minister has to be encouraged to do more.

Now this water system: There was a little river about a mile and-a-half up into the woods, they put a little dam across that river so that they had a good level in there, they had it checked out by the Department of Health and everything was very good and the twelve people or so got together with picks and shovels and they started there a mile and-a-half or so to cut the trees. There was hardly enough room to swing a good pickaxe but they cut the row of trees all the way down through the woods and pickaxed their way from that little dam and laid the pipe and put in a water system.

I talked to the people out there in Phillips Head on the wharf and I walked all the distance

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MR. DINN:

just to have a look at what

had happened,

Mr. Dinn: what had gone on here, There were some widows in the community who, when the waterline went by their houses, did not know how they were going to get hooked up because they certainly could not put in their own piping and the guy next door, the neighbour, or the neighbour down the road came along and he said, "Well, I will hook your's up, Ma'am", he says. "And", he says, "we will see if we can get water to you." And that day there were some ladies in the community washing clothes in that water system and hanging out their clothes and talking about what a wonderful thing it was, what a wonderful community project it was, and how the whole community seemed to get together on that project and do something for themselves.

There was one young gentleman -I cannot remember his name, but if I saw him I guess the name would come back to me -saying to me that he was on social assistance for some twelve years, and he said, "That first cheque that came in was mine", he said. "I worked for it". And he was really proud of that cheque. And I said, "You had a good time Friday night." And he said, "No", he said, "not with that cheque I did not." He said, "I will have that cheque for a good long while." And that is the kind of programme that we got to get on to. That is the kind of programme that not very many people on this Island know is going on. It was \$3 million, and this year we have something like a total budget of about \$66 million, and that programme again is going forward and I believe they have \$2.5 million or \$3 million again. And I can assure the minister that if he has any other projects like the project that went on last year in Phillips Head he is but to down to my department and I will do whatever I can to see to it that these kinds of things are done because, Mr. Chairman, that is one of the things that makes me kind of proud, People who are social assistance, we sometimes get the idea that they are written off, and they are not written off. And the minister through that kind of a programme is going to bring more of these people, make them the proud Newfoundlanders that they were, and bring them back into the labour force and give them

Mr. Dinn: the kind of encouragement that they need.

Now we have heard too long in this debate tonight, and I sat down and listened to hon. members opposite_I listened to the hon. the member for St. George's (Mr. McIsaac) whom I have to compliment for her fine speech, because she brought problems into this House, and she should be bringing these problems in a little more, we should be discussing these kinds of community and social problems rather than discussing the things that we often hear in this House, a comment from the hon. member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) tonight, "the helicopter kid." And how is that going to help the social assistance people in this Province? Comments like 'discrimination', 'abuses'. These are not the kinds of words that we need to be using in this House. We should be talking about the problems of the people of this Province and solving some of the problems.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Now, Mr. Chairman, I sat here tonight and

I listened to all hon. members opposite and I would respectfully request
that they listen to me just for a change, that they sit in their seats in
silence. I do not know if it is even a rule, it is just a common,
gentlemanly thing that we like to see happen in this House of Assembly.

The kind of thing that we should be doing a little more listening
instead of butting in and cutting in and making snide remarks. Mr.

Chairman, the day for that should be gone. We have had our days -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. DINN: - and weeks of that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

The hon. minister speaking has indicated indirectly that he would like to be heard in silence, and I would ask that that rule be adhered to.

The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

MR. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope I do not have to call upon the protection of the Chair again because we do have things to say in this House, and I think they should be said, and

Mr. Dinn: we should all be given an opportunity to say them.

But I say this year, Mr. Chairman, the total budget of this department is \$66.5 million or thereabouts, and that is quite an amount of money to spend. Twenty-six of it, by the way, and we have to give credit where credit is due, comes from the federal government, Uncle Ottawa.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Comes from Ottawa?

MR. DINN: That is right, the federal government.

Forty or more from the Province, and I do not know if we can really afford that kind of money. But if the kind of money is spent on the kind of programmes that the hon. minister and I witnessed out in Phillips Head, then I have no objection to spending \$2.5 million or \$3 million on that. And if we could increase social assistance a little more along with these community development programmes, I think we would be doing something that should be done because the meager existence that some of these people have to go through in this Province is something that we cannot, we should not always be proud of. I hear some comments by people in communities that they are getting enough, and they should be rousted out and made get out and work and that kind of thing. Those that can work should work if they can get a job, but there are some people in this Province that cannot work.

