

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1980

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

With respect to the point of order raised by the hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) prior to yesterday's adjournment, it was quite correctly a point of order and I bring to the attention of all hon. members Standing Order 11 (c) which states in part that "When a member is speaking, no member shall pass between him and the Chair". And I trust that members will in future adhere to this rule in well-known parliamentary tradition.

I would also like to take this opportunity on behalf of hon. members to welcome to the gallery today fifteen Grade ten students from Long Island Academy in the district of Green Bay with their teacher, Miss Ellis. We hope they enjoy their visit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. J. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I

apologize to my colleague, the spokesman on fisheries in the Opposition, because my statement is not in prepared form. I want to inform the House of Assembly that I have now been informed by the federal authorities and the Federal Minister of Fisheries (Mr. LeBlanc) that the directed fishery for the cod in the Northern cod zone will close as of midnight this weekend, Saturday night, May 10th. That means there will be no more directed fishery in the Northern cod area. The total quota of 45,000 metric tons has not been taken: the total of it taken is approximately 38,000 and not 45,000. And the reason the federal authorities has chosen to close the directed

MR. J. MORGAN: fishery is because they feel that the by-catch by the trawlers operating in the area will bring up the quota to 45,000 metric tons and they want to make sure that there is no over-fishing, to go over and above the 45,000 metric tons.

Now, Mr. Speaker, also I want to inform the House that this government is really concerned over the fact that 6,000 metric tons were recently taken over the last three or four week period and landed in Nova Scotian fish plants. We are concerned because it means a lack of raw material for a number of our fish plants around the Province and therefore a loss of jobs. I am now in the process of meeting with, for the last hour and a half and am now going back after Question Period, to meet with the Nickerson's and Sons Limited of Nova Scotia and the officials, including Mr. Harold Nickerson, discussing that matter which we view as a very serious matter, because our policy - there is no question of our policy - our policy on the Northern cod issue is that the cod stocks in the Northern cod should be caught by the inshore and midshore fishery of our Province, left to migrate for the inshore, midshore fishery.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the second part of the policy is also of utmost importance; that is, any surplus, any surplus beyond the harvesting capacity of the inshore and midshore fishery should be caught in the offshore and landed within our Province. And that has been put forward now to the companies in Nova Scotia.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for Trinity-Bay De Verde.

MR. F. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, in response to the minister's statement, obviously there is a real danger here of the trawlers, particularly the Mainland trawlers, over-fishing the Northern cod stocks through, as he mentioned, the by-catch if they continue to fish beyond the 38,000 metric tons, as the minister already indicated have been caught up to this present time. I would like to ask the minister if there is any particular danger now that these trawlers have been asked to move off the Northern cod stock area, whether there is any danger of them in fact moving towards the Grand Bank area and over-fishing in that particular area and doing same damage on the South coast area of our Province as is happening now on the Northeast coast that are in the Northern cod stock region? I would like to ask well, Mr. Speaker, in responding to the minister's statement to point out that I think this is a clear case where a strong federalist government is very important in matters of this kind. I would feel that if we had, for example, sole and total and complete provincial jurisdiction over the fisheries in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, PEI, Labrador and Newfoundland, that we would be in a situation today where we might in fact have a fish war going on off the Northeast coast of our country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. F. ROWE: So I feel very strongly that this is a typical example of where a strong federal presence is necessary, notwithstanding the fact that each province should have as much consultation with the federal government and input into the federal government as possible. But I would like the minister at some point, Mr. Speaker, to indicate whether or not there will be a danger in fact of these same trawlers now shifting

MR. F. ROWE: from these Northern stock grounds to the Southern grounds, if I could use that expression, and we having this same danger in that particular area.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN: Could I respond to the question by leave?

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): Order, please! If I may, I do not believe leave is required there. There are ample precedents where a member is entitled to ask explanations and questions, and therefore it is reasonable to assume that the minister is entitled to answer.

The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to answer the question because the question is indeed very important to the South coast plants and the plants on the Burin Peninsula. That is one of the topics I am discussing now with the Nickerson group from Nova Scotia, and that is where

MR. MORGAN: will they fish now? Because the fact is they moved to the Northern cod and took over 6,000 metric tons, National Sea and Nickerson's, primarily because of the fact there is a poor market for redfish, which they would now normally be fishing for. So now when they move from the Northern cod area, the 2J 3KL areas, we are convinced, and we have not got a straightforward answer yet from the companies concerned, that they will divert their activity to the Grand Banks and fish for flounder and, if that occurs, in no time the quota for flounder and yellowtail will be caught up in the Grand Bank area, and that means a shortage of raw material for the plants on the Burin Peninsula and the South Coast.

MR. NEARY: They had better not come down in the Gulf or the Bay St. George area.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms:) Further statements?

The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I had intended to make this statement yesterday and I had issued a copy to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Jamieson), but my colleague the Minister of Manpower and Labour (Mr. Dinn) made so many statements by the time he had finished I had forgotten that I was intending to make one.

I would just like to table, Mr. Speaker, the document which I intend to present to the hon. Marc LaLonde when I meet with him. It will now be next Wednesday rather than this afternoon at three o'clock, as was originally intended. The fog has prevented my getting to Ottawa. But I have a copy of a document entitled "Inter-Provincial Electrical Energy Transfers-The Constitutional Background" to establish that there should be no question that federal jurisdiction exists with respect to the transmission of electricity from Labrador to other parts of Canada, that the federal government has this jurisdiction and it is simply a question of whether they intend to exercise it. And also, that in exercising federal jurisdiction, this does not automatically mean that the federal jurisdiction has to extend back into all aspects of provincial generation and transmission and distribution

MR. BARRY: of electricity, that there can be a point where federal jurisdiction extends leaving the normal provincial jurisdiction within the Province.

I have copies of this document for all hon. members; I am sure they will be reading it carefully.

MR. SPEAKER: Further statments?

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Burin-Placentia West.

MR. HOLLETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In connection with the statement made by the minister today, I think it directly relates to some of the comments I made in - I think it was last Tuesday or whenever the statement was made - but I am very concerned about this particular matter. The minister alluded to asking Nickerson's - which is really National Sea, it is a subsidiary of - of their fishing plans for this year. I would hope that he does get an answer and at the same time be cognizant of the fact that we do

MR. D. HOLLETT: have to work out an agreement with all people fishing our Continental Shelf, and I am saying Canada's Continental Shelf here, but I am more concerned now than I was at that time.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, would he establish, if possible, which has not been possible to date, Nickersons and its subsidiaries - which includes more than National Sea, as the minister is aware - their fishing plans for 1980. But I also would like to ask the minister would he endeavour on the same subject to also establish our own Newfoundland companies' fishing plans, because they are interlinked. This has never been accomplished before and unless we can get a programme like this in place, I am scared that there will be no onshore work and a lot of boats tied up by, maybe, the middle of October, 1980 in all Southern Newfoundland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, yes, the concerns of the hon. gentleman are very well taken and I thank him for the question.

What I accomplished this morning, I have wired the President of the Fish Trades Association, presently attending a Fisheries Council conference in Montreal, that upon return, and we have asked if at all possible, this weekend, while attending a Marystown fisheries conference - a very important conference, I would say, involving all aspects of the fisheries on the Burin Peninsula and the South Coast - I have asked the Fish Trades to agree to a meeting with the officials of the Department of Fisheries and myself, to sit down and discuss this overall issue of supply of raw material to their plants. Now, of course, to date the Fish Trades Association has not taken a stand, I notice, publicly, and it is worthy of note that two members of the Fish Trades Association in our Province are National Sea and Nickersons. However, I do believe it is of the utmost importance to convene a meeting of the Fish Trades operating within our Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. J. MORGAN: If National Sea and Nickersons want to take part we have no objections, they are also operating within the Province.

MR. J. MORGAN: We want a meeting of all the companies operating within the Province - the Fish Trades - and I want that meeting to be convened if at all possible on Friday evening in Marystown during the fisheries conference over the weekend.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the member for St. Barbe.

MR. T. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. J. Dinn). I am wondering if, as briefly as possible, you could explain the real necessity for all of the applicants for offshore having to be screened or having to go through your department, the applicants for jobs? Mr. Speaker, nobody wants to see jobs created for Newfoundlanders more than I do and I can sympathize with the minister's dilemma. I am wondering if the minister could explain briefly why the absolute necessity of going through his screening process which is in place?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. J. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I have done this many times, but for the benefit of the hon. House, number one,

MR. J. DINN: drilling offshore has taken place in Newfoundland for about fifteen years. There has been no control over employment or preference or anything of that nature in the offshore. Now, we consider the offshore, the continental shelf, to be our resource; we have in place regulations. There is no point in having laws or regulations unless you can enforce those regulations. We have, as a condition of lease, regulations that say, as a condition of lease, that you will employ Newfoundlanders. The reason why we need a registry is that a company would come here with a crew on a drillship, they would say that all of these people are experienced on the drillship and we can not find any Newfoundlanders. What we have done is we have asked Newfoundlanders who have some experience in the oil industry to come into the department and register, register their experience, and that list, then, or that registry is given to the oil companies. They have no excuse at all for not hiring Newfoundlanders if there is a Newfoundlander on that list. And that is the purpose of the registry.

It is one thing to have a law or regulation; it is another thing to be able to supply information to people who may or may not want to comply with your regulations. We are making it very easy for them to be able to look at a registry and say, "Yes, they do have Newfoundlanders here and therefore they should get preference." Now, nobody else does this, just to inform the hon. member.

The Department of Employment and Immigration does not look beyond the coastline. They could not care less. We happen to care about it, we have regulations in place and

AN HON. MEMBER: There is a shortage (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! If the hon. member wishes to raise a point of order I will hear one, Otherwise, I would ask for silence so the hon. minister can be heard.

MR. J. DINN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is interrupting me while I am trying to explain, as requested by the hon. member, why we have to have a registry.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. SPEAKER (Simms) :

Order, please!

MR. J. DINN :

And it takes a little bit of detail.

MR. SPEAKER :

The hon. minister has a right to be heard in silence.

MR. J. DINN :

So the fact of the matter is that now we have in place a registry, the oil companies can not claim that we do not have qualified people. They are on a registry and they just have to refer to that. And we are saying to them on a preference basis, "Employ Newfoundlanders as a condition of your lease and live up to the regulations that you agree with."

MR. T. BENNETT :

Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER :

Supplementary, the hon. member for St. Barbe.

MR. T. BENNETT :

Mr. Speaker, in the last few days I have had communication with people from the district of St. Barbe. One gentleman is here and has been trotting up and down from Crosbie's hoping he is going to be employed. A few days ago I asked him had he registered with your department, and he knew nothing about it. For two months he had been waiting and going down to Crosbie Enterprises and they have never told him that he had to register with your department.

