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PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 1980

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms) Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to table a response to statements made in certain sections of the report of the Public Accounts Committee, concerning the Department of Finance, which was presented to this hon. House last week.

Before dealing with these specific recommendation in the report, I would like to make a few general comments on the collection of Retail Sales Tax.

In the preamble of the section of the report, entitled "Findings", the Public Accounts Committee reveals a fundamental difference of opinion with the Department of Finance concerning the philosophy and intent underlying the Retail Sales Tax Act. The department interprets its mandate as one of licensing and registering vendors to collect Retail Sales Tax as agents of Government and at the same time requiring the Government to ensure remittance of collected taxes by performing appropriate auditing procedures and, where necessary, applying collection enforcement measures. In our view, the primary purpose of the Act is not served by driving out of business those vendors who failed to remit the taxes, nor would so doing amount to a "sound business approach" using the words of the Committee. The cancellation of a vendor's licence, with or without resulting business bankruptcy, is regarded by the Department as a failure of the system, and not conducive to the primary purpose of the Act which is to raise revenue. Under the provisions of the Act, an unsuccessful result to the application of various established collection procedures does leave the option of the vendor

DR. J. COLLINS: licence cancellation, with or without recourse of the courts, but tax-gathering objectives dictate that this should be employed as a last resort rather than a first order of enforcement. By this method of performance, the Department maintains that the essential provisions and spirit of the Retail Sales Tax Act are preserved, namely maximization of revenues, impartiality and a sound business approach.

During the appearances before the Public Accounts Committee, officials of the Department of Finance contended that the main reason for the increase in the percentage of Retail Sales Tax receivables to revenue over the past number of years had been an insufficient number of tax collectors. Accordingly the Committee's statement on page 10 of the report notwithstanding, the Department does not agree that previous accumulations of arrears of unremitted taxes resulted from a lenient manner in treating delinquent vendors nor that established procedures of themselves, resulted in collection delays. Statistics were presented to show that, since the establishment of regional audit offices in 1973, auditors detected tax arrears at a faster rate than the available enforcement personnel could collect them. The accumulation of arrears was accentuated to a lesser degree by the non-write-off of uncollectable Retail Sales Taxes after 1975-76. This problem was recognized by Government and during the past year a total of 47 new positions were approved, 45 of which related to the enforcement section of the Taxation Division of the Department. When all these

DR. J. COLLINS: positions have been filled, a substantial increase in tax revenues, and an improved position with respect to tax receivables, are confidentially expected.

I would now like to comment on the recommendations in the order listed in the report:

Recommendation 1 (Page 13): The Committee recommends that the Department require that all vendors be bonded.

In June 1979, the Department of Finance implemented a system of bonding all persons applying for registration certificates to operate certain types of business. No other Provinces of Canada had initiated such a system, although we have had many enquiries from provinces who are interested in our system. We are pleased with the success of this venture, but are somewhat reluctant, at the present time, to extend the system to all vendors because the cost of acquiring the bonds may prevent some prospective small businessmen from getting started. However, extension of the system is being kept under review.

Recommendation No. 2, also on page 13: The Committee recommends that more prompt procedures be developed to deal with vendors who are delinquent in their returns. The Committee feels that the department should establish the financial position of those vendors more promptly and would be justified in withdrawing the vendor's licence in extreme circumstances until his account has been brought up-to-date.

The Department agrees that delinquent vendors should be dealt with more promptly and we are confident that, with the recent hiring of field collectors, delinquent vendors will be dealt with on a more timely basis.

Recommendation No. 3 (Page 14): The Committee recommends that the department encourage its auditors to become more involved in the collection of outstanding taxes from the vendors they visit.

The Department of Finance has always required its auditors to collect the audit assessment immediately upon completion of

DR. J. COLLINS: an audit. If the full amount could not be collected, they were instructed to prepare a complete financial position report to enable Head Office personnel to take an appropriate course of action to achieve collection.

Recommendation No. 4 (Page 14): The Committee recommends that the department develop a system for recording settlement proposals as agreed with delinquent vendors. It also feels that such accounts should be monitored constantly and firmer action taken when a proposal is not honoured.

The department's present system itself for recording settlement proposals is considered adequate. The problem in the past has been of not having sufficient staff to follow-up all proposals. With the hiring of additional collectors, we are confident that this will be done in the future.

Recommendation No. 5 (Page 14): The Committee recommends that the department should first do its search for assets of the vendor which are not encumbered before obtaining a lien on the assets. This would reduce time spent by the Department of Justice in obtaining worthless liens.

The department agrees that all un-encumbered assets should be identified before obtaining a lien on assets. Over the years, the department attempted to do this but severe difficulties were encountered because there were no officers in the field other than tax auditors. The problem was compounded due to the lack of a full-time search officer to search the various registries for encumbrances. Newly approved positions will enable these tasks to be discharged more adequately.

DR. COLLINS: Recommendation No. 6 (Page 14): The Committee recommends that the Department secure all claims over \$10,000 and that the Department of Justice be required to give the obtaining of liens some priority to ensure that the Province's interests are protected.

The Department's position has been that writs be issued on all accounts, regardless of amounts, that appear to be in financial difficulty. In addition, where large amounts are involved and the vendor can only pay immediately a relatively small amount towards liability, the Department will undertake to secure the debt by undertaking a lien on unencumbered assets.

Recommendation No. 7 (Page 15): The Committee recommends that the Department perform or request a review of the Division's organization to eliminate unnecessary administrative positions and to re-assign these staff to more productive duties.

In this regard, I must point out that the breakdown of the staff complement shown on page 11 of the Committee's report is misleading. It purports to show 56 administrative positions out of a total of 109 staff. However, this number includes 27 administrative positions quite unrelated to Retail Sales Tax and several others having responsibilities in areas additional to Retail Sales Tax.

Recommendation No. 8 (Page 16): The Committee recommends that Sections 53 and 54 of the Retail Sales Tax Act, 1978, should be amended to make the assessment of penalties mandatory. The Lieutenant-Governor in-Council should have discretionary powers under a special section, but these powers should only be used in exceptional circumstances. In this way respect for the tax system will be maintained.

Over the years, the Department has initiated several reviews of the implementation of mandatory penalties. Generally speaking, it was felt that an interest rate of 12% per year, which is now imposed, and the imposition of penalties for deliberate withholding of remittances was sufficient; also, adding penalties to already financially troubled accounts would only increase the receivables. In addition, at present a great amount of time is spent dealing with vendors' requests to waive interest, and the routine application of penalties would, without

DR. COLLINS: doubt, substantially increase these requests. Nevertheless, in view of the relatively low interest rate charged in comparison to current bank prime lending rates, the Department will again review the situation from the viewpoint of increasing the interest rate or implementing a system of mandatory penalties.

Recommendation No. 9 (Page 16): The Committee recommends that the vendor's commission be reinstated. A 3% commission would reimburse the vendor for a portion of the cost to collect the tax and provide an incentive for the vendor to remit taxes promptly.

The vendor's commission was removed in 1975 as a fiscal measure. Even though Newfoundland is the only Province not paying a vendor's commission, Federal government taxes are withheld and remitted without compensation.

The reinstatement of a 3% commission would reduce provincial revenues by approximately \$7.5 million, resulting in a significant shortfall on Current Accounts. It is generally agreed that a commission may provide an incentive for vendors to remit promptly. This matter will continue to be reviewed each year during the budgetary process.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Recommendation No. 10 (Page 16):

The Committee recommends that the Department should examine the possibility of collecting Retail Sales Tax on credit sales when it is actually collected by the vendor.

The Act requires that when an item is sold Retail Sales Tax is due and must be collected at that time. Any arrangements such as suggested by the Committee would also lead to significant administrative difficulties.

With the introduction of a refund to vendors for taxes on uncollectable accounts, which is now in place, this matter should not be a problem in the future.

Recommendation No. 11 (Page 22):

The Committee recommends that in future all serious cases when a vendor has not remitted a material amount of Retail Sales Tax collected to the Department be referred promptly to the Department of Justice for prosecution.

This recommendation arose from a specific case documented by the Auditor General, wherein an audit in early 1977 showed a large tax arrears by a company in severe financial difficulties. Following several successful actions in magistrates' court - that is under the provisions of the Retail Sales Tax Act itself - by the prosecutor attached to the Department of Finance, the file was referred to the Department of Justice for possible charges under the Criminal Code of Canada in September, 1979.

I must point out that except for a case of a test nature, the Department of Justice did not undertake on a regular basis to investigate cases of failing to remit tax for possible charge under the Criminal Code until late 1978. Previously, all cases were prosecuted under the Retail Sales Tax Act by the prosecutor in the Department of Finance, and recently, Treasury Board has approved a second prosecutor position for the department.

Since late 1978, it has been the practice for the Department of Finance regularly to refer tax arrears cases to the Department of Justice for appropriate action under the Criminal Code where reasonable suspicion of conspiracy to defraud government exists.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Recommendation No. 12 (Page 23):

The Committee recommends that the department document the action taken against a seriously delinquent vendor and if no action has been taken, document the reason why senior officials of the Department of Justice decided it should not be taken.

The department agrees that all action against vendors should be properly documented, and a determined effort will be made to ensure that all major decisions are clearly annotated in the vendor's files.

I would like to table those comments,

Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I understand a member on this side responding to a Ministerial Statement could take about half the time that the hon. gentleman took in reading his statement. I presume the hon. gentleman was merely reading the statement for the purpose of getting it into the record and getting it recorded with the boys and girls, ladies, up over my head.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministerial Statement situation in this House seems to be getting out of control.

MR. S. NEARY: My understanding of Ministerial Statements, Mr. Speaker, is that first of all they must convey information - in this case it conveyed information-but not provoke debate of any kind. Well, certainly the things that the minister read out of that statement could certainly provoke a debate. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that the things the hon. gentleman just read from that statement, which was seven pages, took fifteen minutes of the time of this House, could have been done under the Department of Finance when we are debating the estimates and the minister's estimates are the next to be called in this House.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the purpose of setting up a Public Accounts Committee is to deal with the report of the Auditor General, so all these things again will have to be examined by the Public Accounts Committee. The ministers, apparently, by making these statements on the Auditor General's report are trying to circumvent the Public Accounts Committee and I would submit to Your Honour that it is about time that we put a stop to this childish, foolish nonsense of ministers coming in, making foolish Ministerial statements.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. S. NEARY: In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, Ministerial Statements should involve something urgent, something of an emergency nature. And I believe, Sir, what is happening in this House now is a complete abuse of the privileges of this House and it is about time the Premier put a stop to it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR SPEAKER (Simms): Are there any further statements?

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask

the hon. the Premier if he is in a position to give us a run-down, a report or bring us up to date on his trip to New York and probably other places South of the border with his entourage in the last couple of days?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, as hon. members

know I travelled to New York on the weekend to meet with two particular organizations, one, Mobil Oil Corporation and, two, the Power Authority of the State of New York.

Number one, the meetings with the Mobil Oil Corporation were to discuss with them the ongoing offshore exploration programme for oil and gas, and with the Power Authority of New York to talk to them about the study that we have ongoing jointly to determine the feasibility of the Anglo-Saxon route for the transmission of power from Labrador through Newfoundland and to other places in Canada and the United States.

Generally speaking, the meetings were very positive. I had met with Mr. Tavoulaeus, the President of Mobil Oil Corporation and a whole bunch of his people to talk about Hibernia, to talk about Ben Nevis, to talk about the ongoing exploration activity and to get to know these people a bit better.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And those meetings were, overall, very positive. The main crux of those meetings were to talk about the environmental repercussions of any production of oil and gas off our coasts, the effect upon the fishery, the fact that we were earnest and sincere and determined to ensure that our regulations applied, that there would be a whole bunch of things have to happen before any approval on the productions side would be approved by this government. And so, most of the discussions centered around the whole question of the environment and the fishery.

On the Power Authority of New York, the final report is not in yet on the study that was financed jointly by us and the Power Authority of New York, fifty-fifty, to see whether in fact it was technologically feasible to build the Anglo-Saxon route, and, secondly, to see in fact, what the differential would be between transmission through some other route other than that Anglo-Saxon route down to New York and the Anglo-Saxon route. And the final studies are not in on that yet.

And that will have to be considered in context with the Lower Churchill Development report which is due in the next couple of months. So the meetings were very positive. The Power Authority of New York, in the state of New York, I met with Governor Carey, with Mr. John Dyson, who is the Commissioner of Energy for the state of New York and with other members of his staff on that side. On the Mobil side, I met, as I said, with Mr. Taboulaeus, the President with Mr. LaSade, who is one of the chief lieutenants of Mobil Oil Corporation with the head of exploration, worldwide with the head of marketing worldwide of the Mobil Corporation and with some of their other people.

On both accounts the meetings were very cordial and very positive. We will be holding other meetings, of course, with those people over the next number of months as a follow-up

PREMIER PECKFORD: to these meetings, but I had not met with the head of the Mobil Corporation worldwide and some of his people and I thought it was important that I do so. And I wanted to follow up the meetings that I had had with Mr. Dyson here in St. John's some months ago. And overall there was a very positive, co-operative atmosphere prevailing. And, thirdly, I also talked to a whole bunch of people in New York, the Business Week people, Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Petroleum Daily and a whole bunch of other people like that about the prospects that Newfoundland and Labrador have and their interest in it. So, overall, the trip was fairly positive and I think there was a good information flow from both sides.

MR. S. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. the Member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am rather intrigued by the activities of the hon. gentleman in the last week or so in connection with the Anglo-Saxon route and transmitting power to New York. The reason I am intrigued about it is because you would swear we were back in 1965 in this House when that is precisely the same discussion, the same tenor of debate and information -

MR. ROBERTS: Almost the same people.

MR. S. NEARY: Almost the same people. It is rather intriguing. But I want to ask the hon. gentleman now, has the government committed itself in any way, shape or form because there has been a complete reversal of policy on the part of

MR. S. NEARY: the minister, who was then Minister of Mines and Energy in the Moores administration, there has been a complete reversal of policy. Government are now talking about exporting the power from the Lower Churchill. How much power are we talking about sending to the Maritimes, sending South of the border to operate the subways, as we were so often told in this House, and operate the subways in New York and light Broadway? Are we committed to a certain amount of power? How much power will have to be exported to make it economically feasible?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) does not understand that what we are trying to do is to keep all of our options open and explore every possible alternative. One alternative happens to be the export of surplus power South, that has always been an alternative. The question is how you get that power South if, in fact, you agree that some surplus should go South. That is one alternative and so we must explore that and we are exploring it. Another alternative is to use the surplus power in Labrador for industrial expansion in Labrador, and we are looking at that as well as a possible way of making the whole Lower Churchill development project feasible. So we have made no commitments to anybody. All we are doing is exploring every alternative. The other alternative is not on the front end to develop the Lower Churchill River at all. It is to get access to additional cheap power now available from the Upper Churchill contract, at three and a half mills, and build transmission lines to the Island to take some of that power which is now going so cheaply to the Province of Quebec who is acting as a broker.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Suffice it to say, Mr. Speaker, in summing up, that we are trying to look at all alternatives, industrial expansion in the Province, transmission of surplus by some means, either through Quebec or the Anglo-Saxon route, that we will never sign a sixty-five year contract for three and a half miles which actually goes down after the first forty-five years.