Now this community development programme,

by the way, I believe - and the minister will correct me if I am wrong - but I believe that these people are paid something like \$4.20 an hour, and if they are on

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) close.

MR. DINN: Well, it is pretty close to that.

social assistance they get \$2.50. I believe that is the maximum.

But it gives them incentive, anyway, for people to get out and do something, And when they do something like providing a basic service like water in a community, I think they are to be commended. I think that if the people in the press want to get a good story, want to see a community that was in action last year, they should go to Philip's head, take a few pictures of the water system and get off this kick that we all seem to have been on in the Province lately of using words like 'abuses' and 'discrimination' and 'pork barrelling', the same kinds of comments that were used during my estimates, Mr. Chairman, and they were refuted; and the document was placed on the table of the House and it did not get half the publicity that the words that were used in describing some of the things in my estimates got the day prior to that. And, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to dwell too long on this, but somehow in this House of Assembly we have to get back to reason. We have to get away from the partisan; the minister skated over, 'rogues', 'law of averages: What we should get back to in this House of Assembly is some kind of a law of decency. Mr. Chairman, the framework to weed out abuses - there is a book on abuses in this Province, and it was not this Minister of Social Services that it was written about.

AN HON. MEMBER: I knew we would soon have quotations.

MR. DINN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I will allow the hon.
minister to answer some of the questions that were put forth by some of the
hon. members opposite and also over here. And we should spend a little more
time in discussing the issues of this Province rather than discussing that
kind of garbage.

MR. NEARY: The RCMP will write a new -

The hon, the member for Baie Verte - Thite Bay.

VE. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, having listened to that scenario -

IR. NEARY: If you are waiting for the Minister of Justice (inaudible).

IR. DIAN: (Inaudible) like ne

did before.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (Mr. Young) Order, please!

MR. RIDEOUT:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. minister who just took his seat begged the protection of the Chair all the while he was speaking and, of course, as I was about to say, he is one of the worst offenders in the House. And, of course, he leaves the House in the same way that he has left it many other times, huffing and puffing.

Mr. Chairman, to be quite truthful,

I was sort of warming to some of the things that the hon. minister was
talking about. I think the first five or ten minutes of his remarks made
a lot of sense, especially his remarks regarding the community development
programme, or whatever it is. But as usual, the minister had to get in
his few political digs before he took his seat and sort of detracted from
the remarks that he had.

There are two or three things that I want to bring to the minister's attention while I have the opportunity.

Mr. Chairman, I could take the twenty minutes that are allotted to me and talk about social assistance recipients not receiving enough money. It would be easy to do that and it is true, but the field that I find the most heartbreaking as far as social assistance is concerned in this Province is in housing to social assistance recipients who are on social assistance through no fault of their own. That is the field that I want to say a few words about, and that is the field that I find most disheartening in parts of my district and other parts of the Province that I have the privilege to visit.

Mr. Chairman, I have seen social assistance recipients in this Province living in housing - and I do not care whether the Minister of Municipal Affairs likes the words or not - but I have seen them living in housing that I would think twice about whether I would put an animal in it. Now that is not exaggeration. You can say, Mr. Chairman, that we have given them housing before and they have abused it. Well, maybe they have, and maybe there is a role for the social workers or some

MP. RIDEOUT: other social assistance agency in this Province to play in educating those people in how to look out for real property and so on.

.T.RIDEOUT: And I have seen people who have become entrapped in bureaucratic red tape spending months and months and Winters and Winters entwined in the bureaucratic red cape trying to get some decent housing for themselves and their families. In most instances, Mr. Chairman, that has not been people on able-bodied relief, that has been people who are on Social Assistance because they have no choice and these are the people that I am most concerned about and these are the people that I want to talk for a few minutes about tonight. I notice in the budget that there is \$52 million to be paid out this year in Social Assistance and I would assume that that includes all forms of Social Assistance, money paid out for housing renovations and so on. I would like for the minister when he gets a chance to speak next to attempt to break it down for us. We know how many Social Assistance recipents there are in the Province, let us know how many dollars are being spent, how many dollars are exactly being spent on removating and repairing houses so that they are fit to live in.