I had another man telephone in and he says, "I was turned down from a job after registering with the Department of Labour and Manpower"; the minister's department. He says, "I was turned down because I do not have the necessary qualifications but I have been a fisherman on longliners all of my life,

MR. BENNETT: I am a seaman by nature. I do not have a piece of paper." Another gentleman calls in and he says, "I have just spent about \$300 going in to register and I am back in Bonne Bay unemployed." I went to several employers in St. John's and all three of these, they have more of a dilemma, Mr. Speaker. And I am wondering if we are not creating a greater schmozzle, if you will, in the direction that we are going. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, where we draw the line. Could the minister explain where we draw the line? For argument's sake, if a supply boat comes in, Canadian manned, a Canadian boat with all Canadians, do we say, 'Oh, you fellow Canadians, you are Nova Scotians, you are not Newfoundlanders so you must step aside and Newfoundlanders must have these jobs'.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I have no problem with answering that at all. The fact of the matter is that -

MR. FLIGHT: Brief.

MR. DINN: Does the hon. member want the answer? His colleague does.

MR. BARRETT: His question was not very brief.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DINN: Does the hon. the member for Buchans (Mr. Flight) want the answer? His colleague does, I believe.

MR. NEARY: Ah, boy, do not be making a fool of yourself.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, number one, I would like to know of any person in Newfoundland who has

MR. DINN: been accepted for a job
and has been turned down- the name of any person in
Newfoundland who has been accepted for a job and
has been turned down.

MR. NEARY: (inaudible) three.

MR. DINN: And the hon. the member
for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is interrupting while I am
trying to give an answer. The hon. the member for
LaPoile was challenged last week to produce names
to me and to this day, to this very day, Mr. Speaker,
those names have not arrived on my desk. And I would
say to the hon. member, they will not arrive on my
desk because he does not have the names.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Order, please!

MR. DINN: Now, Mr. Speaker, with
respect to supply ships working offshore, the fact of
the matter is that all of the companies know that they
operate as a result of leases that the companies have
that are working offshore. And they know that if
you have a Canadian supply vessel that on that ship
the captain has to be a Canadian. If is a French,
English, Norwegian, the Captain and first officers
have to be of the country of the flag that they are
flying. But over and above that, we have, as a
condition of lease, the companies give Newfoundlanders
jobs. There are 6,000 on a list. If we did not have
our regulations in place, we would have no Canadians,
probably no Canadians at all working in the offshore.

 Last year, because of the
regulations, we had

MR. J. DINN: 730 full-time, and this year we should have somewhere between 800 and 1,000 because regulations are in place. If they were not in place, we would have nothing and no way to enforce it and the Canadian could not care less.

MR. T. BENNETT: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A final supplementary, the hon. member for St. Barbe, followed by the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. T. BENNETT: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering the significance of having Canada employment centres in place at this time if we side-stepped them. I am wondering why the minister could not go through with the stipulations to Canada employment centres, give them the conditions, or indeed, Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if we could not have an independent committee set up other than politically motivated or oriented or screening process. I am just wondering if we could not use the existing Canada employment centres?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. J. DINN: Mr. Speaker, it seems rather naive, and I heard on the radios that the people in Canada Manpower, Canada employment centres, do not know where to send people in Newfoundland to register for offshore. It seems rather ridiculous and to me it just shows the interest they have in getting employment for people. Because the fact of the matter is this has been advertised everywhere, it is in most post offices in Newfoundland, it is everywhere throughout the system, and if an employment officer in a Canada employment centre does not know where to send

MR. J. DINN: a person to register, it seems to me he should not be an employment officer.

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

MR. G. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan). My question is with respect to the operation of the Department of Fisheries at Nain and Makkovik fish plants last year. Could the minister advise if all of the fish, the arctic char and salmon that was purchased by the Department of Fisheries in 1979 have been sold and, if not, are there any monies outstanding to government?

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

MR. J. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, yes, last year the operations of the government in purchasing salmon and char in Labrador, most of the salmon was sold to a company, W.B. Frank, in New York and there is monies owed to the government by that company in the vicinity of approximately \$39,000 and we are now in the process of collecting that money from the company. The company has had some financial difficulties; however, we are convinced that we can get the monies owed to the government from that company. They purchased most of the salmon and the char was purchased mostly by local companies and by the Canadian Saltfish Corporation; they were involved as well.

MR. WARREN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, I understand that this company has presently gone bankrupt. I would like to know from the minister if this fish was sold on public tender or was it sold to the first company who came along?

MR. S. NEARY: Buddy-buddy - a sweetheart deal.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, last year the Department asked for submissions on the purchase of char and salmon. Now whether or not we will go through that same system this year has not been determined. We are looking at possible means of getting, if at all possible, better prices; better prices for salmon, better prices for char. Last year the fishermen got \$1.80 a pound for their salmon, and they got forty-five to sixty cents a pound for their char. Now in talking to the Fishing Industry Advisory Board and the Department of Fisheries officials, we think maybe we can get a better price this year. So we are going to do a promotion in Europe for the first time on char in particular, on Arctic char, char caught in Labrador, a special promotion programme to sell the char in Europe. Now if we will be calling tenders for the acquisition of the fish or to ask for bids from companies we feel can give us a good price has not been decided to date.

In respect to the question regarding the company going bankrupt, that is correct, the company that bought the salmon last year. In fact 355,000 pounds of salmon was purchased and \$39,000 is owed to the government. However, the officials of the Department of Fisheries are convinced that in conversations with the receiver, the receiver is now in place in the bankrupt company, that we will be getting the \$39,000 owing to the Newfoundland Government.

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

MR. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary is not in respect to the salmon and char, I would like to know from the minister, how much money the Provincial Department of Fisheries lost last year on the purchase of rock cod along the Labrador Coast?

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that the provincial government lost money, but I know that there was a loss to the Salt Fish Corporation in dealing with rock cod. The rock cod is a

MR. MORGAN: fish that apparently has all kinds of problems in connection with quality. The quality of that species is not good. And we have held talks with the Salt Fish Corporation, in fact we are going to be holding talks in the very near future with regard to improving, if at all possible, the quality of the product coming out of Labrador, the rock cod, so we can get a better price to the fishermen in Labrador.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for St. Mary's-The Capes.

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Transportation and Communications. Yesterday the minister was ready to consider doing almost anything; I do not know how he feels today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HANCOCK: We need a crusher in our area to crush some rock, Mr. Speaker, to put on the highways that are there. They are in a deplorable condition. There are rocks - I travelled there over the weekend - as big as those glasses sticking up through it. The Department of Highways just has not anything to put on the roads, I wonder would the minister consider looking into the possibility of having a crusher come to the area so that we could have some fill to haul on the road? I understand there are some crushers around the Island not in use.

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

MR. BRETT: Mr. Speaker, we have something like three or four crushers around the Province; all of them are very old and out-dated and we do experience a lot of break-downs, and because they are so old it is difficult in getting the parts to get them going again. We want to get out of the crushing business altogether, because in order to make a crusher pay it has to work almost around the clock. I think that you will find that

MR. C. BRETT: Construction companies do work the crushers right around the clock. In the Summer months our staff, our crews, work approximately seven hours, and even if we had new crushers it still would not be economically viable for us to be crushing stone, So we are getting away from it as much as possible and where we need crushed stone we are going to tender and we are buying it and spreading it that way. I doubt very much if it is going to be possible to get a crusher to put in that area. I doubt it very much. Like I say, there are four, they are scattered all over the Province and they are needed where they are, and they are needed in many other places. So, you know, if there is a desperate need for stone up there, I suppose we can look at it when we do our regular maintenance work.

MR. D. HANCOCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Mary's - The Capes, followed by the hon. the member for Grand Bank.

MR. D. HANCOCK: Sir, if we cannot get a crusher there to have the stone made available, can the minister give us some assurance that we can get it from somewhere else, that it will be hauled into the area? What are we going to put on the roads?

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

MR. C. BRETT: Yes, I will look into it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. D. HANCOCK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER: A final supplementary, the hon. the member for St. Mary's - The Capes.

MR. D. HANCOCK: Mr. Speaker, the dust problem will soon be upon us again now this year. I wonder could the minister give us some assurance that there will be calcium treatment given to the roads or something to keep the dust down in that area this Summer?

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

MR. C. BRETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have a calcium chloride programme again this Summer.

AN HON. MEMBER: For my area?

MR. C. BRETT: Yes, it is for all over the Province, all the built up areas. It will not be between the communities, but in every community. I do not know how soon we will be starting, but as soon as we can.

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

MR. L. THOMS: Thank you, Your Honour. I have a question I would like to direct to the Minister of Justice. The Minister of Justice, I am sure, is aware that the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary in this Province can only carry guns under certain and special conditions. Something that I have learned recently which concerns me very much is the fact that the Quebec Provincial Police can now operate in this Province and carry guns. I would like to ask the minister by what and under whose authority the Quebec Police, the QPP, can carry guns in this Province?

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

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

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: I am aware, I think, of the incident to which the hon. member refers. It took place a few days ago in either Wabush or Labrador City, and I have myself asked that that matter be looked into and want a full report on it. So I am not in a position to give a full report - it was only a couple of days ago it did come to my attention. The preliminary information I have - and it obviously is not the total information - is, number one, they obviously are not entitled to and, indeed, were not exercising any police authority within this Province, in Wabush or Labrador City, where they have no legal right to operate as police at all. So they were performing no police functions with respect to this Province or people resident in the Province. The preliminary information I have - and, as I say, I asked for a complete inquiry or complete briefing on it and I should have all that information within a couple of days - is that, obviously, as the hon. member knows, certain areas of this Province, Labrador, and certain areas of the Province of Quebec are very close to contiguous - well, they are contiguous there, and there are road connections between the two areas, and that at times there is consultation by the provincial police of this Province,

MR. OTTENHEIMER: the RCMP acting as provincial police of this Province, and the Quebec provincial police acting as police in the province of Quebec with respect to offences in one or the other jurisdiction; for example, in drug trafficking; you know, there can be trafficking obviously from Quebec to this Province and from this Province to Quebec, and that the two forces do consult and co-ordinate their, if you wish, police intelligence on the matter but they certainly were not and are not intitled to exercise any police authority in the Province and the preliminary information I have is that it was a matter of consultation between the two forces, a consultation which took place in this Province and which on other times could well have taken place in the adjoining province.

MR. THOMS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary. The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: Is the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) then telling us that the Quebec provincial police came into this Province, for whatever purpose, carrying guns without somebody first contacting the Justice Department of this Province?