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

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

MR. S. NEARY: We do not know what the hon. gentleman is going to do. We can only, as the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) said the other day, after his administration has ended then we will be able to judge whether he did right or wrong but so far he has not done anything. It seems to me though to be rather strange that the State of New York would pay fifty/fifty on a study to have surplus power used in Labrador - New Yorkers sharing the cost - because they want the power to go into New York State, not to be used in Labrador. But there are so many questions I could ask the hon. gentleman about that. I am going to get back to the oil one because my other colleagues may want to ask a few questions.

I want to ask the hon. gentleman if the matter of offshore ownership or management or control whatever - we have heard various and sundry terms used - did that come up for discussion with the Mobil people and are they concerned about that? Are they anxious, for instance, to start now planning and spending money to get ready for producing the oil, to get into production, and they cannot proceed because the management question or the control question or the ownership question is not settled? Did that matter come up, and what was the hon. gentleman's position and what is Mobil's position on that particular matter?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, to answer the preamble to the hon. member's question, perhaps the hon. member does not really understand two points, one is - and I can understand his surprise - one of the conditions for sharing the cost of the particular study on the Anglo-Saxon route, one of the conditions that I set was that there was to be no commitment by this Province to doing anything in giving power to the New York State Power Authority or to anybody else outside of this Province, and they had to agree to that condition. Now that might come as a complete surprise to the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that some government in Newfoundland can make that condition stick and still get them to share in the cost, but that is what has happened, that they have shared in the cost not knowing whether in fact they will get one single drop of water power from this Province. It was just that they are so eager to have additional power available to them in the 1990s that they are willing to put money forward without any conditions attached to it as to whether they are going to get any power or not. So there are no sweetheart deals here. They entered into this financial arrangement for this study without knowing whether they were going to get one single kilowatt of power from this Province. Otherwise I would never have allowed them to finance it. We would have financed it ourselves. That is number one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Secondly, on the whole question of the ownership of the resource, the offshore, the oil and gas! The issue did come up because I raised it. The Mobil Oil people did not raise it. I raised it in the meeting and right now Mobil Oil Corporation, the position on it is that they take no position. They are going to stay out of it completely. They are quite satisfied to work with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador in the exploration, production, and everything else of the resource. They have no great particular bias one way or the other. So they are staying completely out of it.

To this point in time the present dispute does not inhibit investment because we are still in the exploration stage. Now if at some point in time Mobil decides, "Yes, we have a reservoir of hydro-

PREMIER PECKFORD: carbons here that should be developed and we want to get on with it and here is one, two, three, four on the investment side of the production," then there would be some problems, obviously, because they cannot serve two masters there. Because if they did serve both masters, under the present royalty regimes which exist by the Province, the present royalty regimes that operate with the federal government, there would be no money left there for the company at all, and nobody would finance that kind of an operation. You would be looking at about 105 per cent of royalty or whatever, with the company not even getting one per cent return on investment. So that would not work.

So to this point in time everything is okay because we are still talking about exploration and step-out wells and to determine if in fact we have sufficient volumes of oil available for commercial production. To this point in time everything is okay. Obviously when we do get to that point in time, whenever that is, there could be a problem.

MR. NEARY: A final supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary,

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman probably anticipated my next question in connection with oil. Is there any discussion, any comment from Mobil as to when they expect - I would gather from the hon. gentleman's answer that he just gave me that they are not sure yet whether they have a commercial find or not; that has not yet been definitely determined. But I would think they are getting very near that stage. So have they talked about, in relation to production, when they anticipate the first oil could come ashore in Newfoundland, how long will it take them - let me ask the first question. How long more is it going to take before they are sure they have a commercial find? Will it be this year? And if so, have they indicated when the first oil would be brought ashore? How do they intend to bring it ashore? Will it be loaded at the well head by tankers or will there be a pipeline from Hibernia and the other wells into Newfoundland? How do they intend to bring the oil ashore? When will they bring it ashore? I think the hon. gentleman has the drift of my question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, first of all, it is very difficult to say when you are going to be in a position to say it is a commercial discovery, because you do not know what the step out wells are going to show. If you knew, if you could say that the step out wells will be similar to the original well, then you could give some time frame, but perhaps the two step out wells will be dry, and, therefore, that would extend the time to which you could determine when the commerciability of the thing was going to be. So you cannot say definitely when. We believe in our own minds, and the best advice that we have, is that by the end of this year we would have a good idea and that a determination of the commercial -

MR. S. NEARY: How are the step out wells so far?
Have they?

PREMIER PECKFORD: The step out wells so far, there are two being drilled. One is a bit more advanced than the other and we have not

PREMIER PECKFORD: reached the bottom of those wells.
Testing should take place on both of those step out wells within the next month

MR. NEARY: So far there are no indications whether they are good?

PREMIER PECKFORD: There are logs being run on them and there is some indication that there is some hydrocarbon within one of those two wells; the other one we do not know.

MR. S. NEARY: It is not as good as expected?

PREMIER PECKFORD: We do not know that yet. We would not be able to say yes or no to that.

MR. W. MARSHALL: Not disappointing.

PREMIER PECKFORD: It is not disappointing.

MR. S. NEARY: It is not something to get wild about either.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, perhaps we have gotten too wild anyway. We have been looking for the big elephant that does not exist on earth, and exists somewhere else and it exists off Newfoundland. That is some of the stuff that one hears that is so crazy it is not even funny. So, you know, your expectation versus what is reality is something else.

So we are looking at, say, by the end of this year, given the normal kind of situation happening as happened other places where you got into this kind of development, there should be some determination of whether we have a commercial find or not, number one. Number two, how the thing is developed; and this is why I wanted to talk to the people in Mobil, especially at the top, that Mobil - the hon. member's question is very interesting because it smacks of what I am so much opposed to. The company will not determine how that is developed. The people who will determine

PREMIER PECKFORD: how that is developed are right here
in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: That is the big difference.

MR. NEARY: Did you tell Mobil that?

PREMIER PECKFORD: We do not ask Mobil how it is going to
be developed. We indicate to Mobil that the onus is on them to prove that
the way we want to see it developed is impossible.

MR. NEARY: Did you tell them that?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh yes, in no uncertain terms. The hon.
member knows me well enough for that. Surely the hon. member knows me
well enough for that. We do not go on bended knee and ask Mobil Oil
Corporation, "Now, how do you think you are going to develop this?" Not
a chance! Our whole regulations are geared in such a way as to indicate
to Mobil Oil they better prove to us, unmistakably, through public hearings
and everything else, that the way we want to see this thing developed is
totally and absolutely wild and impossible because otherwise the thing
gets the same way as other resource development opportunities in this
Province have gone over the last hundred or hundred and twenty years, and
that is not going to happen anymore so we are going to determine how it
is going to be developed.

AN HON. MEMBER: The government will decide whether
(inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: We will determine and we will force the company to prove to
Newfoundlanders publically and every other way that a certain thing will
happen. Now we do not know yet. The other thing that determines the kind
of development that will occur is how much you have, and to this point in
time we do not know how much we have. So that is a big factor in determining
the way and the kind of development that it will take, how much is there.
To this point in time we do not know so therefore we have kept all our options
open and will not restrict ourselves to any particular kind of development
until we have more information on just how large or small the oil is, in
relation to the gas and in relation to other structures because, you see,

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, you have to be very careful here and I do not intend for this government or for this Province to be bound into talking about the development of Hibernia, full stop. That is not only one well, that is only one structure even if it is twenty-five wells on that structure. There is Ben Nevis which has been started and there are seven or eight other structures and I am not going to be bound into determining a certain kind of development just because of Hibernia which has 444 million barrels of oil which determines a certain development. However, when you put Ben Nevis into the picture and into the equation, one can then talk about a different kind of development which might be better for us. And, secondly, we might even have to delay the development because we might not be satisfied with the environmental controls that are being put on it to safeguard our fishery.

MR. NEARY: And what about these environmental controls?

PREMIER PECKFORD: The first thing that has to be determined is that the fishery must be at the most minimum risk that we can imagine before we can allow the development to go ahead in the first place.

MR. NEARY: Are you satisfied with the environmental controls?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Not yet, because we do not know what we are talking about and we are still working on whether in fact there are sufficient environmental controls around to handle that kind of development.

MR. NEARY: I wish I could ask some more questions.

Premier PECKFORD: I wish I could answer you.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer), I wish to ask the Premier a question. This past week I had the opportunity of visiting my district and on the way to and from my district I visited jail in Happy Valley-Goose Bay - not as a guest.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order. The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I just want to know because I

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PREMIER PECKFORD: think there is a rule around this House about hon. members sitting in this Chamber, whether in fact the hon. member spent any time there because if he did he may be disqualified from asking the question.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms)

I will take that under advisement.

The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, I did spend some time there visiting a constituent of mine, but what the Premier should know is that there is a jail there with two cells, size eight by ten with five human beings as patients there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, would the Premier advise the hon. House if he is aware of those unsanitary conditions that exist in these jails in Happy Valley - Goose Bay?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

The short answer to the question is, yes, I am aware of it, the ones that exist in Happy Valley - Goose Bay. I am also very aware of the ones that exist in Botwood -

MR. S. NEARY:

St. George's.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

- in St. George's -

MR. S. NEARY:

In Bonavista.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

- especially in Bonavista. Bonavista is a very, very perhaps the worst, worse than Happy Valley - Goose Bay.

MR. L. THOMS:

The same down on Duckworth Street.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Well, yes, obviously, I am just talking about those outside of St. John's - which I am knowledgeable of, too. -

MR. S. NEARY:

St. George's (inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Assuming and implicit in the statement is that because now that I live here for five or six days of the week, I do know, obviously, about the ones in the place in which I reside. But to address the question, because I am aware of those problems, and the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer) is very aware of them, we are trying to develop right now, and I think the Minister of Justice within the next two or three weeks will be making a number of announcements about what we intend to do about those kinds of facilities in line with our five year plan.

PREMIER PECKFORD: We have more or less determined the way we want to move in the next five years as it relates to the Department of Justice in the five year plan. And very much a part of it is the kind of issue that the hon. member now addresses as it relates to facilities for prisoners in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, Bonavista, Botwood, St. George's and all over the Province.

MR. G. WARREN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I understand from the Premier that he does not know there is some correspondence received probably from the RCMP and from other groups in Labrador concerning this particular jail. As you know, Mr. Speaker, prisoners are lying practically on a concrete floor, with a very thin mattress. There is a very small fan, the air does not circulate, the stench in the cell is just unbearable and here we have, just this past week, as high as eleven prisoners in these two cells. It is just unsatisfactory and it is unhealthy. I am just wondering if the Premier will take immediate steps, not five year plan steps, immediate steps, to alleviate this problem now and give those people a human standard of living?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I can not say right off the top of my head whether we can take immediate steps or not. Most of the prisons in the Province are blocked so it is not only a problem for Happy Valley - Goose Bay, it is a problem for everywhere else, but we will do all in our power this year to try to alleviate that unsatisfactory situation that exists in Happy Valley - Goose Bay. This year we will try to do something to make that a bit better.

The long-term answer is not to start shifting the people around to better positions, but it is to build better facilities in the region. So that is our long-term aim.

Our short term aim will be to try

PREMIER PECKFORD: to address what the hon. member is talking about and we will try to do that in the next year.

MR. G. WARREN: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, My final supplementary is that in view of not building new foundations and new construction, would the Premier think about all the vacant buildings that have been left vacant by the United States Air Force in Happy Valley - Goose Bay. In fact recommendations have been received from various groups on some particular buildings that could be used to accommodate those prisoners. Will the Premier look in that light, or new construction?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, it varies from place to place and in Happy Valley - Goose Bay it will be the same way it was in the district of Stephenville, that the member for Stephenville can talk (Mr. F. Stagg) about, because we announced just some time ago a new facility in Stephenville dealing with existing buildings but renovation of them for a female facility over there for female prisoners to be housed there. And we would look at existing buildings in Happy Valley - Goose Bay, of course, before we start building new ones. I think the most immediate need for new building construction would be the Bonavista - Clarenville axis and the Botwood - Grand Falls axis. In Happy Valley - Goose Bay obviously we have to look at existing facilities. So, number one, we will take immediate action in the next twelve months to try to alleviate the real serious situation now in Happy Valley - Goose Bay; number two, in the long term it will be to either acquire existing facilities and renovate them or build new ones, and that we intend to do.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Transportation and Communications. The question I would like to ask is basically with regard to the condition of the roads in this Province, particularly also the deterioration because of the Winter, and also the demand for new roads and new pavement.

This administration got elected on one of the slogans that we have a PC Government in Ottawa and basically we should have a PC Government in Newfoundland. While the PC Government was in Ottawa, Mr. Clark for nine months, did the Minister of Transportation submit a new DREE agreement on roads to that government?

MR. NEARY:

No, he did not. He was too lazy.

MR. HISCOCK:

Can you answer it now?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Minister of Transportation and Communications.

MR. BRETT:

Mr. Speaker, the request for the DREE funds for roads went after the Conservative Government in Ottawa was defeated.

MR. NEARY:

In other words, you expect the Liberals to do what the Tories would not do.

MR. HISCOCK:

A supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER:

A supplementary, the hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:

Am I to understand while the Conservative Government was in Ottawa for nine months and the close co-operation that we were supposed to have, that no agreement was submitted to the Conservatives? And also the question - well, the question I would like to ask now, is with regard to the money that is going to be spent on road construction this year, is that not a carry over from money that was left over last year?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I will respond to that because I was intimately involved in it. The DREE agreement on Coastal Labrador had roads as a part of it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

PREMIER PECKFORD: I am talking about roads. Is the hon. member talking about roads?

MR. HISCOCK: DREE roads (inaudible).

PREMIER PECKFORD: Yes. But can I isolate Labrador? Are you against me isolating Labrador as one area first of all?

MR. HISCOCK: I wish you would do all.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I want to answer the question three or fourfold. Okay?

There are three parts to the whole question of road transportation in this Province. There is the Trans-Labrador Highway which on its own has to be considered because it is so large. Secondly, there is a Coastal Labrador agreement through DREE which was submitted before Mr. Trudeau was defeated, after he was defeated, when Mr. Clark was elected, after Mr. Clark was defeated, and now that Mr. Trudeau is re-elected. That has been there all that while, as the hon. member knows, which is a very important road transportation problem that we have in the Province, on the Straits part of Labrador. That is second.

Thirdly, there is the Trans-Canada agreement which is fifty/fifty and it is in the third year of its operation right now, on a seventy-five provincial/twenty-five federal part, because that is the way we screened it as a formula.

And then fourthly, there is a brand new secondary roads agreement. Okay?

So number one, on the Trans-Labrador Highway, we are still trying to fight that one in the conceptual stages of trying to get some agreement, that the federal government will even look at it.

Number two, as it relates to Labrador, the DREE agreement on Coastal Labrador contains road work there to be done.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Thirdly, we are trying to negotiate a new Trans-Canada agreement because the present upgrading will not be sufficient to make that highway anyway near where it is supposed to be. Of course, we go into it with great apprehension and caution because we do not want to negotiate a fifty/fifty one again. I think that that was a bad deal, really, because the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador is not in the same position as New Brunswick or PEI or Nova Scotia as it relates to road transportation. We should get better than a fifty/fifty deal. So we are going to try to negotiate an additional TCH agreement for ongoing upgrading beyond this present third year.