If, Chairman, I have seen so many houses in my district where snow blows in through the windows, and where rain leaks through the roof and blows in through the eaves, and where wind blows in through the basement windows and blows out the furnaces. I have taken then to the social workers, and the recipents themselves have taken then to the social workers and we still do not have any relief. I understand the regulations. The regulations say that the department is responsible for making the home water resistant and—what is the other word?

Waterproof.

RIDEOUT: Waterproof -

MR.NEARY: Watertight and windproof.

AL RIDEOUT: Water tight and wind proof. That is exactly

what it says.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (H. Young) Order, please! I would like the hon, gentleman to

my left to permit the hon, member to speak without interference.

MR.RIDEOUT: Mr.Chairman, Lidid not even hear them.

Lust be made watertight and windproof. Now when you have a situation where the wind coming through the basement blows out the furnace, I would not call that windproof, Mr. Chairman. You cannot get anything done that the basement windows and the recipent and the family who are living there are a widow and her children. Certainly it is long-term assistance. Then you have cases where you go in and walk into the upstairs and they will take you in and show you and you see the water and the mould on the wall, that is not water-tight.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know, and this is why I am interested in the minister telling us exactly how many dollars are being spent in proportion to the Social Assistant budget on housing for those people, those people who have no choice but to be on Social Assistance. I am not talking about able-bodied relief, I am talking about those people that cannot help themselves.

Now that is one part of the argument. The part, Mr. Chairman, is that the minister's department has some sort of programme ongoing with the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation and the intention, I have no doubt, of the programme is a good one; to provide adequate housing for those people on long-term assistance who need it. After your get through the bureaucratic red tape and after a couple of years, if you are lucky, you may end up getting a home for a Social Assistant recipent. But lo and behold! We went through the rates here today depending on, one adult \$180 per month; two adults, no children \$243, two adults and two children \$267 and so on, we have been through the rates already this evening and, lo and behold, what are they bringing out to those people, Mr. Chairman? I have seen three of them put in Roddickton last Fall, three beautifully built homes by Atlantic Design of believe it is out in Stephenville, three beautifully built homes brought down to Roddickton on the Morthern Peninsula equipped with electric heat. Now who is going to pay the bill? They cannot get extra funds, Mr. Chairman, for fuel allowances because that was done away with many years ago. I think you can get a few dollars extra if you live on the Labrador coast but you cannot get it in Roddickton, you

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T. T. RIDEOUT: close it around down under, put the house up on top of it, set it up with electric heat in it and they are rot getting enough money to keep body and soul alive let alone pay, I suppose on the average,\$75.00, \$80.00 or \$100.00 electricity bill, probably \$120.00 a month with the cost of electricity today. They would be much better off if they had some sort of heating equipment in it that could utilize wood and oil or something of that nature. At least they could balance out the cost of heating that type of home. But, no, ir. Chairman, the great brains, the great bureaucratic brains that we have at work in this Province to service the people insist that you bring your home down to give to a poor long-term social assistant recipient equipped with electric heat and then expect them to pay the bill after. I would suspect that you will find some of those homes, I would suspect that right now you will find some of those people have their electricity disconnected. They cannot pay the bill. They cannot even come close to paying the bill. And that is what we give them.

Now, Mr. Chairman, my colleague for
Burgeo - Bay d' Espoir (Nr. Simmons) made some references to the appeal
process and I am not going to waste the time of the Committee by
rehashing what he had to say but I do want to say this my experience
with appeal process before the Department of Social Assistance Appeal
Board is that you are doomed even before you start. You are doomed
even before you start! I have taken unemployment insurance appeal
cases, for example, to the Appeal Committee and then I have taken a couple
of cases right through to the umpire who is a judge, I believe, of the
Circuit Court of Canada. At least you have a chance. At least you
arguing before a person who is neither prejudiced to one side or the
other and I have won one of the two cases, by the way, that I have taken
before him. But in this particular Social Assistance Appeal Board you
are shot even before you start. I have appealed decisions of the district

IR. T. RIDEOUT: administrator to the field officer and to the Appeal Committee and there is absolutely no change. As far as I am concerned it is just one bureaucratic bunch backing up the decision that was already made in the beginning.