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

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, as I said at the very beginning, as soon as I heard of the incident I asked to be completely briefed on it and I am, you know, not to date completely briefed on it so I do not want to give inaccurate information, I do not want to give false information even if it is not intentionally inaccurate. I certainly would prefer to wait until I have the full information, and the only information really I have as of this date, because I am not sure if it was yesterday or the day before yesterday, I believe, that it first came to my attention when I asked to be completely briefed on it, and the only information I have now are the two facts which I have stated. Number one, that they were not attempting to exercise any police authority in this Province, which obviously they are not entitled to do because they are police in another province. Number two, I understand it was a matter of consultation with

MR. OTTENHEIMER: respect to crime prevention or detection, one or the other, or both, between two provincial police forces. I am not avoiding giving information, but until I have been fully briefed on it I do not have additional information. I share the hon. gentleman's concern. One of the problems, I think, is that in Quebec their provincial police without any special authorization at all, habitually or daily, ordinarily, go armed, whereas in this Province, obviously, our Newfoundland Constabulary do not. The RCMP, acting in a provincial capacity, do. But it appears at least incongruous, and may well be quite improper, that police of another province who come to this Province for whatever purpose, be it a legitimate purpose of consultation with another police agency, should wear firearms in this Province. I can certainly see a need for consultation between two police forces in an area where two provinces are involved, and obviously police intelligence in various areas

MR. OTTENHEIMER: should well be shared by police forces. But certainly it is my opinion that if it is necessary or beneficial, from time to time, for there to be consultation between a force acting provincially in Newfoundland and Labrador and a force acting provincially in Quebec, that indeed the Quebec force, if the meeting is in this Province, should come without wearing firearms.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): A final supplementary. The hon. the member for Grand Bank, followed by the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. THOMS: Thank you very much, Your Honour. I fail to see where anybody needs guns to consult. But I am wondering if the minister could tell me -

AN HON. MEMBER: Just bop them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: - does he know if in fact permission was granted? And if permission was granted, by whom was that permission granted? Does he know that much?

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

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, that is part of the data that I am hoping to have. I do not know, number one, apart from a report, whether firearms were carried and, number two, I do not know if permission was given or not. That is among the data, among a part of the information that I am waiting to have given to me.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier, Sir. Up in Ottawa the Tories in the House of Commons seem to think that the Government

MR. NEARY: of Canada are trying to blackmail the Atlantic Provinces into getting agreement on bringing the price of oil up to world prices in Canada. Could the hon. the Premier tell us the stand, the position of the Newfoundland Government on this matter of bringing Alberta oil prices up to world prices? What is the position of this government here?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a number of occasions in this House and outside it, and in the formal representations that we have made in writing and in presentations before federal/provincial conferences, we have indicated that we believe the price of crude oil has to increase to allow for additional exploration, that it should be done over a three or four year period, and that it should reach somewhere in the range of 85 per cent of the price at Chicago, which would, therefore, keep it that far below and keep us competitive in the whole North American market and still be close to world prices.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would assume from the hon. gentleman's answer then that they are supporting the Government of Canada's request for an increase in the prices of crude oil. Now what will this mean in terms of increases to the consumers here in this Province as far as electricity rates are concerned and as far as heating fuel is concerned? Will this government's policy, by supporting the Government of Canada, mean an increase in electricity rates and an increase in heating fuel to the consumers in this Province?

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the Premier.
PREMIER PECKFORD: Number one, Mr. Speaker,
we are not sure what the Government of Canada's
position is on energy prices. The Minister of
Energy for Newfoundland (Mr. Barry) is due to meet
with the Minister of Energy for Canada over the next
few days to find out just exactly what they are
saying. Their Minister of Finance is saying one
thing, the Prime Minister is saying something else,
the Minister of Energy is saying something else and
we are not at all clear. All we know is that they
keep saying that in the first year - the latest
thing coming out of Ottawa is that in the first year
it will not be greater than the Tories, the federal
Tories budget of this year.

But the Prime Minister
has continually stated, the new Prime Minister, that
he is not sure whether in fact, over the next three
or four years, the increases in oil will be less than
what the P.Cs had indicated in the first budget that
has come down in the last couple of years in Canada.
So we do not know exactly what the whole formula is
that the present administration in Ottawa wants to
put on the table.

Secondly, as it relates
to electricity prices, let me remind the hon. the
member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) that we support and
have contact with the federal government on allowing
us to transmit electricity through the Province of
Quebec the same way as Alberta can transmit oil to
the other provinces of Canada. If that is done, then
the whole question of electricity costs in this Province
could be affected in a dramatic way and allow for a
stabilization of electricity prices. The problem
right now is that we are not able to transmit electricity

PREMIER PECKFORD: through Quebec without them being the broker and, therefore, electricity prices will go up over the next five or ten years unless and until, under responsibility under the constitution by the federal government, they allow us to transmit through Quebec electricity and only pay the wheeling charge.

So the question of electricity prices is linked both to oil price - and we do not know what the federal government's position is on that yet - and it is also linked to the whole question of whether we can transmit electricity through Quebec at a reasonable wheeling charge rather than them act as brokers.

Once we have the answers to those two questions, both of which now lie in the federal domain, then we will be able to answer the hon. member's question very definitively.

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms) Order, please! The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

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

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was asked a question about the impact of acid rain and to our knowledge, the department's knowledge, medical knowledge there is no direct human health hazard caused by acid rain. There is none reported in any of the literature. The problem with acid rain and the reasons for our concern, and that is a concern of both the Department of Health and the Department of the Environment, is that it solely relates to ecological damage which occurs over time and as a result of the change in the groundwaters the bacteria, I suppose, in the groundwaters. And in the long-term should our lakes and rivers not support any life this may have a serious impact on the total health of the general area. But directly, there is no positive impact.

MR. S. NEARY: We just starve to death.

MR. W. HOUSE: Well, perhaps it - I am not stating that now and I do not think that anybody can say that, but it could have an effect and that is why it is being carefully monitored now.

MR. SPEAKER: Are there any further answers?

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to present a petition signed by a number of my constituents who are residents of the communities of Croque and St. Julien's, which is the contiguous community. Croque and St. Julien's have recently, Sir, had a road completed to them; in fact, the road to St. Julien's was only completed last Fall, which makes it the last community on the Northern tip of the Northern Peninsula to receive a road connection. I believe there is a community of Harbour Deep

MR. E. ROBERTS: in Baie Verte - White Bay- I know the community of Harbour Deep is in Baie Verte - White Bay. I know the community well. I do not believe they have a road there as yet, but Croque does have a road. Now that the road is completed, Sir, the inadequacy of the part of the road link between the community of Croque itself and the highway into which it connects, which is the road that runs from Roddicton branch over to Main Brook, the inadequacy of that road link is revealed for what it is, and that is it is a woods road that had been upgraded very minimally since it was first hooked up the better part of eight or ten years ago, and four or five years ago into the community of Croque itself. The road was tolerable while other roads had to be built. The people of Croque put up with it while a road link on the three or four miles into St. Julien's was provided, but now that the communities themselves have been connected, the time has come in the feeling of the people of Croque and St. Julien's, to upgrade their road. I agree completely with that. I have driven over the road a number of times. It is not much of a road. It is barely, I would suggest, about ten feet wide. It is a woods road that was built by bulldozers and graders without any proper equipment, without proper plans, and in a grand old Newfoundland tradition of naming a road the So-And-So Line this road could only be called the Line of Least Resistance. Because if it comes to a rock, it goes around it and if it comes to a tree, it goes around it; if it comes to a pond, it either goes through it or around it depending on whether the water in the pond is more than several inches deep. The prayer of the petition, Sir, is to request that the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador allocate the necessary funds this year to rebuild the twenty-two kilometers of winding woods road connecting the main road to the existing road to the communities. Interestingly enough, because the road from Croque to St. Julien's was built properly by contractors, it is a superhighway by comparison with

MR. E. ROBERTS: the road which runs from Croque out to the provincial highway network, and that only adds salt to the wounds. The petition, Sir, has been signed by 140 people which is a little better than all of the voters in St. Julien's and Croque. There were 132 voters in St. Julien's and Croque in the last election, most of whom, I am happy to say, voted in what I believe to be the best of the choices available to them. It is signed by all of the people of that community and in addition, Sir, there is another page signed by the people who come back and forth over the road in a business sense and that includes the gentleman who carries the mail, the Esso distributor, the man from Hydro, the social welfare workers, the wholesalers and the people who generally provide the commercial services supplied by road. I think the cause is a worthwhile one. And I know the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Brett) has been allowed by the niggardly Finance Minister next to no money this year with which to do reconstruction work, but nonetheless he does have a few million dollars. I would say to him most earnestly that there can be no project on the Island of Newfoundland of this nature, a reconstruction project, that more deserves some money spent on it. I do not think the people in Croque or in St. Julien's expect all of the work to be done this year. They do want some of it to be done this year, Sir, I think that is a very reasonable request. I think it is a very modest one for them to make. I support it whole-heartedly and I commend the cause to the minister in the hope that we will see some work done this year. We will even ask him, Sir, to the official opening just as we are quite prepared

MR. E. ROBERTS: to ask the man who built the road, now Senator Doody in Ottawa, to the official opening. It can be Doody's Drive, I do not know what we will call Brett's- well, right now it is Brett's Break-axle. I would hope, Sir, it could be perhaps Brett's Boulevard to go with Doody's Drive, Sir. I commend it to the minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms) Are there any further petitions.

The hon. the member for Exploits.

DR. TWOMEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition on behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion, Botwood, Branch No. 5. "We the undersigned members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 5 wish to add our support to the Newfoundland Command in urging the rejection of the proposed provincial flag."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

DR. TWOMEY: "And we urge that you, our member, vote against its acceptance. The proposed flag is unacceptable to the Legion." This petition is signed by thirty members of the Legion.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms) The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support that petition. The hon. gentleman who presented the petition did not indicate whether or not he was supporting it because I presume the hon. gentleman did not want to indicate whether he is voting for or against this flag, this particular design.

I do not think it is any secret that Legion Branches all over Newfoundland, along with 99 per cent of the population of this Province, are against that particular design. And we are going to see more petitions, more telegrams and more letters and more phone calls -

MR. G. WARREN: Marches.

MR. S. NEARY: - more marches on Confederation Building and other public buildings in connection with this matter before it is all over. I too, Sir, have - it is not a petition but just to reinforce what the hon. gentleman said - I have a telegram myself from Port aux Basques

MR. S. NEARY: from the Royal Canadian Legion. It says, "The members of the Royal Canadian Legion, Channel, Branch No. 11 strongly protest the adoption of the proposed provincial flag and urge you to speak out for all veterans. The sword is incorporated to remind us of the sacrifice of our comrades. We have the Poppy, we fully support other branches across the Island and emphatically state that if this flag is accepted it will not fly from the flagpole of this Branch. Signed, Joyce Samms, President, and Wilson Strickland, PRO Royal Canadian Legion, Port aux Basques." I would like to lay that on the Table of the House.

Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge this is the first time in British parliamentary history that elected members of the people are fighting against the people; members are fighting against their own constituents and the voters and members are fighting against the people. The first time, I suppose, it ever happened under the British parliamentary system. I support the petition and I hope, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members will not just treat this matter lightly. The Royal Canadian Legion is a highly respected organization in this Province and well it should be, Mr. Speaker. And as I said the other day, I am shocked to hear some of the comments emanating from responsible people saying that all they can think about is war.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that all hon. gentlemen, all hon. members will support that petition and I would suspect that we are going to have more petitions and I would say, God bless the people. The people will win in the end. Keep the phone calls coming, keep the petitions coming, keep the letters coming and the people will win in the end.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER:

Are there any further petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. W. MARSHALL: . . .