Fourthly, we submitted in the dying days - the hon. minister might know, I do not know; I will have to look up the dates - in the dying days, perhaps, of the former federal administration under Mr. Clark, we submitted a full, new roads programme, secondary roads programme for the Province.

So there is the Trans-Labrador Highway, the Coastal Labrador agreement already in effect, re-negotiating the TCH, which we have indicated that we want to do, and a secondary roads programme for the Province was submitted either in the dying days of the Clarke Administration, perhaps two or three weeks before they fell -

MR. NEARY: Came down.

PREMIER PECKFORD: - not knowing they were going to fall, or in the early days of the new Trudeau Administration.

MR. HISCOCK: A supplementary question.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: That was the basis of the question that I asked, that after nine months in the dying days of the PC Administration, finally a new secondary road agreement was submitted, either submitted to the Clarke Administration or the Trudeau Administration. But basically this Province has been waiting well over nine months now, almost into a year, for a new roads agreement.

April 23, 1980

Tape No. 969

DW - 1

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: No, there had been roads put forward beforehand but we revised what we had put in and tried to shorten it to try to get some agreement on it. All the hon. member has to do is leave this Chamber and go out and call up Mr. McGonegal or somebody else here in the local DREE office, or call Moncton or call Ottawa, and he could easily find out what I am saying is valid, that there has always been an ongoing standing request by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for additional roads agreements. I just have to look across from me for this, The hon. member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Höllett) knows exactly what I am talking about just as well as I do because he was involved with the Leader of the Opposition -

AN HON. MEMBER: Better than you do.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I would not say better. Let us just be fair. The hon. member for Burin - Placentia West knows what I am talking about. There is an ongoing standing agreement for additional roads improvements in this Province before DREE all the time. What we did was try to revise it. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we tried to be really fair and just isolate those particular legitimate secondary roads so that we could get quicker agreement to them so that there would be no politics played and no accusation that we were doing something for one area more than another, that we were just putting forward legitimate secondary road requests rather than every single one. Because very often the Federal MP's will say, 'If only you would put forward this road, then DREE would look at it'. So you get every Federal MP agitating for his own area so that you put every single - you know, the road from your house to my house gets in a DREE agreement. Well, that is crazy! There are certain

PREMIER PECKFORD: legitimate secondary roads that should be considered by DREE, there are others that we have to do totally on our own as a Province. And we have tried to be fair in isolating the wheat from the Chaff and to really legitimately go after what we could expect to be considered by DREE as secondary roads that could justifiably be considered as part of an economic strategy for the Province.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions has expired.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. H. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present the annual report of the Public Service Commission for the year ending March 31st. Hon. members will note that the Public Service Commission had a very active year as indicated by the large number of citizens served, approximately 72,000. The committee also witnesses substantial growth in training and development activities and have given me much pleasure in presenting this report.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

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

MR. T. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide some information to the member for St. Barbe (Mr. Bennett) as a result of a question yesterday in regard to the people of Parsons Pond about moving their homes. In his question he raised the point of the cost of moving in relation to a commitment made by the government. I have the information which I undertook to get for him.

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Tape No. 969

DW - 3

MR. T. HICKEY:

The situation is very simply this: Government made a commitment to provide \$3,000 per family to move their homes. There were twenty-three families. Most of the twenty-three could not or would not qualify for any assistance under the Social Assistance regulations. I make this point to point out that this programme of assistance was outside of the Social Assistance regulations altogether. It was government's wish to assist the families in their plight to move their homes, which was necessitated because of flooding. The situation was that government made a commitment of \$3,000 and in June of last year the people in question made a request for an additional \$1,500, which government rejected outright, because, as I pointed out, those were people who would not have qualified under assistance. Whilst I am not prepared to say that they were wealthy people, they were reasonably well-off and government felt that a \$3,000 contribution was indeed a fair amount to provide in assisting them to move. Subsequent

MR. T. HICKEY: to government's rejecting the \$1,500 increase, a tender was called. And one contractor bid and his bid was \$3,500. The government refused to accept that bid because, number one, the amount was over the amount - or the estimate as put forward by the contractor was \$500 over the amount, was number one. But, not as important was the fact that the contractor attached three conditions to the move: One, that he be allowed to move the houses that he chose and not all of them; two, there was no insurance coverage to cover damages of anything of that nature and so government rejected the bid. Finally, most of those people have been paid the \$3,000 as committed by the government and those who have not need only submit their bills to the government and they will be paid the \$3,000. That is as far as government's commitment went and that is the present situation.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Any further answers?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Today being Wednesday, Private Member's Day, Motion No. 4. The hon. the member for Trinity- Bay de Verde.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, thank you, The resolution reads as follows: "Whereas the proper development of our fishery is of paramount importance to the economy of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador and the well-being of our people; and whereas off-shore oil and gas exploration is a reality; and whereas off-shore oil and gas exploitation appears to be a certainty and therefore of great importance to the economy of our Province; Therefore be it resolved that this House fully debate both developments for the purpose of ensuring that the fishery will not be endangered by off-shore oil and gas exploration and exploitation and that the renewable fishery resource and the non-renewable oil

MR. F. ROWE: and gas resource will be developed in a strategy of compatibility for the maximum benefit of our people; And be further resolved that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to meet throughout the Province to hear and seek advice and recommendations, and to call outside experts, for the purpose of ensuring the successful co-development of the fishing and off-shore oil and gas industries and that such a Committee report to the House before the end of 1980."

Now, Mr. Speaker, the real motivation behind this resolution is the quite legitimate fear by the people involved directly and indirectly with the fisheries that the exploration and production of oil and gas off our shores could quite conceivably interfere in an adverse way with our only marine renewable resource, namely the fishery. And, Sir, that resource, the fishery, should be around long after the non-renewable resource, namely gas and oil, is depleted.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, many people are deeply concerned, if not outright scared to death, over what the exploration of oil and gas, and its ultimate production, would do to this province in the social way, economically, politically and, more importantly, what oil production might do to our fishing industry. Now, Sir I do not want to be an alarmist or appear to be against offshore gas and oil production, but, Sir, as sure as the sun will set tonight and rise tomorrow looking out the window, I am not quite so sure of that - if we, in this province, Sir, particularly hon. members on both sides of this House, do not ensure the proper, the logical, the planned, precautionary and controlled development of our offshore oil and gas, we could end up with a phenomenal boom-bust situation with the complete annihilation of our fishery which could be, to put it in its mildest terms, catastrophic for our children, our grandchildren and generations yet unborn.

MR. F. ROWE:

Now, Sir, why do I say that? Because, Sir, we are now in the process of dealing with what has been termed as the Seven Sisters, and they can be a thing of beauty, Sir, or seven witches whose ugliness defies description, but we are dealing with the Seven Sisters and this ugliness aspect of it is what bothers me and should be of paramount importance to every single member here in the House of Assembly. Because, Sir, we have reached a point in our long history where our actions here in the next few months and the next few years

MR. F. ROWE:

respecting offshore oil and gas will determine the very nature, the very substance of this Province for decades, in fact, hundreds of years.

Now, Sir, who are the seven sisters to whom I refer? Sir, these are the giant multi-nationals, namely, Gulf, Exxon, Mobil, British Petroleum, Shell, Chevron and Texaco. Mr. Speaker, these are amongst the largest and the most powerful corporations on the earth. They know absolutely no boundaries. Their interests, Sir, are global. For over fifty years, the seven sisters have controlled the oil markets of the world. Sir, the seven sisters have controlled countries and, indeed, have run over countries, because, Sir, the incomes of the seven sisters are in excess of billions of dollars. And these billions of dollars, hundreds of billions of dollars, my friend reminds me, their incomes are in excess of hundreds of billions of dollars, which far exceeds the assets of most, if not all of the countries and the provinces within which they operate.

So, Sir, the decisions that we fifty-two members make over the next few years relating to the seven sisters - in other words, oil and gas exploitation and production - can in a sense be the salvation of this Province or it could be the exact opposite, it could lead to the complete destruction of the social, economic fabric of this Province as we know it today.

Now, Sir, without being disrespectful of hon. members, when you look at the global power and the magnitude of the seven sisters, and you look at their assets, we may well be looking at a situation where we have fifty-two mice - an analogous situation - fifty-two mice confronting seven elephants. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is the backdrop, if you will, that is a resume of a situation with which we are dealing here in this Province this very day.

Now, Sir, my concern is obviously with the preservation of the fishery, and obviously, experiences in other countries have shown that even with extensive planning and controls over

MR. F. ROWE:

oil and gas production, there is the ever present danger that a renewable resource, namely, the fisheries, may be jeopardized or sacrificed for the temporary benefits to be gained or derived from a relatively short-term exploitation of a non-renewable resource, namely, oil.

Sir, no matter what safeguards are taken now, no matter what long-range plans are made and implemented to preserve our fisheries, no matter what plans or safeguards are taken or implemented, I still fear for the fishery of this Province as a result of the massive impact of a potentially major oil discovery off our shores.

Sir, there are two major questions we have to address ourselves to: number one, How can the fishery be protected from the environmental and economic and social hazards of oil? And number two, Sir, How should oil and gas revenues be used to ensure the best interests of the way of life in our Province, and I think particularly as it relates to the fisheries? Now, Sir, let us deal with the last question first. How should oil and gas revenues be used to ensure the best interests of the fisheries in this Province? Mr. Speaker, there is the disastrous route where rapid and uncontrolled growth in oil and gas production could quite easily create an economically two strata society in this Province - in other words, the rich and the poor or the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. Now, Sir, we have read about and we have seen that in many oil rich countries of the world,

MR.F.ROWE: when the oil runs out, the rich remain rich and the poor not only remain poor but become poorer. When the oil and gas run out there is a sort of a nightmarish scramble or rush to fill the gap with some sort of an industrial development, to fill that gap when the oil runs out.

MR. HOLLETT: Make work projects.

MR.F.ROWE: Right. Make work projects. Now, Mr. Speaker, we in Newfoundland have an excellent ace up our sleeve, namely the fisheries, which is a renewable resource. But, Sir, the fisheries can only be an ace if we use oil revenues properly. If we do not, Sir, the fisheries will turn out to be a dismal deuce instead of an ace. The obvious answer, Mr. Speaker, is to use a considerable amount of the oil revenue for re-investment in the fishery. Now the hon. Premier-obviously this was referred to in the Throne Speech but I would like to draw distinction here between re-investment and subsidization of the fisheries. I would like here to differentiate from using oil revenues to subsidize the fisheries because in the long haul we will end up back at the starting line. Once the oil revenues run out we can no longer subsidize that fishery and the fisheries will therefore fail. So, Sir, using oil revenues to subsidize the fisheries amounts to a form of extended welfare which will do more harm in the long run than good. Sir, instead of subsidizing the fisheries with oil revenues what I am suggesting is this, let us identify the problems in the fishery, let us identify the needs in the fishery, let us identify ways of improving the fishery and then let us identify the solutions to these problems in the fishery, let us itemize the needs and recommend methods of improving the fishery and then and only then should we invest oil dollars or revenue to develop the fisheries, invest these oil revenues to develop the fishery so that the fishery in this Province will be second to none in the world and will be self-sustaining long after the last ounce of oil and the last cubic inch of gas is extracted from our shelf. Now, Sir, what are the areas that I have referred to here in a general way? Well, Sir, we need greater and improved efficiency in productivity, that is, in the catching sector and in the processing sector. Secondly, we

MR. F. ROWE: need quality control with respect to our fishery. Thirdly, we need improved marketing techniques and finding new markets as we are finding out this year. Fourthly, we need improved facilities, wharf stages, slipways, haul-outs, marine service centers, breakwaters, ice-breakers, large and small boats, longliners and ships. Fifthly, we need the adequate infrastructure, that is, adequate roads, marine transportation systems, adequate freezing and storage capacity. Sixth, we need more experimental technological and scientific research in this Province. And, Sir, seventh and probably just as important, proper education as far as attitude is concerned and skills are concerned in the fishing industry.

Now, Sir, if oil revenues could be directed towards these areas instead of subsidizing the fisheries with Band-Aid treatments we could build up a fishing industry or a fishery as second to none in the world which could preserve our unique way of life in this Province, give a decent income to those in the boats and those in the plants and those in the administrative sector of the fisheries and at the same time and most importantly, the fisheries could sustain the economy of this Province long after the oil and gas is gone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, let us deal with the -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible)

MR. F. ROWE: And I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. member is either taping or dictating over there which I do not think is allowed in the House. The member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg).

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible)

MR. F. ROWE: Well, I do not think it is allowed, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: If you pick up the speaker and you can see it, that is not allowed.

MR. F. ROWE: I think there has been a ruling on that

MR. F. ROWE: before, Mr. Speaker, so I will just draw it to your attention and I will not waste my time with a point of order, but if he wants to make interjections, I will make my counterattacks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. F. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether hon. members want to listen to me or not, but I am not going to entertain interruptions, if you will, please.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please! The hon. gentleman wishes to proceed in silence.

MR. F. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, to deal with the first question, How can the fishery be protected from the environmental and economic and social hazards of oil? In answering this question, Mr. Speaker, we have to look at four things, one, the pollution of the marine environment, two, physical conflict with the fishing industry; third, economic pressure on the fishery from the oil industry; and fourth, the fact that the fishery is not a single industry.

Now, Sir, let us deal with the pollution of the marine environment. The effects of oil pollution are still very poorly understood, especially in Northern waters. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the oil companies, during their exploratory programmes, have very successfully downplayed the complete uncertainty regarding the long-range effects of oil pollution on all species of fish, fishing activity and fishing habitat. For example, Sir, what about the fouling of fishing gear and subsequent increased costs, downtime and loss of earnings? What about the tainting of fish catch and the processed products which results in loss of earnings, layoffs and subsequently in the loss of markets? Sir, what about the lethal and sublethal toxicity that petroleum can cause to the fishing habitat? And what about long-term ecological repercussions?

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the oil companies have consistently downplayed the dangers of a serious spill or blowout off our shores, especially, Sir, off Labrador where the limits of available technology have just about been reached.

Then, Sir, there is the question of the physical conflict with the fisheries. In the North Sea, Mr. Speaker,

MR. F. ROWE: the fishermen there have experienced problems with equipment and debris, either washed or thrown overboard from supply vessels; and, Sir, this has resulted in loss of fishing time and fouled nets. Also, Sir, fishing grounds around exploratory rigs have been closed to the fishery. Fishing grounds around production platforms have been closed to the fishery. Submarine pipeline routes, Mr. Speaker, have been closed to the fishery and harbour facilities have become polluted and overcrowded.

Looking at the economic pressure on the fishery, Mr. Speaker, the economic viability of the fishery could, in fact, be jeopardized in the short and in the long run, because, Sir, the much needed manpower or person power can be lured away from the fishing boats, lured away from the fish plants and from the administrative component of the fishery to the high paying jobs on construction projects, production platforms and supply boats. Sir, consequently, at the end of the oil boom, the fishery could be a very weak economic component in our Province because it did not have the manpower to sustain it during the oil boom.