MIS. MCISAAC:

Kangaroo courts.

ME. T. RIDEOUT:

Kangaroo courts. You are shot even before you start. So, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that the minister very seriously consider setting up an appeal process in his department that has some meaning to it, that will at least not be prejudiced from the beginning against the poor ordinary recipient of social assistance, set it up something like they have in the unemployment insurance commission, or set it up - MR. BRETT:

It is.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: It is not, Mr. Minister.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is not.

MR. T. RIDEOUT: My friend from Burgeo - Bay d' Espoir

(Mr. Simmons) gave the account of the Secretary of that Appeal Committee and I could rehash his words again but I will not because it has already been done. Set it up, I would suggest, something like the unemployment insurance commission, something like Revenue Canada where you want to get a question of entitlement for insurable earnings, something of that nature where at least you are dealing with a body of people who are not - well, in my particular case I can only say 100 per cent of the time who have told the line of the decision that was made and I feel that the appeal process was usefess right from the beginning.

Now in closing I just want to mention the Community Development Project that the minister has on -

an experience of the second se

AN HON. MEMBER: Employment.

Yes, employment opportunities projects
that the minister has ongoing in his department. To be positive, I think
it is an excellent programme, I would hope that the minister in co-operation
with other departments, the Department of Municipal Affairs and Rousing for
example, maybe the Department of Tourism, would be able to initiate a number
of those projects in various parts of the Province. The Minister of Municipal

IR. I. RIDEOUT: Affairs talks about the water system in Phillips Head . I think that is an excellent example of where that type of programme can work. It can be done in many other parts of the Province if the minister could convince his colleagues to give him the dollars in his department and then of course have some matching dollars in other departments. We could go a long way and, Mr. Chairman, I would even go so far as to say tonight, and I do not care whether it is politically popular or not because I happen to beleive it, I would go so far as to say that we are going to have to take a new direction in this Province when it comes to, especially, able bodied relief. We are going to have maybe to think more in terms of those community projects where we can get people to build water systems because they need them and pay them to do it and they are doing a service for their community and they are not just drawing the back and sitting back on their ass in the meantime. I would suggest that is the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY:

Good Tory philosphy!

MR. RIDEOUT:

I do not care.

to the taxpayers.

MR. RIDEOUT: if it is Tory philosophy or Socialism or NDPism or Liberalism, I happen to believe in it and that is it. So I would hope that the minister would do more of that type thing and you could put a water system into a place like Smith's Harbour then, whereas if you are ever going to convince the Department of Municipal Affairs to do it you will be in the year 3000. But if you did it under this type of programme it could be done, the community would receive a service, If there are people there drawing social assistance they would not be drawing it and doing nothing, they would also be doing a service for their community. I think that is the direction we have to go in. I think it is a good programme, I would encourage the minister to keep it going and I would encourage his colleagues to help him fund it so that those type of projects can be carried on.

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

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, I did get some good,

constructive criticism and I thank the Opposition for it. Let

me say at the outset that as Minister of Social Services I have

a responsibility to the indigent people of this Province but I

also want to make it very clear that I also have a responsibility

One of the Opposition members talked at some length about unmarried mothers and our refusal to set them up in apartments and the question was asked. What have we done for unmarried mothers? A large percentage of our caseload, too large a percentage, I am afraid, is made up of unmarried mothers. I think the reason for it is that since 1974 we introduced a system, a programme whereby an unmarried mother could keep her child and we will pay to an unmarried mother and one child living in her own apartment \$248 a month, plus rent; if she is boarding with relatives we will pay her \$167 a month,

MR. BRETT: and if she is boarding with non-relatives we will pay her \$194 a month.