Order No. 40, Bill No. 44.

Motion, second reading of a bill,

"An Act To Adopt A Flag For The Province". (Bill No. 44)

MR. SPEAKER: (Simms)

The hon. the member for Kilbride.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. R. AYLWARD:

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Before I continue with my remarks on our proposed new flag, I would first like to thank the Speaker for providing our Flag Committee such a staff to support our Committee as we travelled throughout the Island. Our clerk, Neil Penney, and our recording technician, Terry Connors, worked very hard day and night travelling, driving and at meetings. So I would like to congratulate those two gentlemen and the Speaker for providing us with the staff.

Mr. Speaker, our flag design that is proposed has come under some criticism because of the fact people say that there is too much symbolism in our flag, it is too hard to explain and it is

MR. R. AYLWARD: too geometric. Well, one of the most visually acceptable flags that I know of or I have ever heard of is the Union Jack. The Union Jack certainly is loaded with symbolism and it is definitely geometric.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition when he was speaking on the flag debate, one of the reasons he gave for not supporting our flag was because when he looked at the flag he needed the explanation with it. Most flags of any country, if you look at them, no matter how loved they are by anyone, a lot of people do not understand the flags. There are quite a few people that I have contacted and I asked to explain to me what the Union Jack meant, and unless they were very loyal Legionnaires or Monarchists, they did not know what the Union Jack meant, they just liked the shape and they liked the look of the Union Jack.

There is another flag that the people of Labrador have adopted as their flag and it certainly is a simple flag. It consists of three panels, a white, a green and a blue and it has the spruce twig in it. There are not too many flags that are any more simple than this flag, but I would like to read into the record the explanation of these three panels and the twig. Although the flag looks very simple, there is a very detailed explanation with it. The Labrador flag says, "This flag is meant to be a permanent declaration of the unique identity of the people of Labrador and their common heritage. The top white bar represents the snows, one element which, more than any other, coloured our culture and dictated our lifestyles." We have white in our own flag, in our proposed design. "The bottom blue bar represents the waters of our rivers, the lakes and oceans. The waters have been our highways like the snows, and nurtured our fish and wildlife." We have blue in our flag also. "The center green bar represents the land. The green and bountiful land is the connecting element that unites three diverse cultures." The symbolic spruce twig, which the people of Labrador look to as a lot of people on the Island would look to the pitcher plant. Although the pitcher plant is our provincial flower, the people in Labrador seem to relate more to the spruce twig or the spruce tree, which is scattered throughout Labrador and it is also in our Province. The simple spruce twig that is on the Labrador flag has a very

MR. R. AYLRARD: involved meaning. "The symbolic spruce twig was chosen because the spruce tree is the one thing that is common to all geographic areas of Labrador. It has provided our shelter, transport, fuel and in a direct way, our food and clothing, since the spruce forests became the environment from which the wildlife gave us meat for our tables, skins for our clothing and trade. 'It is from the spruce that we sawed our planks for our timbers for our boats, our komatiks and our houses.'" This is one part of an explanation of a very simple spruce twig, and still it is not finished. 'The three branches on the spruce twig represent the three races, the Inuit, Indian and European settlers. The twig growing from one stalk represents the common origin of the people regardless of race. The twig in two sections or year's growth, the outer growth is longer than the inner growth. This occurs because in the good growing years the twig grows longer than in the poor years. Thus, the inner or stronger sprig reminds us of past times, while the longer sprig represents our hope for the future. This is our flag and the symbol of faith in ourselves and the future, and pride of our heritage and our respect for the land and the dignity of the people.' Now in a very simple flag such as the Labrador flag to look at it, it has an explanation which is much more involved and detailed than the explanation of our own flag.

MR. AYLWARD: So the fact that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Jamieson) said he had to have an explanation with the flag, I suggest that with any flag, you would need an explanation and especially until you are used to looking at this flag and are used to it.

One point I notice that we get some criticism for. The Premier announced that he would continue to fly the Union Jack over provincial buildings and people have suggested to me that this is a cop-out. I certainly do not believe that it is a cop-out. And I heard some comments that we would be the only Province that would do this and it would not be acceptable at all. The fact is that while I travelled in New Brunswick I saw the very same, the New Brunswick flag, and the Canadian flag and the Union Jack flown. And in Ontario, I also noticed it. It was a couple of years ago that I saw it in Ontario and I would imagine it is still being flown the same, three flags, the same as our Premier proposed for this Province.

One group that is opposed to this flag, this new design - the hon. the member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) presented a petition on it today - is the Canadian Legion. Yesterday, when I was speaking about the flag, I explained as best I could the trouble we had in picking a design when a lot of people who sent designs to us could not make up their own minds and they sent three, four, ten-seventeen some people. They could not make up their own minds.

Now, the Royal Command of the Legion presented our Flag Committee with a brief at our last meeting, March 28, and they had a

MR. AYLWARD: proposed flag which was a Union Jack in the corner, a maroon background with the caribou in the fly. Yet, at our first public meeting in St. John's, it was reported to us by the Newfoundland Flag Society that at a meeting in Corner Brook some two years ago the majority of the people who attended that meeting of the Legion, the majority of the people who attended that meeting had supported a flag which was proposed by the Newfoundland Flag Society, which was the Pike, White and Green with the Coat of Arms and the pitcher plant and a Union Jack over it. They also wanted a spruce twig in it.

I just mention this to point out the difficulty that anyone would have in preparing a flag or any design that would be automatically accepted. I would suggest that if it was possible for us to pick the Labrador flag, and the people in Labrador made it quite clear to us that they did not want us to take the Labrador flag for our provincial flag, but had they agreed to us accepting the Labrador flag, and we had chosen the Labrador flag, although we would have had great support in Labrador we would have had as much controversy on the Island as we are having now.

I would just like to clue up by saying that there is no one, single design or single symbol that can be a distinctive, simple, unique Newfoundland flag. This design is based totally on the impressions we received from the submissions, the four hundred-odd submissions that we received during our travels across the Island and it is, in my mind, the best design to suit these submissions. We could have picked much more complicated designs but it would defeat the purpose of flag immediately. If you

MR. AYLWARD: had dogs and caribou, pitcher plants, coats of arms, crests, all of these things that were suggested to put on the flag, it just would not work.

So I would like to say, before I sit down, that naturally I am supporting this flag. I was most disappointed. I expected a lot of support from all of the members of this House of Assembly when our Committee reported, but most of all, I was very disappointed when I heard the Leader of the Opposition would vote against this. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER(Butt): The hon. the member for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let me say from the start that I recognize, as a result of my involvement in this

MR. FLIGHT: House, that I am probably recognized as one of the people who standing in debate in this House tends to be partisan, and I accept that criticism. Now I want to say from the start, Mr. Speaker, that this will in no way be a partisan speech on my part. I do not recognize this debate or the flag issue as a partisan issue. Obviously the Committee that brought the flag in is a non-partisan Committee. And having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would want to congratulate the Committee who brought in the flag. It is very obvious they accepted an unthankful, certainly, and impossible task, a task to bring in a flag that would be accepted by all the people of the Province. I accept that as a probably impossible task and I want to congratulate them for the effort and the sacrifice they made in travelling this Province and hearing the various representations, and congratulate them on having presented to the House of Assembly a flag. I also, Mr. Speaker, want to congratulate Mr. Chris Pratt on his design, on designing that particular flag.

I want to make it clear, Mr. Speaker, that I am one of the people in this House who has probably got more reason to stand and be associated with the work of Mr. Chris Pratt, I have probably got a better reason than most members. I think in 1957 when Mr. Pratt was doing his last year of Fine Arts in Mount Allison University, I attended that University; my first year was his last year. And out of a desire to associate with Newfoundlanders on that campus, and there were not all that many Newfoundlanders, I found myself more and more in the company of Mr. Pratt. I found myself more and more in the company, socially and otherwise, with the senior class, the Newfoundlanders who were there and from whom I could learn the ways that one should live and the circles that one should travel and things one should do. So obviously in the intervening years, as Mr. Pratt became more and more renowned as a Newfoundland artist, then I had a real reason to follow his progress and to be proud of his achievements. And, Mr. Speaker, I therefore congratulate Mr. Pratt and I have total respect and total admiration for the flag that Mr. Pratt designed.

MR. FLIGHT: Now having said that, Mr. Speaker, let me, as the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Jamieson) did, and I take my cue from him in this particular case, state from the start that I will not vote for this flag and I will not support the particular design that we had lain in front of us a few days ago. And I will try now, Mr. Speaker, to indicate to this House why.

Mr. Speaker, after the Committee was struck and the hearings started throughout this Province, the flag issue became a mini debate throughout the Province. Wherever I went, at some time or other somebody made some comment about the kind of a flag we could expect. And to me, Mr. Speaker, and I am speaking here today trying to represent the views that I have personally heard and seen in this Province since this flag debate started, there were two universal desires that I found, Mr. Speaker, One was for the retention in some form, incorporation into that flag in some form of the Union Jack. That was one. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me say I have no brief, I carry no brief for the Canadian Legion. Obviously the Canadian Legion, they are certainly capable of making their own cases and I suspect they will make their own case in this issue. I have no great strong feeling for the Union Jack other than the fact that it is there. The Union Jack was there when I was born. I grew up with the Union Jack. St. John's was the capital of Newfoundland, and in the same sense everything around me that I know of in Newfoundland, the Union Jack falls into that category. It was the flag of this Province. I am one of the people who would have wanted to see the Union Jack replaced by a distinctive Newfoundland flag. And I think all of Newfoundland, and possibly including the Legion and the veterans, would have wanted to see a distinctive Newfoundland flag. They had one desire, Mr. Speaker, one desire and one desire only, to see incorporated and retained in some form - and not an abstract form, Newfoundlanders by and large do not think abstract, they do not see things

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MR. FLIGHT:

abstractly - they wanted to see the

Union Jack retained.

And why not, Mr. Speaker? Three or four of the other provinces retain the Union Jack. And let me make this case, that as far as the veterans in this Province are concerned, when they went to the conflicts up to this point in time they were going under the Union Jack in their own right.