Sir, the fourth question there

MR. F. ROWE: is the fishery is not a single industry. Now this is a peculiar thing to look at. Sir, everyone knows that the fishery is composed of the inshore fishery, the mid-water fishery, and the deep-water fishery or various descriptive modifications of the three types of fisheries that I have just mentioned.

Sir, if the oil boom strikes we could have a situation where as a result of manpower being drawn away from the inshore fishery it could cause a major expansion in the deep-water or offshore fishery by the large multi-national companies investing their huge capital in great trawler fleets. And, Sir, I submit that that is not the policy neither of the federal government, nor the provincial government.

It is the inshore fishery which we wish to preserve in this Province and have it co-exist with the mid-water and offshore fishery.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know that I have about half a minute left but I need about two or three minutes to really complete my point and I would ask leave of the House if I could just complete that.

MR. NEARY: By leave.

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) Agreed. By leave.

MR. F. ROWE: I thank hon. members, Mr. Speaker.

So, Sir, these are the main problems that we really have to address ourselves to in this particular debate. And, Sir, the time element prevents me from saying much more really about it. It also prevents me from mentioning the steps that have been taken by the federal government and the provincial government to help prevent some of the concerns that I have mentioned relating to the possible incompatibility of the fishery and the oil and gas industry. But, Sir, let me simply end by saying, or conclude by saying, that I have not read nor seen sufficient evidence from either the provincial or the federal government, nor from industry, to convince me that all will

MR. F. ROWE: be compatible, and all will be safe as it relates to oil and gas on the one hand, and the fishing industry off our shores on the other.

Now, Sir, that is not to say that both levels of government are not concerned and they have not done anything. For example, provincially the Premier has announced the Petroleum Directorate, which I think is an excellent idea.

Sections 30, 31, and 33 of the Federal Fisheries Act certainly have some control over how companies operate. And, in fact, the Federal Minister of Fisheries can stop certain oil related activities off our coast. Well, Sir, I hope, and I sincerely hope, and I respectfully request, that hon. members opposite do not use the activities that they are going to get involved in, and the federal government are already involved in, to speak out against this particular private member's resolution, Sir, because I think it is one of the most important resolutions brought before the House. Because whatever decisions we make in this House over the next two or three years may well decide the future, the foreseeable future of this Province and it could be disastrous or it could be good.

So, Sir, I respectfully ask for support for this particular resolution and I ask that no stone should be left unturned to ensure and assure the preservation of not only the fishery itself but of the very way of life of this Province. And, Sir, I would like to end by simply saying that I have introduced this resolution in an extremely non-partisan fashion. I have tried to address myself to the ecology, the sociology, the economy, the science, and what have you, of oil and gas production on the one hand and the fisheries on the other. And I hope hon. members will see fit to do the same and I respectfully ask for their unanimous support.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) -- The hon. the member for Bay of Islands.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WOODROW: He probably thinks it is funny and probably he is just telling his hon. friend and colleague he was foolish to make such a resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) has been going over the Province and outside the Province, and so has the Premier. In fact, only recently, in New York, he has certainly been looking into this same matter. And to start off another committee, to my mind, would not be the right thing to do at this particular time.

I would like to say though that the hon. member referred to the multi-nationals as the seven big sisters. Now, I do not know why he called them sisters, I would prefer to call them the seven big brothers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WOODROW: Now, Mr. Speaker, I also noticed that the hon. member, and I agree with him on this, prepared and read very carefully most of his speech. And because of the importance of this matter that he is talking about I have prepared mine and I intend to read most of it as well.

MR. NEARY: You are not allowed to read a speech in the House.

MR. WOODROW: When I get the experience of the hon. the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) I will probably be able to go on and swing on it, you know.

Mr. Speaker, much has been said during this session of the House concerning the development of offshore oil and gas and the possible detrimental effects such a petroleum industry would have on our fishery and traditional way of life. In fact, this session, as all members will agree, I suppose, almost every day something has been said about the effects

MR. WOODROW: Mr. Speaker, I would like, at the outset of the few remarks I have to make, to congratulate the hon. the member for Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) for bringing forth this motion or resolution.

I notice, Mr. Speaker, the resolution says, "Therefore be it resolved that this House fully debate both developments for the purpose of insuring that the fishery will not be endangered by offshore oil and gas exploration and exploitation and that the renewable fishery resource and the non-renewable oil and gas resource will be developed in a strategy of compatibility for the maximum benefits to our people."

But when the Throne Speech was read, Mr. Speaker, and there was mention made of another study on the fisheries, some hon. members from the opposite side of the House said the fisheries had been studied to death or words similar to that.

And also, "Be it further resolved that a Select Committee of this House be appointed to meet throughout the Province to hear and seek advice and recommendations, and to call outside experts, for the purpose of insuring the successful co-development of the fishing and offshore oil and gas industries and that such a Committee report to the House before the end of 1980".

Now, I would like to ask the hon. member what the Minister of Mines and Energy has been doing over the past couple of years, at least over the past year.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. WOODROW: Now, Mr. Speaker, I get sick and tired of interruptions from the member for Bonavista. He should go down and look after his district.

MR. WOODROW: of oil and gas on our lives and especially on the fishery. This has been a meaningful dialogue and I think that every member of this hon. House and, indeed, every resident in the Province is aware of the inherent dangers and benefits.

MR. L. WOODROW:

related to an oil boom when full scale production comes onstream. For our Province the challenge will be to develop the oil and gas industry for the maximum economic benefit. Now, I recently attended, Mr. Speaker, a conference on the effects of the oil and gas on our Province and perhaps the major thing that was brought out was this, that the development has not got to take control of us, we have to take control of the development while at the same time ensuring that the quality of life which we all treasure will not be destroyed.

Modern history has shown all too grimly that there is a price to be paid for the so-called progress and any hon. members who have visited the places where oil, in fact, has been discovered, they realize what ill-effects as well as good effects it can bring on a province or on a country. Whether it is in the field of nuclear energy, supertanker technology or development of our modern frontier areas, it is becoming apparent that the bigger and better, full speed ahead mentality of development poses serious questions.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to stop here and make this remark; I feel that the Premier and the higher echelons of the government, as well as the Cabinet, they must be awake, and I know this for a fact, many hours during the night pondering over this question because after all it is very serious. I do not suppose Newfoundland ever faced a problem more serious than we are facing at the present time. It certainly could be good and certainly it is going to bring evil things as well.

While our Province has remained somewhat aloof on the problems that have plagued the North American society for the past decade in particular, we will be forced in this decade to address these difficult questions. It will be an exciting, challenging and, by the same token, a dangerous period for our Province. Our culture, traditional lifestyle and industries, and the very humanity and spirit of quality that still marks this Province apart from the mainstream of North American life, will be severely tested and we must be ready to tackle and control the oncoming

MR. L. WOODROW:

oil and gas development lest it engulfs and swallows us as a people.

I am optimistic that we will meet the great challenge ahead, that we can seize the opportunity to maximize the economic benefits for our Province and maintain our social and cultural fabric.

Mr. Speaker, our government has indicated in clear language that this will and must be the case. Our government has also committed itself to the continuing revitalization of our fishing industry, recognizing that it is and will always be the backbone of our economy and social fabric providing direct employment for 30,000 Newfoundlanders and Labradorians and indirect employment for another 45,000. Our future growth and indeed our very existence rests fundamentally in the expanding fishing industry and the planned development of our resources.

Fears have been expressed from many quarters that a full-scale oil and gas industry will stunt our fishing industry since many of our young people will prefer the employment opportunities associated with the petroleum industry. While this may be the case in some instances,

MR. L. WOODROW:

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MR. L. WOODROW: I firmly believe that our young people in rural Newfoundland will continue to participate in our fishing industry because of the healthy economic return and for the quality of life in our rural communities

With our continued support through the development of new programs and improved marketing, the fishing industry will continue to be the major social and economic component in our Province's future.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of concerns regarding the environmental impact of offshore development and I would like to briefly mention a couple of areas that warrant our serious attention. I believe it is vitally important that we establish and enforce strict safeguards and an onshore capability to protect our marine environment in the event of an oil spill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, sometimes, no matter what precautions are taken, accidents can happen. But, I hope that we will never have something happen like happened when the Kurdistan was broken in two last year and had so many ill effects even on the coastline of our province. But, we can only, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, do our best. We are not God almighty. Even the Titanic sank and it was said that neither God nor the Devil could sink it. I am particularly concerned with any possible tanker movement around our rugged coastline and the viability of a seabed pipeline.

I understand that the studies certainly have been and are going on about the viability of a seabed pipeline but there is no doubt about it, the great icebergs will have, perhaps, something to say about that. These are questions that must be addressed to the fullest extent should oil and gas develop and become a reality and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that these things are being - advice is being sought from people who know what they are talking about and I cannot see why

MR. L. WOODROW: we should establish another committee at the moment to do things that are already being done or in the process of being done.

It is also vital that we encourage research into counteracting the inherent danger of icebergs that threaten offshore drilling and production operations. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that research is progressing on this environmental problem that again must be addressed before any full development comes on stream. Our marine environment is a very fragile one. In view of the recent activities in frontier exploration for oil and gas reserves, new concerns and questions have been posed. It is a challenge for technology and by the same token it is a challenge for our people.

Government's actions and initiative, to date, indicate that the important challenge ahead of us will be met. Offshore oil and gas development will proceed in a controlled, planned manner, and I believe this was brought out today by the hon. the Premier in answering the hon. member's questions from the district of LaPoile (S. Neary), offshore oil and gas development will proceed in a controlled, planned manner for the maximum benefit of our people in a strategy of compatibility with the fishing industry and all other resource based industries. This must, and will, be the case.

I will end up by saying, Mr. Speaker, that government have already taken steps to look into all these problems and I cannot see the necessity

MR. L. WOODROW: of a committee being set up to do,
as I said, what is already being done or in the process of being done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): The hon. the member for LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate my colleague for raising this very, very timely matter now of whether or not fish and oil are compatible. That is really the matter that the hon. gentleman raised. He brought on a debate that we were promised by the Premier last year. In the last session of the House we were told by the Premier we were going to have a full-fledged debate - a major debate, we were told by the Premier, on whether or not oil and gas and fish are compatible and whether or not there is a potential danger in the offshore drilling and exploration and production of oil, whether there is a potential danger that it could severely hamper the fishery in this Province. That is the purpose of the resolution, that is what it is all about, Mr. Speaker, and I would suggest that members who participate in this debate should address themselves to that topic, to that question. The hon. member who just spoke on behalf of the government did not address himself to that question, he skirted around it and did not meet the question head-on. I thought for a moment when the hon. gentleman started out - I said to myself, now there is Cabinet material, there is a potential Cabinet minister. I always felt that the hon. gentleman should be in the Cabinet. But at the end of his speech there, which he was reading, I was beginning to have grave doubts and I was losing confidence in the hon. gentleman, and now I know why he has been by-passed, he is too wishy-washy, trying to straddle the fence all the time instead of coming right down on the side of Motherhood. You are either right or wrong in this matter. You do not gamble with the fishery, your most basic industry. The most important renewable resource that you have you do not gamble with. And we are gambling with the fishery right now.

I was interested today to hear the Premier say during the Oral Question Period when I asked him some questions about his trip to New York - he told me that one of the matters raised with Mobil

MR. S. NEARY: was the environmental problems involved with gas and oil and the fishery. And I presume that the Premier during his trip to New York was brought up to date on the technology that is available on the face of this earth today to deal with an oil spill, whether it is caused by a tanker or by a broken pipeline or by a blowout in a well. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to members of this House that in the two offshore developments that have taken place in the world, the one in the North Sea and the one in the Gulf of Mexico, both of them have had a major oil spill as the result of a blowout.

AN HON. MEMBER: Beaufort Sea.

MR. S. NEARY: And in the Beaufort Sea also. But in the two major offshore developments on the face of the earth today, both of them have had a major oil spill that has done tremendous damage to the environment and to the coastline in the United States and in the North Sea. And I think we may as well face up to it here. Sooner or later, Mr. Speaker, we are going to have it here in Newfoundland on the Grand Banks, which is where Hibernia is located, right in the heart of the most prosperous fishing grounds around our coast. Sooner or later we are going to have it. And, Mr. Speaker, all the film and all the propaganda - and they are out there now at it. The oil companies are having documentaries done on all the money they have spent to protect the environment and to clean up oil spills. But all the film and all the propaganda and all the brochures and all the documents that they can put out will not save us from a major oil spill on the Grand Banks, will not save the fishery. Any spill on the Grand Banks is going to do irreparable damage to our fishery.

AN HON. MEMBER: Send them home.

MR. S. NEARY: No, it is not a matter of sending them home. I think the Premier put his finger on it today. I do not know whether it slipped out or not. He said, 'We may have to delay -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, that is right. I heard what

MR. NEARY:

he said. I hang on to every word that is said regarding the offshore and the fishery. "We may have to delay," he said, "the development, the production stage of the offshore development because of the threat to our environment." And I tell you that, that is right on, Mr. Speaker.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

That is reassuring.

MR. NEARY:

Well I do not know how reassuring it is because when the big money starts to get moved around and the pressure come on -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, sooner or later it is going to happen and I can tell this House right now that there is no technology on the face of this earth that can cope with a major oil spill off the Coast of Newfoundland, no technology.

There a year, or a year and a half ago, the Canadian Coast Guard and the oil companies went down out here in Freshwater Bay and they dragged a few booms around with the offshore service vessels, dragged a few booms around, threw a few barrels of oil in the water, and invited the press out to do a con job on them.

MR. HODDER:

On a calm day.

MR. NEARY:

On a calm day they took them out in Freshwater Bay, did their con job. That night the two television stations carried these two little tubs, hardly as big - not as big as the ferry to Bell Island, dragging booms around Freshwater Bay to show us how they clean up an oil spill.

MR. HODDER:

There was no wind, no swell and no ice.

MR. NEARY:

And there was no ice, no wind and no swell, and my hon. friend said.

They accomplished what they set out to do, they brainwashed the press. And that is so easy to do in this Province. They are so gullible. They have been brainwashed by this government, by the Premier and by the ministers.

MR. STAGG:

They are all gone.

MR. NEARY: Well, I do not care whether they are gone or not, I am here to do a job and I am going to do my job. It does not make any difference to me if they are there or not. That is their problem. If they are not doing a job for the Newfoundland people, that is their problem, not mine. They are supposed to be the eyes and the ears of this House, and if they cut off their interviews and their copy at 4:30 in the afternoon that is their problem and not mine. So I am going to carry on and do my job, because I have done a tremendous amount of research on this particular matter, and I am really scared and frightened at the way the media, especially, because they are the ones who convey, communicate the information to the people, the way they have been lulled into a sense of complacency over the threat, the possibility, the danger to our environment and especially to the fishery in this Province.

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible) PR jobs.

MR. NEARY: No, well, that is right, they are either looking for jobs in the public service on the government payroll or PR jobs with some of the big oil companies. That does not surprise me a bit. You do have the odd dedicated one. There are a couple of dedicated people up there, but the others, I would submit, do things in anticipation of favours they can get for themselves in the future, and I have seen it happen so often.

AN HON. MEMBER: And we will not name them.