Mr. Chairman, is that a large number of unmarried mothers are keeping their children. Now we believe that this is good. It has some side effects, though, in that we have less children available for adoption today than we ever had and we are unable to fill all the applications that we have on file. I do not think that we should adopt the policy that every unmarried mother should be set up in an apartment and I am not suggesting that every unmarried mother is a woman of the street, that is ridiculous to suggest, but I think it could be very dangerous to set every single unmarried mother up in an apartment and we are not going to do it. Where we think it is absolutely necessary we will, but where other accommodations can be found then we will go that route.

The hon, member for Lewisporte (Mr. White) or his seat mate, I am not sure, one of them made quite a fuss about the number of cases that went to the Ombudsman. Mr. Chairman, in any given month in this Province there are approximately 20,000 plus, say 21,000 or 22,000 or back to 19,000 welfare cases in this Province. And I understand, somebody made the statement over there that if sixty or seventy cases went to the Ombudsman that is a grand total for the whole twelve months. So I think we should be very proud that out of twenty-odd thousand cases a month, every month, for the twelve months only seventy people found it necessary to go to the Ombudsman. I do not think anybody can complain very much about that.

AN HON, MEMBER:

Seventy-three.

MR. BRETT: Seventy-three out of a total of twenty-odd thousand cases a month. So that argument does not

MR. BRETT:

hold very much water over there.

One hon, member on the other side suggested that there may be some political interference in giving the \$50 extra to people who have special needs and they asked me if I would table it. Of course I will table it, Mr. Chairman, and my staff, who are outside, cannot get the figures tonight but I have no hesitation whatsoever in this world in tabling that by electoral district. The decision as to who qualifies for that \$50 is made at the district level. I have absolutely nothing in this world to do with it; they have all the authority they want in the district to make the decisions, they do, I never see it. So if the hon, member wants it tabled I will be happy to table it

I might tell the House,

Mr. Chairman, that one group of people who will get the \$50

extra are the blind people of this Province; every single,

solitary blind person in this Province receives an extra

\$50 a month, and of course if both are blind, the man

and wife, then they get \$50 each, which is an extra \$100

over and above what they are getting on social assistance.

in the Legislature tomorrow.

The attitude of the social workers: I guess it is a little bit ridiculous to expect that out of 205 field workers that every one of them would be absolutely perfect.

FR. BRETT:

I have no doubt that some of them may be a little bit twisted in their attitude and sometimes I can understand why, too. As I said earlier, I was in the field and other members of this House were in the field; I know the pressure that is on particularly in some parts of Newfoundland where the caseloads are heavy, and it is not difficult sometimes to have an improper attitude. It is unfortunate that maybe some workers do have it, but as I said, out of 205 workers it is not impossible that some of them may not be right all the time.

every year. The Auditor General still was not pleased with the effort that we are making to collect all of the overpayments. I said last year and I say again now that I am going to be very flexible on this. I know there are times when we collect and probably cause hardship, and if we do we always try to correct it. There is a fair amount of flexibility in the programme now that was not there last year, but it is a requirement that we collect and, you know, we have to carry on.

Somebody suggested that there should also be some flexibility in granting short-term assistance. And the member for St. George's (Mrs. MacIsaac) indicated that a person in a wheelchair had to travel forty miles to get a welfare order. Now obviously there is something wrong, because if there is a man in a wheelchair then he automatically qualifies for long-term assistance, so I do not know. This is again another individual case and, you know, I would just have to take a look at it, but certainly it does not sound right.

MRS. McISAAC: He is still on short-term plus the fact that it is in the court right now.

MR. BRETT: Yes.

MPS. McISAAC: But his wife still has to travel to the office in Stephenville Crossing to pick up the cheque. This is the reason it is still on short-term, because the lawyers are working on the case.

MR. BRETT: The Appeal Board was mentioned. I do not see where there is a great amount of difference in the Appeal Board that we have and the Appeal Board that you would go to with respect to unemployment insurance. If a recipient is not satisfied with the decision of a

SR. BRETT: social worker in the first instance, then it can be reviewed by the Administrative Review Board. If they uphold the decision of the social worker, it then goes to the Appeal Board and the decision is not made by the chairman only, I think there are four people on that board and I think they are completely independent of government. If the Appeal Board upholds the decision of the social worker then it can be taken to the Supreme Court. So, you know, you can go all the way up the line.

MRS. McISAAC:

MR. BRETT:

That is expensive.