MR. FLIGHT: We had the Union Jack since - well, I suppose since we became a country. It was the flag of Newfoundland. Two or three of the other provinces who went to the conflicts only as a part of a country, Canada, not in their own right, went under the Union Jack, but they appreciated it enough and they appreciated the efforts and the sacrifices of their veterans and the men who went to war, they appreciated that enough to incorporate in that flag, to enshrine in the flag some symbolism of their gratitude to the Canadian Legion and to the veterans that fought and to the veterans that went into the conflicts over the years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, why should we not have - every member in this House of Assembly at one time or another has spoken to a meeting of Legionnaires and veterans and there is one obvious fact, Mr. Speaker, and I say it with no great sense of pride but it is true; what is the one thing that is obvious about the Canadian Legion and particularly the veterans of the various wars? They are growing old. They are growing old, Mr. Speaker. And this Province, Mr. Speaker, has not done well by our veterans. Financially and materialistically we have not done well because we may not have had the means to do well. I know lots of veterans who are subsisting on meager DVA pensions and we have not been able, Mr. Speaker, as a Province to improve their lot. Well, we have just given up the one chance we have had, Mr. Speaker, and if we incorporate that flag we have just given up the one chance we had to say to those men that we do indeed appreciate the contribution you have made. We do indeed recognize that the reason we are here debating freely today is because you and your comrades were prepared down through the years, back since Cabot came to Newfoundland in Newfoundland's case and in the various wars, we do appreciate. Mr. Speaker, would it have been such a great sacrifice, would it have been so great a concession to have made to those people? Mr. Speaker, there is not a Newfoundlander alive today who has not got a relative, one way or the other, some relative who served in the wars. And there would have been no objections, Mr. Speaker. All Newfoundlanders wanted to see the Union Jack replaced. I

MR. FLIGHT: say that here, that most, if not all, certainly ninety-nine per cent, were prepared to see the Union Jack replaced. They had no objections at all of seeing that Union Jack incorporated into a provincial flag. We had a chance, Mr. Speaker, we had a chance to say to the people who have served us so well that we will enshrine now in the provincial flag a symbol that will show our gratitude and the gratitude of generations to come, our gratitude for their contribution and the sacrifices that were made. But no, Mr. Speaker, we were too small. We talk, Mr. Speaker, in this debate about how that flag will grow on you. Is there somebody in the House of Assembly who will say that a flag that incorporated the Union Jack would not grow on you? Is there somebody who will say that that flag will grow on you and in five years all Newfoundlanders will accept it? Well, cannot one say that a flag that incorporated the Union Jack would grow on you and in ten or fifteen years be totally and completely accepted as the provincial flag? So, Mr. Speaker, I understand the feelings of the Canadian Legion and I understand the people who are supporting the attitude of the Canadian Legion and I will tell this hon. House of Assembly that if there was some way to put it to the test in this Province that the majority, and the great majority of Newfoundlanders would be prepared and proud to have the Union Jack incorporated in some small way in that flag. So much, Mr. Speaker, for the Union Jack.

The other obvious thing that came through as we talked about the flag over the months, Mr. Speaker, was we wanted it to symbolize Newfoundland, we wanted to symbolize that great tradition, our culture, the great tradition we talk about. And, Mr. Speaker, I say to this House now it came as a total and absolute shock, the people of this Province were shocked because they had made their minds up. They did not know what it would be. They did not know. It might be a pitcher plant. It might be the caribou head. It might be the Coat of Arms. It could be a codfish. I have heard all sorts of things said, some of them in cunning ways. But they wanted a symbol, Mr. Speaker. Every Newfoundlander in this Province wanted a symbol that they could associate Newfoundland with. They wanted a flag that, when it was unfurled in Toronto, the 100,000 Newfoundlanders

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MR. FLIGHT: in Toronto could say, "Look, that must be our flag. It has got a pitcher plant. It has got a caribou. It has a Coat of Arms. It has got something to which I can relate." I have not got an abstract mind. I do not think abstractly, you know.

MR. G. FLIGHT: But, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing in that flag. And this committee was not put to work, Mr. Speaker, to design a flag for a nation; we are not a nation, we are only one-tenth of a nation. And the only time that flag is going to be seen, Mr. Speaker, is when a Newfoundland delegation goes to some sporting event. The mandate of that committee as far as I am concerned was to design a flag that would be pleasing to the people of Newfoundland and could be associated with by the people of Newfoundland and proud to be looked upon by the people of Newfoundland.

MR. S. NEARY: Right on! Right on!

MR. G. FLIGHT: And, Mr. Speaker, we are presenting the world with a flag where one would think we were a third-rank nation in the world.

Mr. Speaker, another argument can be made. I listened to the Chairman of the committee when he said, 'The blue is most reminiscent of the Union Jack.' You talk about abstract! But better than that, Mr. Speaker, 'The white is representative of snow and ice and the blue represents the sea and the red represents the human effort!' Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is so, then I can sell this flag to any country in the world, any country in the Northern Hemisphere that is bound by salt-water because Mr. Speaker, that flag can represent it. And I would suggest too that twenty or twenty-five years from now if that flag was placed on display with the flags of the world, there would be very few Newfoundlanders who very quickly would be able to separate it and say, 'That is our flag'. There will be no symbolism.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. G. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you there has been one very, very significant issue in this debate so far, a very unpleasant duty carried out by the Speaker, and if I hear that kind of thing once more, Mr. Speaker, you will have a second unpleasant duty to carry out. I want silence in this debate, Mr. Speaker, and I am entitled to it.

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

MR. G. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, we have heard the people speaking in favour of the flag saying that five years from now everybody will have accepted the flag. 'Look at what happened in Ottawa,' they said. 'Do you remember the great Canadian flag debate, how fifty per cent of the country was against it?' Well, there is one thing that this flag has not got going for it, Mr. Speaker, that the Maple Leaf had going for it in that particular debate - you may have been against the new flag, you may have been against pulling down the Union Jack, you may not have wanted the new flag, but the minute that our flag was unfurled, Mr. Speaker, there was not a Canadian in Canada who could not identify with it and say, 'Well, at least it is symbolic, at least it is symbolic of Canada, it contains the Maple Leaf.' And this flag, Mr. Speaker, is not symbolic.

There has been an effort, Mr. Speaker, in these last few months in this Province. There has been legislation presented to this House that will have the effect of preserving our culture and building on it and saying that we are proud of our heritage and proud of our culture. We are proud of the way we speak and the way we sing and the way we dance.

MR. G. FLIGHT: Well, Mr. Speaker, the case can be made that if we accept the design of this flag that we are in some way or another ashamed of that tradition, ashamed of that heritage, ashamed of that culture. There is nothing in that flag, Mr. Speaker, that is symbolic of anything in the background, in the history or the heritage or the culture of Newfoundland.

So, Mr. Speaker, I cannot in conscience, I will not in conscience, I do not believe that I would be representing, Mr. Speaker, the viewpoint of the people who I represent in this House and the by far majority of the people of this Province if I supported

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is one other point and only one other, I want to allude to in this particular debate. I want to say to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) that during the Question Period or during the previous debate on the flag someone, I think on our side, made the reference that we will retain the Union Jack and the Minister of Justice - and I will say this and probably recalls the to and fro -

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: On public buildings.

MR. G. FLIGHT: On public buildings. We will retain the Union Jack. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not say this in an argumentative way, but I say that that is utter and total nonsense. There will be no reason in this world, no legal reason in this world for anyone in this Province, government or otherwise, to fly the Union Jack. The Union Jack is the provincial flag of this Province, Mr. Speaker, and when that flag goes up the Union Jack is coming down. And one could make the same argument: The Government can say, 'Oh, we will fly the Union Jack, we will appease the Canadian Legions and we will appease the people in Newfoundland who wanted to have the Union Jack incorporated.' But we will be under no obligation. Mr. Speaker, to fly

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MR. G. FLIGHT: the Union Jack. Nobody needs
to tell me that as a Newfoundlander if I want to fly the
Union Jack I can fly it. If I want to fly the Stars and
Stripes I can fly it.

MR. G. FLIGHT: As a matter of fact, I know of people in Newfoundland who fly the Stars and Stripes. So, Mr. Speaker, I do not need the government's permission to tell me that I can fly the Union Jack. I can fly any flag I want to fly and there will be no obligation - and furthermore, ten years from now the Union Jack will not be seen in this Province, officially or otherwise, unless the Canadian Legion stand to their guns and fly it anyway.

I want to say a word, Mr. Speaker, on the Committee. Now, Mr. Speaker, having congratulated the Committee and having said - and I meant what I said. But I had a perception, Mr. Speaker, as did the people of Newfoundland, a perception of the mandate under which that Committee operated. And my perception was that the Committee was to go out into the Province and by holding public meetings and by representation they would receive from those meetings, would then come back and recommend a design for a flag. Well, Mr. Speaker, in my perception - I may be wrong, Mr. Speaker, and I am making no accusation towards the Committee, as such; each Committee member will stand here and defend his position one way or the other as will every other member - but in my perception that was not the mandate. The mandate that I perceive was that, Mr. Speaker, and that is not the mandate that I perceive was carried out. Because while that Flag Committee were having their meetings around this Province, I was travelling this Province, Mr. Speaker, as well as the other members and I know what I was hearing, Mr. Speaker, and believing that the Committee would follow that mandate. But I believed that we were going to get a flag that possibly would incorporate the Union Jack - I could have lived without that, I suppose, as other people could have; there would have been a lot of hurt feelings, but certainly I thought there was going to be some symbolism, because that was what was coming through everywhere. The Committee would have had to make a choice of what the symbolism would be. But, Mr. Speaker, I have to say I do not believe that the Committee carried out the mandate that I perceived to be the mandate or that a lot of Newfoundlanders perceived to be the mandate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have another problem with the performance of the Committee. It became obvious in the early

MR. G. FLIGHT: meetings, in the four or five or six or seven meetings - the first meetings - that there has been very little representation made on behalf of the people in those communities or in those districts of the Province, very little representation. There were meetings where two people of the general public attended. So it must have become very obvious to that Committee that we are not going to get the kind of representation we need to recommend a design of a flag. And I have to wonder, Mr. Speaker, why it was that having recognized that fact, that the Committee - you know, would it have been too much to ask for the Committee to have said, 'Well, look, we have to find another format in order to get the feelings of the people of this Province.' And had they found another format, had they found some way to determine the feelings of the people of this Province, we would not have had that design, Mr. Speaker. That is very obvious, and I say that in hindsight. I say it now having seen the flag for a week.

There is another important thing, Mr. Speaker, most important - that the Committee met and they composed a set of rules for themselves. The Committee to themselves made a commitment and the commitment was they laid down conditions under which they would recommend a flag. And the hon. the Chairman of the Committee (Mr. J. Carter) a few days ago outlined those conditions, Mr. Speaker. One was that it be simple, two that it be attractive, three, that it be unique - well, unique it is - four, that it would merit Newfoundland's traditions - one can question that, but you can make the case that they met all those four. But the fifth one, Mr. Speaker, and the most important one, was not met by that Committee. They did not live by their own commitment, and in so doing they negated their mandate, and if that is the flag that we have to live with, they might well have let down the majority of people in this Province and ignored the desires of most of the people of this Province. Here is the condition - that they would not present to this House a flag that was not accepted by the majority of the people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. G. FLIGHT:

Well, Mr. Speaker, they presented to this House a flag that was not accepted by the majority of this Province and

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MR. G. FLIGHT: there is only one way to prove that,
Mr. Speaker, but if there is any concern, if there is one ounce of
concern amongst that Committee or amongst the members of this House

MR. G. FLIGHT:

that that flag would - obviously it was very important to the Committee; we would not accept the design that was not accepted by the majority of the people. And if there is any concern in any member's mind in this House that that flag is not acceptable by the majority of the people of this Province, then, Mr. Speaker, one of two things should happen; either that member should vote against this flag or he should start now to find a format to determine - I will stand by the decision of the majority of the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker - and if it is put to the test on that flag and the majority of the people of this Province, if they can find a way to do it, indicate that that is the flag they want, I will stand up and ask that every word I have said in this past fifteen or twenty minutes to be retracted from Hansard and I apologize for anything that I might have assumed was wrong.