MR. NEARY: And I will not name them, no, I certainly will not name them, but you can look up in the gallery now and see who was there last year, see who was there the year before, see who has been there for the last seven or eight years, and then you can decide for yourselves who the dedicated ones are. It is tragic, Mr. Speaker. It is most unfortunate and it is tragic that the media have been lulled into a sense of complacency. They are supposed to be communicating information, and they accept things at face value. Well, I do not accept things at face value. I went to the Coast Guard after that demonstration out in Freshwater Bay. I could hardly believe it. "Is that all we have?" I said to myself. "Is that all we have to protect our fishery and to protect the coast of Newfoundland, the bird life, the seals and the fish against an oil spill on the Grand Banks? Is that all we have?" And I

MR. NEARY: asked the Coast Guard and I found out that is all we have. That is supposed to be the latest technology available on the face of this earth, and the oil companies will respond - every time I have raised the matter, they will come back and say, "Oh, we have spent millions of dollars, we have purchased the latest and the best technology available on the face of the earth". In my opinion, Mr. Speaker,

MR. NEARY: that is not good enough and that is why today, I believe, the Premier reacted to my question when he said, "We may have to postpone the production of oil on the Grand Banks until the environmental problem is solved." Is that what the hon. gentleman said today when I put the question to the hon. the Premier about his visit to New York when he told us that one of the priority items in these discussions with Mobil was the environmental problems involved with the production of oil and the exploration that is going on off our coast? Mr. Speaker, a few years back, I believe it was back in 1976, this government entered into an agreement with the Government of Canada - the hon. gentleman will remember the Gillespie formula, and that is the only reason the oil companies are out there right now, because the Government of Canada and the Province were able to agree that certain technical matters involved in the offshore drilling and exploration, technical matters such as the environment would be jointly - the responsibility would be jointly shared by the provincial government and by the Government of Canada. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, that is why the oil companies came back and started drilling again. It was not what this government did, it was what the Government of Canada did in co-operation with this government that got the oil companies back drilling again. And the environmental matter was one of the technical matters that is now being shared jointly by the provincial government and by the Government of Canada. And I say that is a good thing, although they managed to suck the Coast Guard in too, the oil companies did. The oil companies took all this technology that they are talking about, a few little booms and a few little offshore tubs and they turned it over to the Coast Guard. They said to the Coast Guard "Would you accept the responsibility of looking after this for us? Look after it for us and in the event of an oil spill will you see that it is put in the water and so forth?" And the Coast Guard said yes they would and they are, they have it stored over on the Southside.

MR. HODDER:

A waste of the taxpayer's money.

MR. NEARY:

A waste of the taxpayer's money, that is right.

The oil companies, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, should, right at this very moment, be compelled to set up a fund in case there is an oil spill or an accident on the Grand Banks or off Labrador, wherever they are drilling, set up a fund the same as they have been forced to do everywhere else they have gone. But even at that, Mr. Speaker, even if they set up a fund, which I think they should have, a liability fund, but even if they set that up and we do have a spill it is not going to compensate for the damage that it will do. It might help but it will not compensate. For instance, we could have our fishery damaged forever. And that certainly is a very frightening thought but it could happen. So the real question that arises now, Mr. Speaker, is, oil and gas and the fishery, can they be compatible? That is the question. And I am not sure after the answers the Premier gave today whether they are or not. And I think it is incumbent upon that gentleman - he has been down to New York, he only came back last night on the plane. He had his entourage with him. He had Mr. Cabot Martin who is now refusing to go on television. He is now refusing. He had an invitation to go on Here and Now and turned it down. Thank God the message has finally gotten through, that he is not the policy maker, and he had to turn it down. He was told to stay off the air, keep his physog and his puss off the televisions, stay off the air. The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) was down in New York. Mr. Victor Young was called back off his holidays. It was so urgent and he was so badly needed he was called from Florida, basking in the sun down there. The President of Newfoundland Hydro was called back from his holidays and told to be in New York. "Get in New York because we have urgent and important matters to discuss." Now I hope the hon. gentleman will get into this debate and tell us - I do not know who else was there - the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) -

MR. S. NEARY: Oh, Mr. Petten was there, of course, the gentleman who writes all of the press releases, the propagandä. Dr. Goebbels of the eighth floor, the propagandist, he was there, he had to travel down to New York at public expense, for what purpose? For what purpose was he down there? Or to put it -

AN HON. MEMBER: Who?

MR. S. NEARY: Dr. Goebbels, Petten, the fellow who used to be over with CN.

MR. L. THOMS: He had to make sure all the rooms were stocked.

MR. S. NEARY: Well, somebody had to carry the suitcases, I suppose. Well, for what other reason would he be there? He had no reason. It would have been far better for the Premier had he taken another member of this House. Instead of taking Mr. Cabot Martin and Mr. Petten and Mr. Young, who was on holidays and summoned back to New York, instead take three members of the House of Assembly down. We are the policy makers and we are the people who have to make decisions whether, in our opinion these developments should take place and go ahead and whether or not the fishery and oil and gas are compatible.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a whole year now, I have been a whole year trying to get a trip out to one of these oil drilling rigs to see what is going on out there. I have been in the Gulf of Mexico. I had no problem at all to get on an oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico but I am having all kinds of problems getting aboard an oil rig here on the Grand Banks -

MR. F. STAGG: They do not know you down there.

MR. S. NEARY: Well, I hope after today they will get to know me because my hon. friend made an excellent suggestion the other day. We are the people who have to make the decisions on these developments, on these matters and we

MR. S. NEARY: are complete ignoramuses. We know nothing about it. The Premier may know about it because he is travelling around all the time. But we have to take our advice and we have to get our information from public servants and we do not know whether they are right or wrong and half the time it is just news releases they are putting out and that is not good enough when we are talking about such vital matters, such important matters. I think the whole House of Assembly, all the members should be taken out aboard of these rigs to see what is going on, to see how that poor fellow fell overboard or jumped overboard the other day and was drowned - What happened in that particular instance? - to see if they are safe, to see if the Government of Canada is carrying out their part of the bargain to inspect and see that the environmental regulations are carried out.

Mr. Speaker, these are very, very serious matters, matters that are very vital to this Province. And I am glad my hon. friend brought this resolution into this House because as hon. members know, and they as well face it, and it is not my - I have been trying to find out about the movement of icebergs. I got a little booklet one day somebody sent me from, I believe it was the university, where they went out and put a few cables around these big icebergs and they felt that if they could shift them a fraction of an inch from the time they started in the North until they got down to the oil rig on the Grand Bank - or a pipeline whatever it is - that they could have them off their course. I do not know whether it has been successful or not, not enough research has been done on it. And here you have these big oil drilling rigs right in iceberg alley -

AN HON. MEMBER: Not so. Not so.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, they are. Well, they are right in iceberg alley and the technology to protect the fishery, to protect the environment is not available, it is not available and I do not care what the oil companies say. The oil companies can retort by saying, 'Well, we have spent millions of dollars to get the latest technology and passed it over to the Coast Guard. That is no answer, Sir. I want a definite answer out of their mouths. The Premier must have got it when he was in New York. 'Can you guarantee us that if we have an oil spill, whether it be from a pipeline or a tanker or a blow-out in a well, can you cope with it?' That is the question we want answered. It is not 'Well, we have all of the latest technology.' That is not the answer, we want a simple yes or no. And if the answer is no then the hon. the Premier better get up and elaborate

MR. NEARY: and expand on his answer that he gave me today in this House. Will it be necessary? Will we be forced? Will we have any choice but to postpone or delay the production of oil out here on the Grand Banks? Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, if we just go ahead, gamble, take chances, then we are placing the fishing industry, our most basic industry, our only real renewable resource in this Province in jeopardy. And I believe it is incumbent now on the Premier to get into this debate, support my hon. friend's resolution. Because the spokesman for the government side, the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), did not say, I do not think he did, whether or not he was going to support this resolution or whether he was going to vote against it. It is a good resolution. I hope members on both sides of the House will vote for it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Baird): The hon. the member for Placentia.

MR. PATTERSON: Mr. Speaker, this resolution started out on a very high plane and I would have hoped it would have continued along in that trend. But now that personalities have been dragged in, the Premier's press secretary, a very able man, a very competent man, we are very fortunate to have a man of his ability today in Newfoundland, also Mr. Martin, a very bright young man.

And it seems to me I am beginning to detect that there is a rift in the Liberal Party on that side.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. PATTERSON: Not so much a rift in the Liberal Party among themselves, but with their counterparts in Ottawa.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, yes.

MR. STAGG: Let her go, 'Bill'.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. PATTERSON: You will get it all if you will just wait. I am talking about a rift between the federal Liberals and the Liberals here in Newfoundland. It is only very, very recently that the Liberals opposite - now, the younger lads, I am not referring to the younger lads who came in in 1975, but to the retreads -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PATTERSON: - held over from the other regime. All of a sudden, since the Tories came to power, they are very conscious of pollution. But they were the very boys who destroyed the countryside in Newfoundland, they were the very boys who ordered an asphalt plant into Deer Lake when the council -

MR. THOMS: Have we made a (inaudible).

MR. PATTERSON: You were excluded from this. - when the council opposed it. When the council decided they objected to an asphalt plant they were advised to put it in. You have pollution on the land as well as on the sea. The roads across Newfoundland contracts were let to their friends without tenders and the sides of the roads were destroyed and vegetation destroyed.

Now, if you gentlemen opposite want to go in opposition to your counterparts in Ottawa, I think that you should stand in your places now and condemn the Department of Transport for thinking about removing the Placentia Bay Marine Centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PATTERSON: I am sure the hon. member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Hollett) will.

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

MR. SPEAKER(Baird): A point of order.

MR. F.B. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, I believe the resolution has something to do with the fishing industry and the compatibility of the fishing industry with the oil and gas industry. The hon. member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) so far has spoken about an asphalt plant in Deer Lake, he is talking about transportation down in his particular district, and talking about rifts within the Liberal Party, all of which are completely irrelevant to the particular resolution under consideration and I would ask Mr. Speaker if he could remind the hon. member presently speaking of the rule of relevance and become relevant to this particular resolution.

PREMIER PECKFORD: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. the member for Placentia is trying to make a point and he has not totally made the point although I think most hon. members here understand what the hon. member for Placentia is coming to, that there are hon. gentlemen opposite who, when in different circumstances, pursued a marine policy, a fisheries policy, and an overall policy which was not

PREMIER PECKFORD:

in the best interest of this Province, and this is how he is trying to relate it to this particular resolution. As we have seen in previous resolutions on the last number of Wednesdays here, that is allowed, that there has been a fair amount of latitude allowed hon. members in the debate of these kinds of resolutions.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

And the hon. the member for Placentia

(Mr. W. Patterson) is trying to make the point that hon. members opposite in trying to pursue a fisheries policy should remember that they have been very inconsistent in other like policies. And this is the kind of point he is trying to make and relate it to this overall fisheries resolution. So it is not irrelevant, it is very, very relevant, because it shows the consistency or lack thereof of certain policies that hon. gentlemen opposite have pursued over the years.

MR. F. ROWE:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Baird):

The hon. the member for Trinity -

Bay de Verde.

MR. F. ROWE:

The fact that the hon. the member for Placentia has failed to make his point should be no excuse to let him off the hook from the point of view of relevancy. If we have to spend twenty minutes waiting for him to make his point and he fails to make his point and he is irrelevant in doing so, he should be ruled as being irrelevant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

AN HON. MEMBER:

He can say whatever he wants to because (inaudible)

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please! To the point of order.

MR. PATTERSON:

I notice the hon. gentleman from Trinity -

Bay de Verde has points as well as curves.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. F. ROWE:

I will show you a curve in a minute,

my son!

MR. SPEAKER:

To the point of order. I would suggest that this is a difference of opinion. I would ask the hon. the member for Placentia to continue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. W. PATTERSON:

I do not know, Mr. Speaker, if the hon. the member for Trinity Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) was in this House when the ERCO plant was set up without any environmental safeguards.

MR. F. ROWE:

I was what?

MR. W. PATTERSON:

Were you in this House? Were you a member of this Legislature then?

MR. F. ROWE:

(Inaudible) me? The answer is no.

MR. W. PATTERSON:

No. You were in this House possibly when the Come By Chance refinery was set up in Placentia Bay?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. F. ROWE:

I would ask the hon. member a question. If a Select Committee were set up at that time, would that not have been advisable?

MR. PATTERSON:

If you would let me get to that. The point that I am trying to make here is this, and it is very straightforward: Presently the federal Department of Transport in Ottawa are considering phasing out the Argentia Management Centre that controls all ships going into Placentia Bay, all the ships going into Burin - and ships are connected with the fishery in this particular case. We have ships going up there hauling phosphorus, so they are concerned with phosphorus. And we are going to have the Atlantic Shipping in and out there with freight. We have the fishermen of Placentia Bay crisscrossing the bay. They do not go on a ninety degree angle, they go on about a forty-five. As a result, they are in the ships' lanes for possibly an hour and a half. Now, are you people going to protest to the Department of Transport and object, to tell them that they should not take out this?

MR. THOMS:

(Inaudible) do not have to protest to anybody.

MR. W. PATTERSON:

But you were the very same people over there who supported it when they took the satellite station out of Cuslett a couple of years ago.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS:

I was not here then (inaudible)

MR. W. PATTERSON:

The Liberals in Ottawa did it. The party did it. Do not try to alienate yourself. Do not try to isolate yourself

MR. W. PATTERSON: from the Liberal Party, from the Liberal Party in Ottawa because you are part and parcel of that administration. And that was the administration that pulled the satellite station out of Cuslett. Now they have the unmitigated gall to go ahead and try and steal the one out of Argentina. And I hate to think what will happen to the ships going into Burin. I hate to think what is going to happen up in my hon. friend's district if this is allowed to happen. And I am sure he will work hard against it and if necessary he will walk over here and fight it with us.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible)

MR. W. PATTERSON: We are not looking for recruits. And I am going to tell you we are going to be very selective, You will make your application and you will wait in line.

MR. L. THOMS: No, I am not a coward.

MR. W. PATTERSON: I did not call you a coward. But if you do not stand up and oppose the decision of the Department of Transport I will have a name for you.

MR. L. THOMS: I will oppose anybody. I will oppose you.

MR. W. PATTERSON: That is what is going on presently so I would advise you to get in touch with your counterparts in Ottawa and tell them what is happening in Argentina. They will do, as sure as night must follow day, they will steal that out like they went down and cut the towers down in Cuslett and shifted them out to Port aux Basques.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. W. PATTERSON: We are working on that yes. And who was in Ottawa when that happened, Minister of Transport, but your Leader. He can brief you on it. He can tell you the cunning ways they go about doing things when it comes to Newfoundland.

MR. W. PATTERSON: Newfoundland is the only province in Canada where they have decided to cut back. The hon. the member for Bay de Verde (F. Rowe) says that has nothing to do with fishery. Take a dragger going into Burin or draggers going up to Placentia and they collide with a phosphorous ship, what is going to happen then? CN boats going in there. During the Liberal administration, when that refinery was there, fifty-two tankers went up that bay without pilots. They just pulled in off Argentia, because it was not a compulsory pilotage area, waved to the base there and went on up. And they knew about that - I wrote them about it. We have the facts and figures on how many ships went, how many thousand tons of oil they carried. So these are the things you have to be concerned with with the fishery. Whether the fish and oil can go together, well cod liver oil and fish, that seems to be working -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. W. PATTERSON: It works well here in Newfoundland, the blue bottle.