Well, I do not know about expensive, but

the system is in place. I think they only heard something like twenty-nine cases last year. Now I do not know what that says for the Appeal Board, but again as in the case of the number who went to the Ombudsman, it is not very many when you consider the number of cases that we have on welfare. Do you pay for people to travel to look for jobs? MRS. McISAAC: No, this department does not pay people to MR. BRETT: travel to look for jobs. And while this sort of programme may be desirable, I do not think it belongs in the Department of Social Services. It can be very dangerous to send people all over the place to look for work, you know, if there is no guarantee of a job, but certainly I do not think that it belongs in this department. We will do some things. There are several things that we will do under the new Social Assistance Regulation 5L, which was approved just a few months ago. There are some things we will do with respect to people getting jobs. For special tools necessary to carry on a trade we will give up to \$100. We will pay union initiation fees, the rate

With respect to people having to travel forty miles to get to a welfare office, I am not suggesting it is not true
MRS. McISAAC: Well, it is from the Highlands to Stephenville Crossing.

MRS. McISAAC: - but in cases like that we usually set up
you know, we have sub-offices, as it is in the case of Carbonear, you know,

probably there are one or two sub-offices down there where the welfare

officer and the social worker will go once a week or once every two weeks

charged by the union. We will - well, apparently that is the only two things

that are there under items of special need, but anyway, it is a help.

You know, this is a direct case that I would have to look into, but it appears to me that if there are a large number of people who

MR. BRETT: have to travel forty miles to get to a welfare office then it may be a case where we would have to set un a sub-post office.

MRS. MCISAAC: If you had to pay taxis: - if I could explain to the minister, this is the same position that this lady finds herself in who has a husband in a wheelchair. What she has to do is pay a babysitter to stay with him while she travels to Stephenville Crossing from the Highlands to pick up the cheque and pay a taxi or some transportation to go in there and come back again. Now if she goes on the bus she is gone from 9:00 o'clock in the morning until about 6:00 o'clock in the evening, so you know, then she pays a bahysitter or whatever, a housekeeper for the full day. So I mean it is quite costly and inconvenient for her to have to travel that distance to pick up the cheque, and what it is short of forty miles I am satisfied to walk.

MR. BRETT: There is just one other item that I would mention and that is the question asked by the hon. member for Baie Verte-White Bay (Mr. Rideout), the breakdown in social assistance. I am sorry that I do not have that, the amount of money that is actually spent on building materials. I know it is a considerable sum, but we do not have that figure tonight but I will gladly table it in the House tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon, member for Carbonear.

MR. R. MOORES: I know, Mr. Chairman, that this is somewhat irregular in that the minister should be perhaps clueing up his denartment, but I thought it might be futile on the last effort to jump up and that we go to and fro from one side to the other. I would just like to say that most of the time I try to research the facts and the figures as best I can. The now Minister of Rehabilitation and Recreation was out of the House apparently when I was speaking first off and he trudges into the House and partially knowing what I was talking about referred to some dog and this type of thing. Generally speaking, in my view of the debate that he carried on, he certainly did not know what he was talking about.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is normal for that minister.

MR. R. MOORES: So just to clear up my facts, my figures, and my research, I recalculated the discussion that I had concerning the widow and the two boarders that she had, and it comes out that if she had two boarders paying \$100 a month to her that she would in the end receive \$165, which is approximately \$33 less than the widow's allowance which the department will pay her. Let me repeat that, she will receive \$33 less by making \$200 a month more on two boarders.

Now the minister also talked about the grand new idea that this government has in relation to social assistance in general and how you can improve the per capita spending, how you can improve the programmes, the community incentive, employment etc. But the fact still remains, Mr. Chairman, that this Province's spending, based upon the latest estimates by Health and Welfare Canada, are \$19 per capita as compared to Ontario's \$70 per capita. That is not including federal funding. And that \$19 per capita or our total departmental budget of \$66 million is merely 5 per cent of the total budget of this Province. And to me, Mr. Chairman, that certainly does not indicate to me that this government is going overboard in providing basic amenities to the social assistance recipients in this Province. I think the minister could be well advised to recheck a statement like that before he makes it so conclusively.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, about two weeks ago I got up in Question Period and I asked the minister why he had not reported on the conference in Ottawa with regard to block funding.