But, Mr. Speaker, if there is anyone in this House on either side, or any member of the committee who has got any doubt whether or not that flag will be accepted by the majority of this Province, then they should vote against it or they should set in motion some method to determine whether or not the committee met their commitment to themselves, one they felt must have been very important because they said, "We will not present a design to the House of Assembly that is not accepted by the majority of the people of this Province." Mr. Speaker, they have presented a design that is accepted by the small minority, a very, very small minority of this Province. So, Mr. Speaker, that is all I have to say. I want to wind up my contribution to this debate by saying that this flag is not distinctive, it is not representative, it does not represent Newfoundland's past, it does not represent the present and that particular design will do nothing for the future of this Province. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt):

The hon. the Minister of Justice.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER:

Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to speak at any great length in this debate but I do wish to put my views on record.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER:

Now, first of all, I do in general wish to commend hon. members on both sides, those for and those against the adoption of the flag as a flag of the Province. On the nature of the debate one can be opposed to something or one can be in favour of something on rational, logical grounds respecting one another's point of view and right to differ. I think that a debate on a matter like a flag can become an emotional and irrational exercise and I do not know that that does anybody any benefit, those who favour this design or those who are against this design. So on the whole the debate certainly has been of a rational nature, People have expressed different points of view, some supporting the design, some opposing the design, but doing so in a rational manner respecting the rights to different opinions of different hon. members. And it is not a question that those who are for the flag or against the flag are more patriotic or less patriotic, it is a question of individual judgment and not a question of who or which or what point of view represents a better Newfoundlander or a better Canadian or a more patriotic person or whatever way you want to put it. In other words, there are honest differences of opinion and that is what we have to accept and I think that is the way in which we should view and continue to view those who have opinions different from our own.

With respect to this particular design, it is a very personal question whether one likes the design or does not like the design. I do not think there is any such thing as a right or a wrong response to that; it is a question of individual taste. I personally find the design attractive and certainly have no opposition to it from that point of view. As I say, that is a personal choice; I feel that Newfoundland should have its own distinctive flag. So if you add those two together, that Newfoundland should have its own distinctive flag and if one finds this design acceptable, then that largely would be the reason that certainly I intend to support it.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms), I believe it was, pointed out that, among various qualities, a flag should be unique or distinctive. In other words, that it would not easily be mistaken with any other flag. And I think that is certainly the case here and that, I think, is another quality it has.

The hon. the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) stated that he thought that this was a very appropriate time and he gave a few reasons, two of them I will allude to: number one he mentioned because of the particular hon. member who is now Premier, and he also mentioned because of a particular hon. member who is now Leader of the Opposition. He went on and said something to the effect that the Premier who would not be frightened or detracted because there might appear to be immediate political gain in changing his viewpoint and he thought that that was advantageous, and, also, a Leader of the Opposition who, although he opposes it, does so on rational and sensible grounds, not on emotional ones or in a manner which would be divisive.

In the Commonwealth where there are somewhat over forty countries - there are somewhat over forty countries in the Commonwealth, four of them have the Union Jack in their flags. The United Kingdom, obviously, and three others; Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. So certainly there is nothing incongruous or unusual in a Commonwealth jurisdiction not having a Union Jack in its flag, as I say. Apart from the nation of which it is originally the flag - it is now the flag of the Commonwealth as well, but originally it was the flag of the United Kingdom - apart from the United Kingdom, of the forty-odd countries

MR. OTTENHEIMER: in the Commonwealth, three have the Union Jack. They are Australia, with some stars around it; New Zealand, with some stars around it, and Fiji with something around it, I am not sure what they are. But out of the forty, apart from the U.K., three others.

Now, in Canada we have three jurisdictions, two territories, ten Provinces. Out of those twelve flags, provincial - territorial flags, leaving Newfoundland out, three have the Union Jack, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. Now, are we to suggest that the people from Nova Scotia are anyway less loyal, less conscious of their Commonwealth heritage, less -

MR. NEARY: (inaudible) they have something in their flag to identify with their province.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Well, they have that blue cross and the emblem which, I think, is essentially of Scotland. I think it is more reminiscent, perhaps, of Scotland. Of course, there is a very large Scottish population in Nova Scotia.

MR. NEARY: We will not even have that in ours.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: But, you know, it is not a Union Jack representation and, I suppose, Nova Scotia is among the most, to use an old term, loyalist provinces in Canada. Of course, it was settled by a large number of Empire Loyalists who came from the United States.

So Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia, three of them have the Union Jack incorporated in it, the others do not. So there is nothing unusual or particular about that.

And there is really only one other point I want to make and that is that the

MR. OTTENHEIMER: adoption of this flag as the flag of the Province takes nothing away from anybody, any organization; the Canadian Legion or any other organization is not obliged to fly the provincial flag, is not obliged to fly any flag, it may fly any flag it wishes, including the Union Jack. The public buildings of the Province which represent the government will, in fact, fly three flags, the Union Jack, representing our Commonwealth association, the Maple Leaf, representing our membership of the Canadian Federation, and the new design representing our distinctive provincial flag. Nothing is being taken from anybody, no options are being denied. There is nobody who can fly the Union Jack today, or wishes to fly the Union Jack today, who will in any way be deprived of that right. No option is being taken away from anybody, one additional option is being added. And on public buildings this will be given visible expression with the flying of three flags, the Union Jack representing our association with the Commonwealth, the Maple Leaf representing our membership of the Canadian Federation, and the provincial flag representing our own distinctive identity as a Province.

And I certainly feel that

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I can see no - well, I cannot say I can see no reason - no, it is a personal choice and some people do not like the design or some people might. They have all kinds of views on it. So I cannot say I see no reason why anybody would oppose it, because there are obviously many reasons why people would oppose it. But myself, bearing in mind, and one can only speak for one's own reasons here, number one, my belief that it is time we had our own distinctive flag. Number two, that I find the design quite acceptable. Number three, bearing in mind that indeed it is unusual for many Commonwealth jurisdictions to have the Union Jack, that out of the forty odd countries there are only three apart from Britain which have the Union Jack in their flag, that is national jurisdictions, and within the twelve in Canada there are only three provinces with the Union Jack. It is nothing radical, it is nothing revolutionary. It is no great departure. Bearing in mind as well that no option is closed, no option is taken away from anybody but an additional option is given to the people of the Province. And that the three flags which will show all of our associations -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): Order, please!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - all of our connections, number one with the Commonwealth, number two as part of Canada, but number three as a distinct province with its own identity, I feel that our identity and our relationships with the Commonwealth and with Canada, and our own identity as a Province will all be enhanced and they are basically the reasons that I intend to support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. W. ROWE: Mr. Speaker, it is a familiar spot, probably not in the last month or so, but this is an important issue, Mr. Speaker and I rise to register my personal sincerely held, frankly felt feelings on the whole matter of a flag for our Province, Newfoundland and Labrador.

MR. W. ROWE: Before getting into the flag itself, the flag design itself, on which I have some strong feelings, I want to compliment speakers who I have already heard speaking in this House and others whom I have read in Hansard on this matter. I share the view of the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer). The debate has been a good one so far. It has been rational. It has been on a high plain. There has been some emotionalism shown. My colleague here, my old buddy from Lapoile (Mr. Neary), has shown a certain strength of emotion regarding this issue and so he should, so he should. If he feels it strongly, he should take a strong position on it.

I would also like to go on record as commending the members of the Flag Committee, each and every member of the Flag Committee on both sides of the House, and I speak with particular reference to my own colleagues at the moment, the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms), Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) and Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock), and the other members who have shown what can only be characterized as courage, bravery, in attacking this matter as they have. They were given a job and they did the job. They went throughout the Province, they heard submissions. They received briefs and they have come in here, Mr. Speaker, and they have, without any trepidation which shows their courage, they have laid it on the Table of this House for us to deal with. It took guts, it took courage, to do that, especially the members on this side of the House, because I believe they were under a considerable amount of pressure as to what would be acceptable to most members of Her Majesty's loyal Opposition, and I believe that most members of that Committee did not get the idea as weeks and months went by that this particular design would be acceptable - we did not know what the design was - but a design like this would be acceptable to most members of the Opposition. We have heard some speeches on what might be acceptable. So they showed courage. They did the job. They carried out a mandate which was assigned to them. They did it in an honourable, decent, honest and courageous way, and I commend them for it.

MR. W. ROWE:

But, Mr. Speaker, I have to say, speaking only for myself and no one else as a member of this House, I have to admit that the first time that I saw this flag, this particular design, I did not like it. I have to say further that the second time and the third time I looked it I did not like the design of this flag. I stood down there in the lobby of the Confederation Building in bemused abstraction for minutes on end, sort of like,

MR. W. ROWE: I suppose, some latter-day Socrates contemplating the verities of the universe looking at this flag. And I could not as much as I tried to, I could not bring myself to accept intellectually, or rationally, or emotionally this particular design. The more I looked at it the more I found it unsettling, unsatisfying, I found it aesthetically displeasing to me. I particularly found, Mr. Speaker, that there is a jarring note in this flag, a jarring note between abstract concepts-- the diagonal lines, the right angles and so on - the abstract concept which I do find fairly acceptable and this concrete symbolism represented by that arrow pointing towards the fly of the flag. I found a jarring note there. I cannot accept the jarring, unsettling feeling which I get when I look at that flag. I find it as a result of that both empty and cluttered if that is possible. That paradoxical statement, if that is possible, Mr. Speaker, I find it empty and cluttered as a result of that arrow being introduced into the design. As a symbol, as a piece of concrete symbolism, assuming that one does not mind the jarring of the abstract in the concrete there like that, as a concrete symbol I find this arrow there, Mr. Speaker, to be corny or cliched in the way it is represented. I do not say that to hurt anybody's feelings, either the artist, Mr. Pratt, or the members of the Committee themselves. I find it corny in the same way that one of the statements in the explanation of the flag, our future is for the making and not for the taking. That kind of, I suppose, banal attempt at Kennedyesque statement or explanation of the flag, I find that corny I find it a cliché, I find that arrow to be a cliché and corny symbol of what Newfoundland and Labrador should stand for and should be heading towards what we stand for as far as our past heritage and our present is concerned. I do not think it represents anything along those lines. Mr. Speaker, if we hang it as a banner, as has been suggested I believe by the Chairman of the Committee, and see some other things read into it, I find the flag displayed as a banner to be a negative symbol, to be almost sinister in intent. The idea of the sword which is supposed to