MR. STIRLING: (Inaudible) are you happy with the oil development?

MR. W. PATTERSON: I am quite happy with the oil development. Quite happy with the oil development. There is not a man more concerned for the environment here under proper management -

MR. THOMS: You do not know any more about it than any of the rest of us who have (inaudible) to be here.

MR. W. PATTERSON: But, we have to get control of it. If we have not got control of it, if we have some fellow up in Ottawa making the decisions -

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible) really controlled.

MR. W. PATTERSON: -we have got to have that. The ownership and the control must rest here with the Province of Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. STIRLING: Be sure you say that once a day.

MR. W. PATTERSON: I will say that and before the oil question jurisdiction is settled that place over there will be as empty as a morgue after a funeral.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. W. PATTERSON: They will be all over there. Because you are going to destroy yourselves if you do not take a stand on this very important issue, this very, very important issue. I am very concerned over the oil and I am very concerned over the fish but I think that we have the necessary regulations to control that. Now there are things that can happen. We could have a blowout like they had down there in Mexico. That would be very difficult to handle but are we going to hide away and go back two or three hundred years just because of this or because of that? We have to look down the road and we have to do the planning.

MR. THOMS: If it is going to destroy the fisheries, yes.

MR. PATTERSON: If it is going - but who knows that? You know, if you get in a plane tonight to go to Australia you are figuring you are going to get to Australia.

MR. STIRLING: What information do you have that we do not have?

MR. PATTERSON: What kind of information?

MR. STIRLING: All this environmental (inaudible) or do you take the word of the Premier?

MR. PATTERSON: I do respect the Premier's word and I congratulate him for the regulations he brought in while he was Minister of Mines and Energy -

MR. STIRLING: A previous administration. That does not count, under a previous administration.

MR. PATTERSON: So there is no comparison with the past and the present of what your former clique did.

MR. STIRLING: So do you have any information that we do not have?

MR. PATTERSON: I do not know what you know.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PATTERSON: I do not know. It is like Oliver Goldsmith said, 'And still they gazed/And still the wonder grew/That one small head/Could

MR. PATTERSON: carry all he knew. I do not know what you know. I do not think you know a thing my son.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING: Tell us what you know, Tell us what you know. In the elected time that you have left tell us what you know about the offshore oil.

MR. PATTERSON: Could this happen in Placentia Bay? Look at this, Ask yourself that question.

AN HON. MEMBER: (inaudible)

MR. PATTERSON: No, it is not I will bring it over to you. I will enlarge it for you. The answer - when you come over to sit with me I will just pass it to you so I will not have to enlarge it.

MR. THOMS: I will be here.

MR. PATTERSON: The answer many people fear is that it could if and when the Come by Chance oil refinery resumes production and huge tankers again begin to ply Placentia Bay. Pictured here is the crippled supertanker Atlantic Empress burning of Tobago in the Caribbean following high seas collision with another supertanker the Aegean Captain. They carried millions of barrels of naphtha and light crude which caused widespread ocean pollution. Twenty-seven men were lost in the collision. So that is why we have to be very careful in what we are doing, I stated it here a few weeks ago in the House but we have a federal Environmental Assessment Act now, we also have a provincial Assessment Act and I think the staff are very competent people but that does not necessarily ensure that you are not going to an oil spill. So I cannot support that bill, I cannot support this motion here insofar as a select committee is concerned because it is not needed because we have all kinds of regulations. We are going to study the thing, First and foremost we are going to control it, we are going to own it and then we are going to make the regulations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. PATTERSON: And we are going to control the development. This is not a giveaway, it is not a Santa Clause,

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MR. PATTERSON:

this is hard business, this is business-

MR. THOMS:

Why can you not support this ?

MR. STIRLING:

Why are you afraid to debate it?

MR. PATTERSON :

One fellow wants to know why I am afraid

and the other fellow - do I show any signs of fear ?

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING:

You will not agree on a select committee -

MR. PATTERSON:

Because we do not need a select committee.

MR. PATTERSON: We have a Federal Environmental Assessment office open here in St. John's, I believe. These are professionals. Too long we have listened and sought and accepted advice from people who were not professionals here in Newfoundland.

MR. WARREN: You are still doing it.

MR. PATTERSON: We are not doing it. We are knowingly not doing it. We are not running off like a hangman with a black hood over the head calling in this fellow and that fellow. We are not doing that, my son. Any proposals that come to this government are very carefully assessed.

MR. STIRLING: Have you read what your environmental professionals said about the Environmental Act?

MR. PATTERSON: Well, there are so many environmentalists, you have them in Europe, you have them in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, all over the world.

MR. STIRLING: No, no, the ones on the government payroll.

MR. PATTERSON: I do not know which ones.

MR. STIRLING: Have you read what they said?

MR. PATTERSON: Yes.

MR. STIRLING: Ask the minister.

MR. PATTERSON: Yes, and I have great faith in what they said.

MR. STIRLING: You have read what they said?

MR. PATTERSON: Great faith.

MR. STIRLING: They said the minister has too much authority.

MR. PATTERSON: Oh, no, no, no, that is only an opinion.

MR. STIRLING: That is their opinion.

MR. PATTERSON: Not at all, no, no, no.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is that a professional opinion?

MR. PATTERSON: Oh, no, no, no.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Point of order, point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird) Point of order.

PREMIER PECKFORD: This is really sort of getting out of hand, and I do not think the hon. members opposite really mean it, but I do not know if it is because the hon. member from Placentia (Mr. Patterson) is

PREMIER PECKFORD: being provocative or not but I would like to hear the hon. member from Placentia (Mr. Patterson) in silence. I would ask the hon. members, especially from Bonavista North (Mr. Stirling) and Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) to participate in this debate in the way that the rules permit. After the hon. member for Placentia is finished his speech, we would love to hear, and I will be very, very silent, what the member from Grand Bank has to say and what the member for Bonavista North has to say. But while the member for Placentia has the floor, let him speak in silence, let him be heard in silence, so that we can get on with this very, very interesting and important debate.

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

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird) The hon. the member for Bonavista North.

PREMIER PECKFORD: There cannot be two points of order at -

MR. STIRLING: To the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order.

MR. STIRLING: Speaking on the point of order raised by the Premier. You see the pattern for this debate was set by the member, who was being very provocative, and as soon as we start asking questions that embarrass the Premier he wants to change the rules, so to say, "Well, we cannot have that back and forth across, now we should hear in silence". Well, the pattern has to be set by the Premier, and he was the one who entered into this and made comments back and forth across the House. What is a rule that we have to stick by should also be a rule that is stuck by on that side.

MR. STAGG: What about the rule of attending the House?

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, any member has the right to be heard in silence.

MR. PATTERSON: The member for Bonavista North referred to employees of government who, I presume, are dealing with the environment. Is that correct?

MR. STIRLING: Yes, if you ask me I will explain what I meant by it. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bonavista North.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: (Baird)

By leave.

MR. STIRLING:

Mr. Speaker, with the permission -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING:

I appreciate the fact that the member has -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms)

Order, please!

The hon. member for Bonavista North has a point to make.

MR. STIRLING:

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the member who was speaking yielded. He asked the question, he asked if I would explain what I meant and I said if he would yield I would explain.

When we were discussing the Environmental bill and that the member who was speaking brought up the fact that they now take the word of professionals, my colleague from Lapoile (Mr. Neary) asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Environment (Mrs. Newhook) if she would table the replies that came from the government's biologists and experts about the Environmental bill. He asked if she would table them because he has copies of it and that the minister sent out to all of these experts that the member referred to, the people who were the professionals who know about the environment, sent out to them and asked them what was their opinion. And they wrote back their opinions one after the other, one after the other saying, "The minister has too much authority, not enough referred to us. The minister can overrule us. We recommend that changes be made." All of these letters, that is what I was asking the member, if he has seen them and if those are the biologists that he is referring to.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Placentia.

MR. PATTERSON:

I did not know the time was so short because, you know, when you invite an explanation from the hon. member from Bonavista North it is like asking him the time and he will tell you how to make a watch.

MR. PATTERSON:

The experts are not always right. If you cut your finger you go to a doctor. If you have a legal problem you go to a lawyer. So that is a way of life. We just have to place faith in these people, select what we think are the best but -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) for advice.

MR. PATTERSON: I did not say that. A team of scientists has examined the possibility of a major North Atlantic oil spill and concluded the job of cleaning up with the existing equipment would be impossible. When attempts to divert the iceberg with huge tugs are found to be impossible, the rig caps the oil well it is working on and moves out of the way but the iceberg is so big it scrapes the seabed and unplugs the well, oil flows out at a rate of 15,000 barrels a day. That is what I assume would come out of one of these rigs out there. This is from people working from the government. We did not hide that and say, "Do not print it". The Premier does not screen the things. He does not do like one of the Premiers who went down to the Newfoundland Hotel when the Minister of Finance was from Ottawa and said, "Look if you say that you are finished" and he went back to Ottawa. This is free, this is open dialogue between -

AN HON. MEMBER: And he was finished.

MR. PATTERSON: Yes, he was finished is right. And this is an open dialogue there.

MR. STIRLING: (Inaudible) the experts.

MR. PATTERSON: You will have to go to the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) for that. I agree with the hon. member for Burgeo (Mr. Andrews), you know, he has a great concern. He has made some fine speeches here in this House on oil, he shows a great concern for it. I think he mentioned today about the oil spill that was down in Mexico, an accident involving the sinking of a floating oil rig following an oil and gas leak in the Gulf of Mexico. It appears to have developed into the greatest ecological disaster in the history of oil exploration. As a result \$2.5 million barrels of crude oil are expected to keep gushing

MR. PATTERSON:

out of the waters of the Mexican Caribbean, 80 kilometers off Campeche in the Southeastern part of Mexico. The Caribbean, reputed for the fauna and flora now is threatened with a gigantic 200 km wide oil slick which has already reached the Coast of Mexico. All these things, I am sure they must be nightmares on the part of the people who are trying to put this together. These things can happen but hopefully they will not happen. But a select committee certainly will not keep an iceberg from coming down out of Narssarrssuaq Fjord in Greenland. It certainly will not do that.

MR. STIRLING: But it would (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): Order, please!

MR. PATTERSON: But I would think rather than you be interrupting me get up and make a speech and say something constructive.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I did not want to get into this debate but just listening to the hon. member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) it is very difficult probably not to get into a debate that is so vital to Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders.

MR. NEARY: How could you jump over the Moores years and go right back to the other administration?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, during the past hour or so on both sides of the House we have had exchanges back and forth and I believe that if we are going to debate such a very important motion as this, and it is important but very simple - Mr. Speaker, basically all it is asking for is to debate fully the development for the purpose of ensuring that the fishery will not be endangered by offshore oil and gas exploration.

MR. HISCOCK: They do not even know what a fish is.

MR. WARREN: And that the renewable fishery resource and a non-renewable oil and gas resource be developed with strategy.

MR. HISCOCK: There he goes.

MR. WARREN:

And furthermore a select committee be established. Now, Mr. Speaker, if we in this government, in this hon. House, are going to go around this Province on cloud nine as the members of the government are acting presently, today, "I am too good to be told anything. 'Look' we know what we are doing. We do not need experts." That is exactly the attitude of the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson) who just left us, you know, "We know all we are going to do. We know what is out there. We know everything about the offshore oil. The fish will not be hurt. There will be ample fish when the oil is there and gone.

Mr. Speaker, not too long ago, in fact I believe it is still in its final stages, there was a select committee set up in this hon. House on the adoption of a flag. Now on the adoption of the flag a select

MR. G. WARREN:

Committee of this House went throughout the Province, throughout Labrador and even went so far as London, England and different parts in Western Europe. Now, it costs, probably, approximately \$57,000 to \$80,000 to decide on a flag for this Province.

MR. S. NEARY: Dinners and wine parties all over the place.

MR. G. WARREN: Now, Mr. Speaker, here we are talking about the livelihood of practically 80 per cent of Newfoundland directly or indirectly - the fishery and the oil and gas - and here we can not even have a Select Committee of the hon. members of this House who have been elected as the representatives of the Province to decide once and for all whether we are going to quit our fishery or not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, the member spoke up just now talking about past performances and he said, "Who was in Ottawa when such a thing was happening, who was in Ottawa when such a satellite station was abandoned?"

MR. S. NEARY: Who was here when Noah built the ark?

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, who was in Ottawa when the Premier said that Romeo LaBlanc was a better Fisheries Minister than Jim McGrath, who was in Ottawa then, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. F. STAGG: We are use to fellows reading our minds over here?

MR. S. NEARY: No, it is blowing your minds.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I think that is a compliment for the hon. member from Stephenville (Mr. F. Stagg) what the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. S. Neary) just said, I am sure.

I am going to go down on the Southern Labrador Coast which is one of the richest areas of the mid-

MR. G. WARREN:

North and here we have this year

Petro Canada is planning to go down and take over from Eastcan and do some drilling explorations. Now, they are going to be drilling for offshore oil and gas. At this time the fishery is just beginning, the cod fishery in particular, with the increase in the Northern cod going back to the coast. The fishermen down there now, the last year and a half, two years, have begun to go back into the cod fishery and are making a half decent living.

Now, we are worse off than

the Grand Banks, we are off in the Labrador current, the Arctic and sub-Arctic climate is a very influential factor. Icebergs - ice for eight or ten months of the year and there is only a very, very short fishing season. You know, there are a lot of questions that we can ask ourselves on this particular area of our Province. What effect will offshore oil and gas exploration have on the lives of those 6,000 or 8,000 people?

Mr. Speaker, in the Royal Commission

on Labrador in 1974, there were several constraints to the fishery in Labrador and I want to pick out two or three of them. You know, we have our fisheries and our fisheries are not even brought up to standard in particular in this area of woods and not even brought up to standard and here we are talking about - come on in, get the oil and gas and more or less put your fishing to one side. Although the Premier saying in one breath, "The fishery is our prime concern." I disbelieve that. I do not believe that whatsoever because if it was there would be more infrastructure on onshore infrastructure, there would be more compensation put on communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador in upgrading the fishing facilities if there is more concern there - there is more concern on the offshore oil. Sea ice restricts the shore based fishery to five months for most of the coast and a maximum of seven months in a year.

Mr. Speaker, asking for a Select

Committee, you know -

MR. F. STAGG:

A smoke screen.

MR. G. WARREN:

A smoke screen, okay. Okay, we had a smoke screen there on the Flag Committee, was that a smoke screen? Has the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) already got his mind made up on what kind of flag we are going to have?

MR. S. NEARY:

Well, we know one thing -

MR. G. WARREN:

I know one thing, that is right -

MR. S. NEARY:

They are going to haul down the Union Jack.

MR. G. WARREN:

Right. So he has already got his mind made up. Was that a smoke screen - \$80,000 of taxpayers' money? That is what I call smoke screens.

MR. L. THOMS:

How much?

MR. G. WARREN:

Probably \$80,000 probably more.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible)

MR. G. WARREN:

I am just using \$80,000 for (inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY:

(Inaudible) over in London.

MR. G. WARREN:

So you know, you are talking about smoke screens, look at the past smoke screens, the smoke screens of the past seven years.

MR. S. NEARY:

One of my kids could have researched the Union Jack for you.