And I went on to say that block funding, the concept of block funding is going to economically revolutionize the concept of social assistance in this Province but, in addition to that, block funding is again going to bail this Province out in its dismal record with regard to servicing the poor. The Province stands to make this year I think just slightly over \$3 million on the block funding concept.

ER. R. MOORES: Most of that, or some of it at least, will be spent on day care, homemaker services, which are generally speaking old concepts in the social services field. They have been in some countries like the United States for about seventy years now and Newfoundland is just catching on and they are making a big thing about it. I hope that the minister will, when he is incorporating the idea and the spending on day care in this Province, that he will not consider the working rich and give them priority over the working poor, which has been done in a number of Provinces in Canada. The principle of day care as it was initially conceived was meant to be for working poor mothers who had to work in order to survive in this society and not the working rich, like doctors' wives and dentists' wives and lawyers' wives, who like to get out of the house and put on these social airs that they are volunteering or contributing to the economy. And when the minister made an inference that I was wrong when I said that the caseload was increasing, he said, "No, they have been decreasing." Yes, they have been decreasing on paper, that is true, due to Canada Works grants, unemployment insurance schemes, etc., but virtually nothing is changed. You have not, as the Minister of Rehabilitation and Recreation said, "You are not doing that good a job at rehabilitating them." You will find that most of the people that you had in your community employment programmes are now on the brink of being back on long-term or short-term assistance after their unemployment insurance payments terminate pretty soon.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, and realizing that the House must get on with more important business, thank you.

On motion 801-01 through 804-02-03,

carried.

Mr. Chairman, 804-02-04, Staff housing, \$16,000 this year where there was no vote last year:I wonder if the minister could tell us where this is being spent?

MR. DRETT: These funds are required to pay the subsidy on Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, the housing units leased to this department, an occasional rent, fuel and electricity bill in the case of a residence that is temporarily vacant but must be maintained. The \$4,500 has been added to cover the cost of rent, hear and light on a mobile home at Hopedale. This amount was previously charged to suspence and was shown in estimates as allowance in salary details.

On motion 804-02-04 through

806-02-02, carried.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, 806-02-03, I notice that there has been a substantial decrease in the amount of funding this year for the appeal board. Now there was quite a discussion in committee stage this evening about the appeal board. It looks like the funds have been a bit better than chopped in half.

MR. RIDEOUT: Is this an indication that the appeal board has been downgraded in any sense? Or does the minister have some reason to believe that there may not be as many cases appealed this year as last year? What is the reasoning behind chopping that in about half?

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, the amount voted last year was not spent. I think the actual amount spent was somewhere in the vicinity of \$2,500 and, therefore, that was the amount that was placed in the budget this year.

On motion, 806-02-03, carried.
On motion, 806-03-01 and 806

806-03-02, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does 806-03-03 carry?

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could tell us why there is a substantial decrease in the blind pension allowance this year? To \$139,000 from \$156,000 seems to be quite a decrease from one year to the next.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. minister.

12 you will come up with the \$139,500.

MR. BRETT: These are technical questions. I am reading the notes. It says here that the number of cases decreased from 183 in August 1976 to 164 in August of 1977. This decrease projected into 1978-79 will give a monthly average of \$155 and if you multiply that by 75 by

On motion, 806-03-03, carried.
On motion, 807-01 through

807-02-02, carried.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does 807-03-01 carry?

The hon. member for Burgeo -

Bay d'Espoir.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the minister will, under 807-03-01 and 02, just indicate to the Committee what employment opportunities projects are being

MR. SIMMONS:

undertaken this year.

MR. BRETT:

I had that information Mr.

Chairman, but somebody from across the House just came over and I had to move my files so I do not know exactly what I did with them. I had the list here. I am very sorry that I cannot find them. I will gladly table them if you want me to, if you remind me tomorrow. I had the list with me. I just had it right in front of me.

MR. PECKFORD:

What happened to it?

MR. BRETT:

It was right here. Just a

minute. I do not know if I have the list or not, Mr.

Chairman. I do not know how long it would take to read it out.