MR. W. ROWE: represent, hanging downward like that, is supposed to represent the sacrifice made by our veterans in the world wars and other conflicts, I find it to be a negative, almost sinister piece of symbolism. It is almost like the sword of Damocles hanging over all of us by a hair which if it breaks threatens disaster for us all. It reminded me when I was looking at it hanging downward like that as some kind of a representative symbol of the Province or an aspect of the Province. I find it almost to be like in the old days when if you were found guilty of a heinous crime and the judge was sentencing you and you came into the room and here is a dagger, a sword pointing towards you a condemnation of you. And I find that to be almost negative symbolism, Mr. Speaker, and I really cannot accept it as a question of taste or a question of aesthetic judgement. Mr. Speaker, the mandate of this Committee was to bring together and submit to the House a flag which I believe was supposed to be simple, distinctive, attractive and a mirror of our traditions as a Province and as a colony and as a dominion. Now, Mr. Speaker, aspects of the flag certainly fulfil the mandate of simplicity, it is simple. Mr. Speaker, some of the imagery evoked by the flag I define not to be simple or uncluttered but more simplistic than simple and I refer again to this jarring note introduced by the arrow pointing towards the fly. Mr. Speaker, as far as distinctive is concerned I think the flag is distinctive. The question we have to ask ourselves though as members of this House is whether it is distinctive in a way that we would want it to be distinctive. It is distinctive in that it stands out, nobody will doubt that if this flag is

MR. W. ROWE: flying, hanging as a banner or flying with other flags that it would be distinctive, it would stand out. Heads will turn and swivel on your neckbone as you look at it. It is distinctive. And I think it was the Leader of the Opposition who said earlier that one of the fears about its distinctiveness, the way that it stands out, may be that it would subject us to derision rather than pride. Nobody is afraid of a little derision or ridicule, Mr. Speaker, but whether we should have in our flag emblems or symbols which threaten, even, to make people look at it and say, 'What is it? What does it represent? What does it stand for?' and looks simplistic and jarring, as I say, and subjects us to perhaps ridicule and derision on that account - I do not think it is distinctive, Mr. Speaker, in the way a flag for this Province should be distinctive. Now, 'attractive' - one of the terms of the mandate of the Committee. Perhaps the members of the Committee do find it attractive. I, for one, Mr. Speaker, do not find it attractive. If there is anything that attracts me, it is the flashiness of the flag that attracts me. It is a flashy flag. It is not attractive in a noble sense, in a sense that evokes emotions of pride or a feeling of patriotism - not blind patriotism, but patriotism towards our own native Province. It is not attractive in that sense.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the other aspect of the mandate given to the Committee, whether it mirrors our traditions as a colony, a dominion and a Province, Mr. Speaker, I would defy anybody without the benefit of some laborious and forced and to me, artificial explanation, I would defy anybody to find in that flag anything which is emblematic or symbolic of Newfoundland's great traditions as a seafaring nation, as people who have lived on this rock, this bald rock, as Joe Smallwood used to say, for 500 years. I do not find anything in the flag which in any way mirrors our traditions and the traditions of our ancestors and forefathers here in Newfoundland and Labrador. You can read into it anything you want. You can say it represents anything, but I do not see anything that makes it, to me - if you were to ask 1000 Newfoundlanders chosen at random, if they had not seen this before and had not been told it was the new Newfoundland flag - if you asked them what it was, Mr. Speaker, the last thing that

MR. W. ROWE: would come into any Newfoundlander's mind is that this is a flag representing Newfoundland and Labrador, if they did not know beforehand. That is my feeling on it, Sir. And I realize that that is my own subjective taste, my own feeling as to my own sense of aesthetics, I suppose, as to the flag itself and what it represents.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared, as a member of the House of Assembly, to admit that my own subjective judgement and taste in this matter was eccentric, wrong-headed and stupid if I did not find as I go throughout the Province, talking to people in my district and people in Newfoundland and Labrador generally - not hundreds and not thousands, but certainly scores of people I have talked to since the flag was first unfurled - I find that 90 per cent of the people to whom I talked happened to share the views which I just expressed at some length regarding this flag. If they did not express that, Mr. Speaker, if a majority or a substantial minority of the population expressed a liking for this flag, they liked it - it represents Newfoundland and Labrador, it is attractive, it does not have this jarring note of which I spoke - then I would be prepared to say that my judgement is wrong and eccentric. But, Sir, when you find that 90 per cent or certainly a vast majority of the people you meet with share your sentiments on this, then you are driven to the conclusion that your subjective taste, your subjective judgement may in fact be so widely felt, so broad and pervasive throughout Newfoundland and Labrador, that your subjective judgement suddenly becomes an objective and broadly held view of most people in this Province, and that what you are doing is sharing in a common viewpoint rather than holding a viewpoint which is sort of eccentric and outside the pale.

Mr. Speaker, there is supposed to be a free vote in the House and that is why we are having members who will stand up on this side. Some will vote for, speak for, some will vote for and speak against. In fact, it is not a free vote. This point has been made before. It is the Premier's bill. It is the bill brought in by the Premier of this Province. It is a bill which I think will pass through the House of Assembly. I will not be voting for it, but I believe it will pass. The freedom of the vote in this House will be seen when we observe the vote

MR. W. ROWE: taken and see how many ministers of the Crown, in fact, vote or speak against the bill.

MR. WARREN: Right on! Right on!

MR. W. ROWE: I think you will not find one minister of the government, you probably will not find too many backbenchers on the government side of the House who will express their views contrary to the bill. You may have two or three. So, Mr. Speaker, I think we should dispell the farcical notion right off the bat that there is a free vote going on in this House outside of the Opposition side of the House of Assembly. It is a government bill and the Premier is determined to get it through the House as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Now, I do not blame the Premier for doing that. The Premier, who is aware of the vagaries of history, knows that in spite of his eighteen hour days, in spite of the fact he may be in power for four or eight or twenty-seven years - he knows that fifty years from now, a hundred years from now, he will be noted in the histories of this Province as the man who brought in the new provincial flag for Newfoundland and Labrador. That will be it. He knows that and he is determined to get his niche in history as a result of bringing in this flag. Well, I would ask the Premier - I am sorry he is not in his seat, but what I would ask the Premier is, Is he

MR. W. N. ROWE: sure right now, is he sure that this is the flag for which he wants to be remembered by posterity. Maybe it is, Mr. Speaker. I would have grave doubts about it if I were in his position. But I do not think it is a flag which should be remembered in posterity or for which a Premier of the Province should take a great deal of pride in years to come.

The Premier says we will grow to love this flag. I will try to love it, I have cuddled up to it, Mr. Speaker, I have looked at it, made eyes at it -

MR. T. LUSH: Love is blind.

MR. S. NEARY: Goo-goo eyes.

MR. W.N. ROWE: Love is blind.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. W.N. ROWE:

No sauciness now I have been good to you so far.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier really means that the people of this Province and the members of this House will grow to love this flag, if he means that as a sincere statement of his attitude towards this flag, then I say to the Premier put it to the test. There is no need to ram it through the House, we have done without a provincial flag so-called, outside of the Union Jack, for a great number of years. There is no need to have one by a week from today or two weeks from now. If we are going to grow to love this flag, Mr. Speaker, then I say let the Premier postpone the passage of his bill for a few weeks, two or three months. Let him see how the people of Newfoundland - send out the literature, send it around to the school children. The school children of Newfoundland and Labrador are the ones who are going to live with this, Mr. Speaker, for the next fifty or seventy years. It is their heritage we are talking about,

MR. W.N. ROWE: it is their future we are talking about and I have not met too many school children who like this flag but maybe they will grow to love it as the Premier has stated. I am not saying wait five years or ten years or until the school children are grown to be fifty or sixty years of age. What I am saying is wait a few weeks, or two or three months and bring this bill back into the House of Assembly, or some other bill for that matter, some other design, back into the House of Assembly in October or November or in the new year of 1981, and let us see if in the interim, Mr. Speaker, we have had an opportunity to let this grow on us, to learn to love this design. Perhaps by that time I will be up making a speech in favour of the flag, at this moment in time I am very much afraid that I cannot do that.

Now, Sir, let me say a word, merely by way of conclusion, about Mr. Pratt, Christopher Pratt who designed the flag. Mr. Pratt, Sir, is one of our foremost artists and painters in this Province. I say one of our foremost artists and painters. He is by no means in possession of the field of artistry or painting totally onto himself. He is a man who I admire and everyone in Newfoundland admires for what he has done but one has to realize that in the last ten or twelve or fourteen years Mr. Pratt has devoted himself to a very narrow segment on the artistic spectrum. He is drawing, he is involved with straight lines more than anything else in the field of artistry. And, Mr. Speaker, he has restricted himself to this narrow field. Fifteen years ago, in my view now, and again I am stating my own subjective tastes, when he did the Links, for example, or the picture on the sheep or even the girl with the seashells, I found those works to be superb pieces of work, of painting, of artistry.

MR. W.N. ROWE:

Since that time, since Mr. Pratt has been restricting himself to clapboards and window sashes I have not had the same appreciation of that man's talent and output. If Mr. Pratt had had submitted to him a request for a design fifteen years ago I would submit, Sir, we would have gotten a different design, I would say a better design than we are debating here today.

The committee made one mistake, Sir, and they should be criticized for making this mistake.

MR. W.N. ROWE: As I understand it, Mr. Pratt was the only man of displayed artistic talent in this Province to be asked to submit a completed design for our flag. I think Mr. Pratt should have been asked to submit a design for our flag, but what about Mr. Blackwood, Squires, others around this Province, Sir, who occupy positions on the artistic spectrum which is different, a different perspective altogether from Mr. Pratt's? Why did not the Committee ask these gentlemen to submit something which they could draw upon their own traditions and then submit a design as well. I think, then, we would have had three or four or a half dozen designs which would have given the Committee a broader choice, a broader array of artistic talent to choose from.

And I think if you - I have not talked to any of the members about this but I would suspect that the members of the Committee, whom I have already commended, whom I have complimented for their efforts, if you ask them privately, they will probably concede at this point in time, Sir, that if they made a mistake, the mistake was that they did not draw upon a broad enough range of the talent that we have in this Province for designing potential and proposed Newfoundland and Labrador provincial flags.

Perhaps we should give that some consideration. There is no need to rush this, this is something that we are going to have to live with forever, presumably. Once we get a flag in place it is going to be very difficult for anyone to change it, but it certainly should be open to discussion now.

And Mr. Pratt himself has said that he would not mind submitting other designs. I do not see why it should be restricted to him, as much

MR. W.N. ROWE: as I have admired him, and as well as he has done in his chosen field.