MR. L. THOMS:

From \$12,000 to \$15,000.

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt)

Order, please.

MR. S. NEARY:

Tear down the Union Jack (inaudible).

MR. G. WARREN:

Mr. Speaker, all we are asking for - we are not deciding

MR. G. WARREN: on any liberation group in the Province who want the flag, we are just deciding on the people of this Province, on their livelihood. Anyone in this Province directly or indirectly depends on the fishery much more so, than, probably ten years down the road, they will depend on oil and gas.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is bit ridiculous when you get a member on the government side having it smoke screened. Look at the past performance of the seven years and there is a lot of smoke screening in fact they are smokestacks -

MR. S. NEARY: But they jump over that. You have to blot that out, that seven years of corruption.

MR. L. THOMS: It did not exist.

MR. S. NEARY: Mismanagement, waste and extravagance and corruption. Blot it out of your mind.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. S. NEARY: I get carried away Your Honour. When I think about it it is enough to make you cry.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, when my hon. friend for Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr.F. Rowe) brought in this resolution last week the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir brought in a resolution that received unanimous consent from both sides of the House. It was a worthwhile resolution. Now here is a resolution pertaining to the fisheries very, much in line with what the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir brought in last week. Now we should pull out that resolution. This resolution is still basically saying we have to protect the fishery. It is actually a continuation of the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir's resolution last week. I will be interested when the hon. member gets on his feet in this debate and comes up and supports this resolution because both of them are tied in, both of these resolutions are tied together. And if he so interested as he was on CBC years ago in protecting the fishery let him get

MR. G. WARREN: up in this House and say it in supporting this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, our fishery is the mainstay of this Province, we cannot emphasize it too greatly. From Nain in Northern Labrador right down to Cape Race, right down to Cape Ray, right down to Cape Spear any part of this Province is depending indirectly or directly on the fisheries. So why should we let the big oil companies come in and put down their anchor off the Grand Banks or off Hopedale, Labrador and extract the oil out of the seabed and all of a sudden - you know, explosions happen and it could -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible) reading it?

MR. G. WARREN: Have I read that? - I have good eyesight but I cannot see that far, I can barely see the hon. member by the way.

MR. THOMS: How lucky you are!

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) Order, please! The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue in the next three or four minutes on this very important resolution. But I am sure that the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) has no regard for the fishery, has no regard whatsoever for the fishery by the few comments that he made in this hon. House so far this evening. He does not give a darn about the fishery.

MR. HISCOCK: He does not know what a fish is.

MR. G. WARREN: In fact, I am doubtful - he asked me a question a while ago, what a whitefish was I am doubtful if he knows what a codfish is. I do not believe he would know a codfish probably from a lobster -

MR. F. STAGG: See what else you can smear.

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) is a disgrace to the hon. House. He is a disgrace to the hon. House, Mr. Speaker. And it is terrible for a member in this House, debating such an issue that is vital

MR. G. WARREN: to Newfoundland, to be getting up and trying to interrupt another member from speaking. It is just disgraceful! It should not be tolerated any longer, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, why should we not have a select committee? Why should the Premier or why should the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) listen to one or two of their assistants or their special assistants and say that they have all of the answers. Who are the special assistants? Are they made up of such a calibre that everything they know, anything they learnt, this is it and it cannot be anything else.

MR. S. NEARY: Well, why do they have their meetings at the Chateau Park in Mount Pearl if they did not debate and discuss these things. That is where they go, down to get a suite -

MR. G. WARREN: It is unreal really! And I believe that a select committee should be set up and go out to the fishing communities, go out to where the people are, where the people are depending on the fishery, go along the Southwest coast of the Province, go along the Labrador coast and talk to the fishermen and talk to the oil companies and find out for ourselves what difficult times are ahead for us if we are going to continue with this offshore oil and gas exploration.

Mr. Speaker, it is a grave injustice to the people of this Province, if we in this hon. House do not tie ourselves together, get together once and for all and support this resolution calling for a select committee. We need a select committee. We need to know exactly what is going to go on. I am sure that all members in this House should get up and say, 'Okay, we support the hon. member for Trinity - Bay de Verde (Mr. Rowe) and his resolution calling for a select committee and it should be instituted immediately. Again now, you know, it is amazing-

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms)

Order, please;

MR. G. WARREN:

- the member from Stephenville, I think he did that time mention about the member from Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout). I cannot remember anything about him really. I cannot remember anything about him.

MR. S. NEARY:

They are too busy trying to haul down the Union Jack to worry about anything else in this House.

MR. G. WARREN:

Right. So let us forget about the Union Jack, let us forget about the Select Committee on the Flag, let us do what Newfoundlanders want done. Let us decide whether we want the fishery or whether we want the offshore oil and gas, or whether we want both of it. But let both of it work for the betterment of Newfoundlanders.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Stephenville.

MR. F. STAGG:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have heard two members of the Opposition speak in this debate. The last hon. member I am not quite sure what he said. He was more interested in provoking comment from this side of the House and was really basically irrelevant. The original member proposed the motion I thought fairly well as far as it goes, however, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that all hon. members on the other side of this House have a condition precedent to satisfy before they talk on this issue at all. Because they have not satisfied us. As a matter of fact, a potential premier that they had sitting in their ranks they did not satisfy him, a potential leader of the Opposition and who knows at some stage of development he might have been premier. He was so dissatisfied with their position on offshore oil and gas and the fishery and you name it, just general disgust with them that he is now sitting over here, my good buddy here from Baie Verte - White Bay, the Freudian Slip from the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren)

MR. F. STAGG: when he referred to the member for Baie Verte - White Bay to whom we should all be grateful.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Unaudible)

MR. F. STAGG: Yes, indeed we should. All hon. members on the other side have a condition precedent to satisfy before they have the right - well, they have the legislative right - but really before they should, with any honour, speak on this issue because the real issue that we in this Province are facing and have been facing for quite a period of time is who has control and jurisdiction over the offshore resources. I have heard a number of statements from hon. members opposite. They say that their position is the same as our position. Well our position is that we do not think that Pierre Elliott Trudeau is any friend of Newfoundland in these times. That is our position. And our position is one that if for some reason, at some stage in our political life we disagree with our federal colleagues we do not mind giving them a few flicks. We do not mind telling it as it is. That has been well established, in December of this year, on the Northern cod stock matter. We do not mind that sort of thing. But I wonder what the members of the Opposition have to hide? What are they hiding behind? Do they all want to be ambassadors to some country or other? Is that what they are looking for? Are they all looking for federal appointments to get them out of the délamma that they are in now, sitting in opposition for the indefinite future? Is that why they will not speak out? I have yet to hear a definitive position from the members opposite as to where they stand on the control and ownership of our offshore resources. I have heard one fellow say that he goes along with the Prime Minister's assertion that they will not object to or try to obstruct a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada so far as this matter is concerned. Well big deal, Big deal! The Supreme Court of Canada is open to any one. So what that they will not try to obstruct us from making the reference? If the reference is made on this offshore matter are they then going to sit aside and not appear in court? No, they did not say that. He did not say that he would not have

MR. F. STAGG: all of the Department of Justice and all of the money that the federal government is so wont to spread around to its friends for getting opinions to try and frustrate Newfoundland. That is the issue that hon. members have not addressed themselves to. "Yes, surely" the Prime Minister says, "Yes, refer it to the Supreme Court of Canada."

MR. F. STAGG: The Supreme Court of Canada is a jurisdiction unto itself. We do not have any appointees on the Supreme Court of Canada. The Premier of Newfoundland has not appointed any Supreme Court judges lately.

MR. L. THOMS: (Inaudible).

MR. F. STAGG: If I were - yes, I would do a better job for Newfoundland. I would do a heck of a lot better job for Newfoundland than the hon. member would.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. STAGG: I would do a better job out of the Supreme Court of Canada than the hon. member would. Because I will state my position right here and now, I am for Newfoundland, I am for provincial control and jurisdiction of the offshore oil and gas. And the hon. member would try to sleeze his way into some court some day -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. F. STAGG: Yes, he hoped he would lose. The hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) ran and hoped he would lose so he might get an appointment to the district court somewhere. But it is not going to happen. I am going to tell my friends in Ottawa that the hon. member should not have that sort of an appointment.

MR. J. CARTER: Send him over his thirty pieces of silver.

MR. F. STAGG: He is too old.

MR. J. CARTER: Give him forty pieces of silver.

MR. F. STAGG: The Supreme Court of Canada is not the answer to this matter, Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of Canada is another delay and frustrating tactic that hon. members opposite have seized upon. They have seized upon it. This is something that we can skate by with for several years in the vain hope that somehow or other this government is going to self-destruct -

AN HON. MEMBER: Vain hope!

MR. F. STAGG: Yes, it is a vain hope.

And there were certain hon. members opposite that I would like to have over here, four at one stage, but it is now down to one and we got him.

MR. L. THOMS: Who is he? Tell us.

MR. F. STAGG: What about this reference to the Supreme Court? I would like to hear the member for Grand Bank, who has been at the Bar now for some fifteen years or so, I would like to hear him on this matter. Where does he stand on it? What chance does Newfoundland have in a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada? I would suggest that we have very little chance in a reference to the Supreme Court of Canada with all of the Prime Minister's buddies appointed to it.

MR. L. THOMS: Why?

MR. F. STAGG: I suggest that the Supreme Court of Canada has always shown a bias towards the centralists.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. F. STAGG: Yes, indeed. That is what I feel.

Now, contrast that, contrast that with the willingness to co-operate between Mr. Clark and the Premier. Contrast that position. The position of Trudeau and his cohorts who sit opposite, his cohorts sit opposite. There are - what? - there are two - well, there are only four of them in the House now, Mr. Speaker. I must be really getting to them, they are looking at me from the wings hoping that I will not point them out. But there are four of them who do have enough guts to sit in the House.

MR. S. NEARY: We are really bored (inaudible).

MR. F. STAGG: Contrast the position of the Liberal Party in Ottawa and its friends over here, all of whom campaigned for their various Liberal members in the last federal election and were successful in electing five of them in this Province, contrast the position of Mr. Clark and his Conservatives with the position of hon. members opposite and I would say what you would come out with is something that is disgraceful, to use a word used in an unparliamentary fashion by the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren). Yes, we have struggled in this Province for a long time to get where we were last year, approximately - well, it is about eleven months ago - when we did have for the first time a level of co-operation between the two jurisdictions, the federal and provincial jurisdiction. Hon. members opposite were not -

MR. F. STAGG: to be seen in those days. They thought for sure that we were going to get control and ownership and so on, and then they really would have been wiped out. Now they see the possibility that the people of the Province just might not cotton on to the realities and hope that the results of the federal election - the eighteen cent election - can be transferred to their election. It is a vain hope, gentlemen, because we are going to go across this Province, all of us on this side of the House are going to go out across this Province for the next four years, and we are going to indicate to the people of this Province how derelict in their duty these eighteen - only eighteen of them left - how derelict in their duty these eighteen members are, how they are willing to substitute representation of their districts and representation of Newfoundland for the vain hope that this government here might self-destruct at some stage and that they might then slither in through the back door. So I am not supporting this resolution put

MR. STAGG: by the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. F. Rowe) because I do not think the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde or any of his cohorts have earned the right to be heard in this House on the question of offshore oil and gas. They have not earned the right to be heard on it. They do not have the right to speak out on it until they have established or fulfilled the condition precedent, and that is to tell us where do they stand, where do they stand so far as control and ownership are concerned? Do they stand with Mr. Trudeau and his waffling, 'shrug the shoulders and it will disappear' type of attitude? Is that where they stand? I think that is where they stand. They stand nowhere, so I am not voting for it and, as a matter of fact, they have not addressed themselves to the act respecting petroleum and natural gas and the guidelines and procedures. I asked the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) if he had read it. He said, "Well, my eyesight is bad, I can hardly see the hon. member". Well, I commend him to read it because there has been a tremendous amount of work already done in this whole area, and it is not going to be ignored, the kind of work that has gone on under this administration from 1972 until 1980, eight years of progress. It is the same kind of thing that Nova Scotia is only now beginning to get into. Those of you who may have read Atlantic Insight, some fellow in an editorial comment in the magazine Atlantic Insight said, "Nova Scotia is only now getting where Newfoundland was many years ago". Newfoundland is ready, where is Nova Scotia? Nova Scotia is coming in the backdoor. And who was leading Nova Scotia during those days? Who was leading them?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. STAGG: Yes, Mr. Regan was leading them, Mr. Regan - or Ragan or whatever his name is - Regan. He is now a Federal Cabinet minister, who has the audacity to suggest that Newfoundland should not try to employ its own people on our offshore oil and gas jobs.

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

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) Point of order, the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, you know, the hon. member is making a speech. There have been interjections all afternoon,

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, and, you know, it is just denigrating the decorum of the House, and the hon. member is entitled to be heard in silence and so are other members entitled to hear what he is saying.

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

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) To the point of order, the hon. member for Lapoile.

MR. NEARY: I would submit there is no point of order, Mr. Speaker, because if we did not interrupt and interject once in awhile we would all be bored stiff, we would all be put to sleep, so I would say it is a good thing. Your Honour -

AN HON. MEMBER: . Sulking. Sulking.

MR. NEARY: - Your Honour might even get a little sleepy up there. I would suggest, Sir, that these interruptions are keeping the members of the House awake, we are all so bored with the hon. gentleman's speech.

MR. THOMS: It is certainly keeping the gallery awake.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the Chair has tolerated remarks from both sides of the House for quite some time this afternoon, and I do believe that a point of order does exist here. I would suggest to all hon. members that when an hon. member is speaking then he should be heard in silence.

The hon. member for Stephenville.

MR. STAGG: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the intervention by my colleague, the House Leader (Mr. Marshall).

Well, I was getting into an area there that was, I think, cogent and was giving rise to numerous interruptions. I see that the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Hollett), he was halfway up there to interrupt or interject or something or other, but he thought better of it. Well, he can have his speech. He can follow me and address himself to what does he think of the Federal Minister of Sport and Labour, the Minister of Work and Play as he is called, who is on the record indicating that he disagrees with Newfoundland's offshore oil and gas regulations, so far as the local preference is

MR. STAGG: concerned in employment, address himself to that, address himself to the preparedness that is obviously evident in Newfoundland. When the rest of Canada woke up last August and found out, "Oh, yes, yes, there is indeed oil off the coast of Newfoundland, well, why do we not just march on down there and take those country bumpkins, take them over." Only they marched down here to find out that the country bumpkins were among the most cosmopolitan people in the whole world, and here are the two documents. Here are the two documents and it has been enacted in here for some three years in the act respecting petroleum and natural gas, and there have very few changes made in them. Why have there been very few changes made in them? Because they were made up by Newfoundlanders. They were made up by experts, number one, and they were made up by experts who are Newfoundlanders, number two. So, we had the best of both worlds. We have the patriotic Newfoundlander, also very highly expert and well versed in the field to which he was addressing himself.

MR. STAGG:

So that is what they found out, that is what Dorry Little and whoever the rest of them are, Mobil and the Seven Sisters that all you fellows are so afraid of. The Seven Sisters, gentlemen, are afraid of us. The Seven Sisters have reason to be afraid of us as we are, in effect, a virile Province down here. And I will tell you what we will do with the Seven Sisters when they come down.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. STAGG: Right. So this is the state in which we presently find ourselves. We find ourselves as prepared as any province or any nationality or any jurisdiction has been before oil and natural gas was discovered. To whom is credit owed?