MR. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, if I may it could save time, perhaps if the minister was prepared to table it.

MR. BRETT:

I will do that.

MR. SIMMONS:

It is certainly information that

is necessary to the whole House.

MR. BRETT:

I will get a copy and table it.

No objections at all, I will table it tomorrow.

MR. SIMMONS:

While he is on his feet, perhaps

he could indicate why the decrease, which is a matter of interest to my colleague behind me as well, in the amount of the community development programme was budgeted? The revised budget last was about \$3 million compared to \$2.5 million this year. Was the expenditure down from the budgeted \$3 million? Could the minister just explain the difference there?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. minister.

MR. BRETT: Mr. Chairman, it may sound a bit ridiculous but we are having some difficulty in coming up with enough people on short-term assistance to do projects. This is an actual fact.

MR. MORGAN:

Bonavista is a prime example.

MR. BRETT:

Yes, that is a prime example.

I do not know if there is either project in my district this year. I think there might be one in the hon.

member's there. It is true that there are 3,700 cases or something but they are spread out and you cannot go into a community and start a project if you have only three of four people, say, in that community. So we were a little bit afraid that we would not be able to wisely spend the \$3 million so the amount was reduced to \$2.5 million.

MR. SIMMONS:

Mr. Chairman, on the same subject. I do know that the minister's department is actively looking at the possibility of such a programme in the Milltown, head of Bay d'Espoir area. His people have been down there to talk to the council and have received a proposal from council. I understand that the scheduling of it would have it begin about June. Perhaps I could suggest to him that he have a look at that with a view to moving it up.

speeches to him now about the unemployment situation in Bay d'Espoir, I am sure he is aware of it, but we are getting into a very critical period there now. Many people who were on unemployment insurance during the Winter are now moving to welfare, as the minister and his officials know, and if it were possible to move that project up instead of having it take effect from June perhaps it could take effect a little sooner. I realize we are only talking four or five weeks in the difference, but if it is ready to go then perhaps it could go. I understand that the reasons for scheduling it for June

MR. SIMMONS:

were reasons of weather and so on. Of course, the weather may well be suitable right now. There is no snow on the ground down there at the moment and it might be possible to move it up even two or three weeks, if he would take that under advisement.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Chairman, my officials

are out there and I am sure they heard the hon. member. I

have this project in front of me now - in the St. Alban's

welfare district, is it not? - and it is something like

an \$84,000 project. If that can be moved up I am sure

it will be. We are quite anxious to get going on these

projects, actually.

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

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Chairman, the hourly rates -

I think last year they were \$4.20 per hour for employees and \$5.53 for foremen - are they going to be increased this year or remain the same as last year?

MR. BRETT:

No, there will not be an increase in the method of payment which is going to be good. Because last year they were paid from my department and there was always some delay. This year they will be paid directly from the Department of Finance which means they will get their cheques the same time as the civil servants do, for example.

MR. WOODROW: But there is no increase.

MR. BRETT: No, there is no intention to

increase the rates.

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

White Bay.

MR. RIDEOUT: Mr. Chairman, just in the minute or so that I have; I am really enthused over this particular Head in the minister's department. I understand that his department has work activity officers stationed in various areas of the Province, and this may be a consideration for

MR. RIDEOUT: another year, why is it that those work activity project officers cannot evaluate what needs to be done in their particular districts, in the areas that they are responsible for, then look at the amount of able-bodied relief that is paid out in those particular areas and therefore gear able-bodied relief towards the community activity projects that need to be done in those particular areas? And I would suggest to the minister, if we do that we would see a substantial decrease in one Head and a substantial increase in this one and thereby be doing something beneficial for the able bodied relief in this Province.

On motion, 807-03-01, carried.
On motion, 807-03-02 through

810-03, carried.

On motion, Head VIII, Social

Services, all items without amendment, carried.

MR. HICKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Chairman of Committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply have considered the matters to them referred and have directed me to report having passed estimates of expenditure under the following Heads, X, Health, VIII, Social Services, all items without amendment and to report having made further progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

MR. HICKMAN: 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 10:00 a.m. and that this House do now adjourn.

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On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow Friday, April 28, 1978 at 10:00 a.m.