MR. NEARY: Gillespie.

MR. STAGG: Gillespie. The hon. member says Gillespie. Well, that is a laugh, that is a laugh. The hon. Allistair Gillespie, that is a laugh. What did the hon. Allistair Gillespie have to do with these guidelines? Nothing. What has the federal government, the federal Liberals done in any and all instances where offshore oil was being discussed or decisions were being made? They have been nothing but obstructive. And that is the party with which hon. members associate themselves. And I heard nothing from them that would indicate otherwise.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I will not support this resolution because - it was fairly well put by the hon. gentleman, I must say, he read his speech well. I do not know who prepared it. I think he probably prepared it himself but it hung together pretty well. But he has not established the condition precedent for hon. members opposite to speak with any credibility on this subject. So I am speaking against it and I suspect that other hon. gentlemen on this side will follow the lead so well established by the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow) and so articulately enunciated by the member for Placentia (Mr. Patterson). In spite of the guerrilla tactics of hon. members opposite, we are voting against it. Hon. members opposite, we may vote for something similar to it once you have established that you are worthy of it. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I guess in one way in rising in support of this resolution I am disappointed. I am disappointed in that the Premier has broken another promise. He sat in his seat this afternoon and said that when I spoke he would be sitting there very attentively without saying a word listening to every word that I had to say but I see he is out -

MR. NEARY: He is out having his picture taken.

MR. THOMS: I was just going to ask you where he was. I was just going to ask my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) where the Premier was knowing, of course, what the answer was going to be. Also I do not know -

MR. NEARY: He cannot do anything else, Mr. Speaker, (inaudible) having his picture taken.

MR. THOMS: - I do not know how or why that I am so fortunate though. It seems that almost every time I rise to speak I am either following the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall), the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) or the member who sits down there by that other fellow.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) Baie Verte-White Bay.

MR. THOMS: That is right, the one who crossed on this big issue.

MR. NEARY: He stabbed his constituents in the back.

MR. THOMS: That is right. The one who did not have the intestinal fortitude to go back to the voters who sent him to the House in the first place -

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. THOMS: - and see if they would elect him as a Tory.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Stabbed his constituents in the back.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) asked me to stand up and give my position on offshore oil and gas. Well, I stood in this House and I gave my position on offshore

MR. THOMS:

oil and gas. But you know what the problem is? They do not want to hear what our position on offshore oil and gas is.

MR. NEARY:

They want to play cheap politics.

MR. THOMS:

They want to play cheap politics. They do not want to hear it because they want obviously -

MR. NEARY:

We want to hear your position, you are the government.

MR. THOMS:

But that is the problem, Mr. Speaker. I can stand here as I have done very recently and I have given my position on offshore oil and gas and then the member for Stephenville (Mr. Staggs) has the audacity to stand in his seat and say that we have not. Of course we have. I will tell you this much, for the first time

MR. L. THOMS: I heard the member for Baie Verte -
White Bay (Mr. Rideout) - this is the first time I heard his
position. I never heard it in caucus.

MR. S. NEARY: Right on! Bill Rompkey never
heard it the night we had the meeting either.

MR. L. THOMS: And here is something else I
did not hear in caucus.

MR. S. NEARY: They will learn. They will
learn over there.

MR. L. THOMS: I did not hear that he was going
to cross the floor of this House in caucus. The information
to our caucus that that man was going to cross the floor of
this House came from the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan).
That is where it came from.

MR. S. NEARY: Right on! He could not keep
his mouth shut.

MR. L. THOMS: It did not come from the member
who did not have the guts to tell us straight to our faces
that he was going to cross.

MR. S. NEARY: Old chawmouth, had to tell some-
body so he told us.

MR. L. THOMS: And you can have him for one of
the few times.

MR. W. MARSHALL: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!
A point of order, the hon.

President of the Council.

MR. W. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman is allowed
great latitude in debate, Mr. Speaker, but I suggest a few
words like - an hon. gentleman has not got the guts etcetera
is not parliamentary. I refer Your Honour to Beauchesne
page 107 where it is one of the prohibited words to be used
in parliamentary debate and I think the hon. gentleman
should withdraw.

MR. E. ROBERTS: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): To the point of order, the hon.
member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Your Honour we are all familiar with the litany in the Beauchesne and we are all familiar with the rubric under which this litany comes. I do not have the Beauchesne, I could look it up, it is in my table - I do not know whether the word 'guts' - there is another word 'intestinal fortitude' which is certainly parliamentary. There is also a word 'terminological inexactitude' which my friend for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) may wish to use. I think this is a clear case where he is carried away in the heat of the debate. He feels very strongly and, I think, with good reason and I am sure that if the word, in fact, is unparliamentary. I do not think it is.

MR. L. THOMS: What about fish?

MR. E. ROBERTS: The fish guts. But if it is known to be unparliamentary it is just simply a lack of intestinal fortitude and I am sure my friend for Grand Bank is more than capable of conveying the point with eloquence and force. I do not know if it is on the list. The list is not exhaustive but I submit it should not be ruled unparliamentary in this context. It is term that is polite. It is not offensive. It is strong but surely, Your Honour, the time has not come when strong debate is outlawed. I notice my learned friend from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) intervenes only when the debate is strongly against him. That is fine.. This may simply be a case of those who cannot stand the heat ought to have to leave the kitchen.

MR. F. STAGG: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the hon.
member for Stephenville followed by the hon. member for
Grand Bank.

MR. F. STAGG: Mr. Speaker, I think on this matter the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) is certainly out of order and on other matters he suffers from asyclinosis which is a congenial disability to differentiate between two round objects one of which is a hole in the ground.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Does the hon. member for Grand Bank wish to speak to the point of order? To the point of order.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to speak to the point of order after the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) has spoken to the point of order.

Mr. Speaker, I would only be too happy to withdraw the word 'guts' but. I would only say what the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) said when he withdrew a word the other day, that I cannot withdraw what I am thinking.

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the point of order it is clearly outlined in Beauchesne, fifth edition, page 107 that the use of the word 'guts, has not got the guts' a quote from the debates of the House of Commons, May 27, 1959 is unparliamentary. In any event the hon. member for Grand Bank has withdrawn it so I would ask him to continue with his remarks.

MR. L. THOMS: Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker. But as I was saying my position on offshore oil and gas - I am not going to repeat it - if the hon. member for Stephenville can read let him go to Hansard and he can read exactly what my position is on offshore oil and gas in this Province. And I make no apologies to anybody -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) fixed up.

MR. L. THOMS: If you can read you go back and get Hansard and read it I am not going to repeat myself at all.

MR. S. NEARY: Why should you bare your soul to that crowd? They have not made up their minds yet which route they are going to take.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, if I may get to the resolution itself. I do not suppose there is certainly no district in this Province that relies on the fisheries as does the district of Grand Bank -

MR. D. HANCOCK: And St. Mary's - The Capes.

MR. L. THOMS: No more. Okay there are districts - I heard St. Mary's - The Capes behind me - There are districts. My friend for Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. Stewart), Burgeo - Bay d' Espoir (Mr. Andrews) and certainly Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Hollett). But Burin - Placentia West really not as much as the district of Grand Bank, Burin - Placentia West does have the shipyards. But the district of Grand Bank has nothing other than the fisheries. Nothing!

AN HON. MEMBER: The stadium.

MR. L. THOMS: Oh, we have a nice stadium. A nice stadium in Fortune. And, Mr. Speaker, as you know,

MR. L. THOMS: I am not averse to taking Tories into the district of Grand Bank. I had a few down with me; I must say we had a marvelous time. I got introduced to a friend of my friend from Humber West (Mr. R. Baird), Tia Maria; we all enjoyed her company on the way down..

MR. S. NEARY: What about St. Emilion? Did he introduce you?

MR. L. THOMS: And my friend from LaPoile (Mr. S. Neary) -

AN HON. MEMBER: And the Blue Nun on the way back.

MR. L. THOMS: And the Blue Nun!

MR. S. NEARY: And the star goalie.

MR. L. THOMS: The star goalie of that great Mockey Night down in Fortune. We raised money for cystic fibrosis. We had a marvelous time.

MR. S. NEARY: Mothers' milk.

MR. E. ROBERTS: It sounds like the Controllers did better than everybody else out of this.

MR. L. THOMS: I was able to show my Tory friends when we went into Fortune, I could not find the arena but I could show them where the one Tory in Fortune lived.

MR. S. NEARY: Right on.

MR. L. THOMS: I could show him that.

MR. F. STAGG: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A point of order, the hon. member for Stephenville.

MR. F. STAGG: There is a rule in this House dealing with irrelevance, with needless repetition. Now the hon. member is speaking on a motion here that is very well put -

MR. L. THOMS: I am talking about my district and the fisheries.

MR. F. STAGG: - the parameters of it are very well defined, and he has been rambling on hoping to run out the clock. He should address himself to the issue that he will not address himself to, where he stands on offshore oil and gas.

MR. E. ROBERTS: To the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): To the point of order, the hon.
member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. E. ROBERTS: If anything is needlessly irrelevant
and tediously repetitious in this House is the alleged points of order raised
by the gentleman-learned, as we are assured he is - from Stephenville. My
hon. and learned friend from Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) is talking
precisely to the point of the resolution. He is doing it in his
own inimitable style. Your Honour has made endless rulings from
the Chair-ininitely better rulings, I may add, than those of the
Deputy Speaker from 1972 to 1975, most of which had to be overturned
by the then Speaker- any number of rulings, Your Honour,
which say that a member is allowed to express his point as best he
can and in his own way. And that is all the gentleman from Grand
Bank is doing. He ought to be allowed, I submit and request, to carry
on without this inain tedious, unnecessary, irrelevant and completely
unforgivable harassment from the gentleman from Stephenville who
insists on parading his ignorance in these matters, Sir, before the
House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the point of order,
Beauchesne is quite clear with respect to the issue of relevance.
It is difficult to define. The Chair generally gives a latitude
to the hon. member who is speaking. However, in the meantime, in the
hope that the hon. member for Grand Bank is not going to pursue
the story about the trip to Grand Bank any further -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER: - I would like to remind him
that the matter being debated is motion number 4.

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, thank you. It does
get a little annoying, though because from the point of view that every
time the hon. member for Stephenville (Mr. F. Stagg) or the President

MR. L. THOMS: of the Council (Mr. W. Marshall)
gets on on their feet on a point of order, it is taken out of my twenty minutes, and that is what I resent more than anything else. And I was talking about the district of Grand Bank and I was talking about the reliance that the district of Grand Bank had on the fisheries, and I spoke of the reliance that the district of Fortune - Hermitage has got on the fisheries and how important, how vital the fishery is to these districts. Without the fisheries there would be nothing, absolutely nothing, but poverty in what is one of the most affluent districts in this Province. So the fisheries is a very important issue.

I do not claim to know all about the fisheries. I lived in the district long enough and I have hauled traps in the district, so I know something about the fisheries, but then again I have got a lot of expertise in the fisheries in my district, a lot of expertise.

Mr. Speaker, the offshore oil and gas, really, you know, in lots of respects, because of the fisheries, because of the reliance of my district on the fisheries, basically, Mr. Speaker, frightens the hell out of me. And I think it should frighten some of those of whom I have spoken. It is not going to frighten the member for Stephenville (Mr. F. Stagg) but it should frighten the member from Fortune - Hermitage (Mr. D. Stewart) and from Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. H. Andrews) and from Burin - Placentia West (Mr. D. Hollett) and St. Mary's - The Capes (Mr. D. Hancock) and St. Barbe (Mr. T. Bennett), it should frighten these people, the possible effects it could have on the fisheries in this Province. But, you know, apart from the effects that an oil spill would have on the fisheries of this Province, there is another aspect of oil and gas that frightens me.

MR. THOMS: Now, I am not saying that we should not have development of oil and gas, but, as I said in the House a few days ago, I would like to know something of what the social impact of the discovery of oil and gas is going to have on this Province. I would like to be able to sit down with the Chief of Police and with my friend, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer), maybe at the same time, and to discuss what has happened in Aberdeen, for example, as far as law and order is concerned in that city since the discovery of offshore oil and gas. I read just a few days ago that, at the present time in Canada, Calgary has the highest suicide rate, the highest alcoholism rate and the highest divorce rate of any city in Canada. Now, I am sure you can add to that: drugs, vandalism and probably every known - prostitution - probably every known crime in the books. This is the sort of thing, I think that we should try to curb as far as the impact of offshore oil and gas.

MR. STAGG: The gentleman is speaking from experience, is he?

MR. THOMS: No, I am not speaking from experience - this is what I am saying! This is what I am saying! - but I would like to gain some experience. I would like to gain some experience. What experience has the hon. member from Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) had as far as oil and gas is concerned? None. Maybe he visited Parsons Pond deposits. I do not know if there is oil and gas in Corner Brook or not. I do not know how much oil and gas is down in Burgeo or Recontre East. I do not know how much oil and gas is down there. There is certainly no oil and gas on Allan's Island in my district, but there is fish there, there is fish there.

Mr. Speaker, I see that it is almost six o'clock and, if it is agreeable with the President of the Council, (Mr. Marshall) I would move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Before Your Honour adjourns to tomorrow, I would like to advise the House that tomorrow we will be back into that bill on the Arts Council. I could also indicate that I do not believe

MR. MARSHALL: that there are any speakers who have indicated, anyway on this side, that they wish to continue any longer with it, so it would be hoped if the events unfurl that we will finish it tomorrow. If we did and there was any time, we would be getting then into Committee of Supply on the Main Estimates.

Mr. Speaker, I should also advise that as far as the estimates committees are concerned, tonight at 7:30 in the Colonial Building the Government Services Committee will meet, and the topic for discussion will be Labour and Manpower. Tomorrow morning from 10:00 to 1:00 that same Committee will meet in the Collective Bargaining Room, not in the Colonial Building, and again it will be Labour and Manpower and/or Finance. On tomorrow morning at 10:00 at the Colonial Building the Resource Committee will meet and the estimates to be considered will be Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development. Well, the Social Services next sitting is scheduled for tomorrow evening at 7:30 at the Colonial Building.

MR. ROBERTS: Did my learned friend say that Finance might be -

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms) The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: - tomorrow morning in the Collective Bargaining Room?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: That is the note I have.

MR. ROBERTS: My understanding was Finance had not been referred out, Finance was still here in the Committee of the Whole.

MR. MARSHALL: No, Finance was -

MR. NEARY: No, Finance is in the House.

MR. ROBERTS: We have only referred out fifteen of the nineteen departments.

MR. MARSHALL: Sixteen, Sixteen, I believe, including Finance.

MR. ROBERTS: You know, I am being told it is sixteen, I mean, fifteen times three is forty-five and all the time calculations reflect forty-five. Well, we will settle it, I mean, you know, we will -

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MR. MARSHALL: Sixteen, it was the same as last year where Finance was -

MR. ROBERTS: I say it was fifteen. We will check the journals. But Finance, then, assuming it is referred out, will come up once -

MR. MARSHALL: Tomorrow.

MR. ROBERTS: - we finish with the Minister of Manpower in the barrel.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, at three o'clock.