One other thing, Sir, before I sit down. I would like to say I do resent a little bit, as a member of the House, being told that this is it, by the artist, presumably, this is it, take it or leave it. I want no suggestions from members of the House as to what should take its place. I do not want any suggestions as to what should be omitted or added with regard to this flag. If you are going to use this piece of work, then you vote for this flag or you vote against the flag. I do not want any tinkering with it, I do not want any compromises, I do not want any suggestions, however reasonable, made with regard to a possible design. I resent that just a bit, Sir. Not enough to get exercised about it, but I do think that we should be in a position where we can make some suggestions and comments as to what should go in the flag.

There has been some criticism, I believe, of members of the House by one or two members of the Committee for not appearing before the Committee itself and submitting some designs. Well, I, for one, Sir, having been a member of the House that struck a Committee to bring in a new flag, would not be presumptuous enough to go before that Committee right at the beginning, with a flag of my own design, prejudge the situation from the beginning and say, 'This is my choice, take it or leave it' as has been suggested to us.

The mandate of the Committee was to come up with a flag which would be debated in the House and I was prepared to allow this Committee to prepare a design and bring it in. I am only sorry, Sir, that they did not bring in one which I can find acceptable.

MR. W.N. ROWE: Now, Mr. Speaker, let me conclude by saying again that the Committee has done its job. The Committee, in fact, Sir, I can compliment on the taste which they showed. Because, as I understand it, it was made public some days ago, that with the exception of one, perhaps all of the Committee members, none of the members, with the exception of perhaps one, shows this design as their first choice.

Each of the members of the Committee wanted a design which was different from that. I do not know if there was any common ground. Two or three members might have wanted one, or two or three members another, perhaps they were completely divergent, I do not know, but, Sir, this turns out to be, as a result of the candor and frankness of Mr. Pratt and some other members, I think, who have made a public statement, this turns out to be the second choice of every member, or nearly every member of the Flag Committee.

Well, Sir, that in itself, I would submit -

MR. THOMS: You should have seen my first choice.

MR. W.N. ROWE: Yes, I would hate to see what the hon. member's first choice was. It might have been good, Mr. Speaker.

But that in itself, Sir, while not a blanket condemnation of the design, is certainly an indication that the members were not at the beginning too happy about the design which they ultimately had to bring before the House. And why did they have to bring it before the House? Because they knew, point number one, that they had to be unanimous. If they did not have unanimity within their own Committee

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MR. W.N. ROWE: then it was useless to
even talk about bringing it to the House because it
would have been too devisive altogether and it would
have been a

MR. W. ROWE: very emotional type of thing, I would suspect, and we would not have had any design. So there was an agreement, I would assume, among the Committee members that there had to be unanimity. So they were unanimous on this particular design which happens to be the second choice of all members of the Committee or nearly every member of the Committee. And secondly, of course, the Premier and this House very wisely when the Committee was struck, gave the Committee a deadline which they had to meet. So they were operating under these two constraints, they had to bring in something on which they were unanimous - and as somebody once very wisely said, a camel is a horse designed by a Committee, and that is what I am afraid we have here, a camel trying to pass itself off as a horse, Mr. Speaker. It is to me, unattractive; it was brought in unanimously as the second choice of the Committee, but it is unattractive and is not symbolic or representative of the traditions of this Province.

I regret very much, Mr. Speaker, along with other members of the House, that I cannot accept, as a member of the House, this flag. Most of the people that I have talked to in my own district and throughout Newfoundland and Labrador cannot accept this flag.

I believe the flag, from what I have heard, will pass through the House, and it would be very easy to jump on the bandwagon and say, 'Well, it is going to pass anyway. There are going to be thirty members or so who will vote for it or perhaps more, thirty-five members - jump on the bandwagon and let her go and not get involved with it at all.' But, Sir, my own feeling is that each member - and certainly, I intend to do so - must vote in accordance with our own judgement and our own taste in this matter, and in this particular case, the taste and judgement which I have expressed I sincerely believe is buttressed by most of the people that I represent and most of the people in Newfoundland and Labrador. For that reason, Sir, regretfully and reluctantly, as a member of the House of Assembly, I must vote against this flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

Before I recognize the hon. the member

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): for St. John's Centre (Dr. P.J. McNicholas), it being 5:00 P.M., I can inform the House now that I have received notice of one matter for debate at 5:30 P.M., when a motion to adjourn will be deemed to be before the House, a notice given by the hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) arising out of a question asked the hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer) and the subject matter being the Quebec provincial police carrying guns in Newfoundland.

The hon. the member for St. John's Centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. P. J. McNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, I am rather amazed or amused at the hon. members across the way when they say that we do not have a free vote. This is a free vote of the House. I must give all credit to the hon. the Premier. I do not think he wants or needs to muzzle anybody as far as government policy is concerned. I do not think he has to worry in the slightest about the loyalty of any member on this side of the House for quite a number of reasons, first of all because his policy is so good that no reasonable person could object to it anyway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. P. J. McNICHOLAS: Secondly, we are all loyal members of the P.C. Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. P.J.McNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the hon. the member for St. John's North (Mr. J. Carter) and his Committee for the terrific job they did. They travelled under very trying circumstances throughout Newfoundland and Labrador and came in with a report and a proposed flag.

Christopher Pratt is, as we all know, one of Newfoundland's most illustrious sons. He has an international reputation as an artist, and he composed this flag. It was his idea combined with thoughts and views of the Committee as they interpreted them from the views of people right across Newfoundland and Labrador. It is an abstract picture. I suppose

DR. MCNICHOLAS: symbolism is in the mind and eye of the beholder. But some people find it extremely difficult to fit the Island of Newfoundland into a triangle and to fit the rest of the country, Labrador, into another triangle and to really figure out what the arrow in the centre means if it is pointing to prosperity or a rosy future.

Mr. Speaker, I have a suggestion of my own. I have not consulted anybody about it. It may not be a popular one. We have waited a long time for a flag. I would like to make sure in my mind that it is a flag that is accepted by the majority of people, and I would like to suggest, it may be a cumbersome means, but I think we should get a coloured plaque together with the proposed flag, with the Newfoundland native flag, with the proposed Legion flag, with other representative flags and have them all in colour, and have them in the polling booths at the next provincial election.

MR. WARREN: Right on!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: At that time, when we are voting, I am sure we will be voting for the P.C. Party, at that time everybody would have an opportunity of indicating his or her choice for a flag.

Mr. Speaker, I consulted a cross section of the people of my district, St. John's Centre. I must admit there were quite a number of them who liked the present flag. They felt that the flag was for their children and their children's children. I had a nice old lady who rang me - she might not like being called an old lady, but she was a nice lady from Carpasian Road, who rang me just last night at supper-time and said to me that she was very pleased with the flag and she hoped that I would support it.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: But, Mr. Speaker, that is not the majority view in my district. I think the majority indicate that they should pay tribute to history in what is called, or what I would call, an understandable way. And they feel, and I feel, that our future is a continuation of the endeavours and sacrifices of the past. And I completely agree with that.

Mr. Speaker, there are three main founding races in Newfoundland, the English, the Scottish and the Irish. The two former are represented in the colour of the proposed flag but, Mr. Speaker, there is no green in that flag to represent the Irish people. I think that is a sad reflection on the unselfish dedication of a large number of -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): Order, please!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: - Irish men and Irish women who over the generations contributed so generously to education and to the development of the intellectual and moral fiber for which Newfoundlanders are so well noted.

MR. NEARY: Forty-seven per cent of the population.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, I suppose Newfoundland is the most British of all the Provinces of Canada. I suppose British Columbia is probably the next British, and they see fit to include British in their title and also in their flag.

We have countries like New Zealand and Australia who have basically the same ethnic background as Newfoundland and they also incorporate a British, if you like, or the Union Jack in their flag.

DR. MCNICHOLAS:

Mr. Speaker, it may sound strange coming from an Irishman that I am advocating such an inclusion in our present flag but I do not have to remind hon. members on each side of this hon. House of the tremendous contribution of Irishmen in the First World War and the Second World War, volunteers who contributed way above their population and whose names, in many cases, are part of the history of the times. I may be wrong, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that I am the only member of this hon. House who was in active service in the last war in a war zone. I was in the British Merchant Navy in 1943 and 1944, in the Battle of the Atlantic. I am very proud of the fact that I can wear the ribbon of the Battle of the Atlantic. I was very pleased to serve under the Red Ensign at that time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if this flag is passed and proclaimed and becomes the official flag of Newfoundland, I do not think I need assure the House that I will pay it all honour and respect. Mr. Speaker, in the final analysis one has to use one's judgement and vote according to one's conscience. I will vote against the resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (BAIRD):

The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN:

Yes, Mr. Speaker. First I would like to say at the offset that I will be voting against the flag.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN:

I am just wondering -

MR. NEARY:

Vote with the people.

MR. WARREN:

- where this government is putting its priorities. I notice that the Minister of Consumer Affairs and Environment (Mrs. Newhook) brought a very worthwhile, very important bill into this House in the last session, an environmental bill and so far that bill is not proclaimed, And yesterday the Minister of Manpower and Labour (Mr. Dinn) made a Ministerial Statement concerning Workers' Compensation for fishermen. However, he did clue up his statement by saying he is hoping to have it implemented, if not at the end of

MR. WARREN:

this year, early in 1981, and here we are trying to get the flag passed by the twenty-fourth of June. Mr. Speaker, I believe our priorities should be carefully looked at.

Yesterday I had a call from the Chief of the Indians in North West River. He asked the same question, where does the priority go? There was an environmental hearing which cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$40,000 on the Kitts Uranium Mine in the Makkovik area. Now we have a flag that has cost the government some \$22,000 and we want to get it through right away. I am just concerned, Mr. Speaker, about where the priorities of this government lie. Do they lie to the future of Newfoundland or the work of the fishermen, the labourers and everyone else or do we still need a flag to make sure that the fishermen on those boats get Workers' Compensation. Do they have to wait until we get the flag first or will Workers' Compensation come before the flag?

Mr. Speaker, I want to go on record and compliment the Committee. I believe the Committee did do an admirable job under the circumstances. Now, if I want to talk about the reaction from my district I am sure I have very little reaction because, as of today, I have not received one telephone call, I have not received one letter, I have not received anything whatsoever. And it is not what probably most people think, it is because most of the people in the district have not got a clue about the flag, what is going on, because

MR. WARREN: only two communities have radio and television. And I understand from the Chairman of the Committee that he is intending to send out 200,000 copies of the flag throughout the Island and Labrador. Well, I suggest that if we are waiting for a reaction back from the Island and from Labrador, we will have to wait many more weeks before we will get any reaction back on this flag. I have sent it out to the schools in my district but, again, it will definitely take two or three weeks before it comes back.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring up something that - I notice in this flag - now it is really flashy, but I am just wondering if Mr. Pratt really thought out what this flag really represents. When we take this flag with our athletes - next time around we have to march with this flag. Well, why do you not look at it very carefully. I understand that this flag will be on the flagpole and the flagpole will be down on this side, and the athletes will be marching forward. Now, it says here, "A golden arrow points the way to what we believe will be a bright future". Now, here we are, we are marching forward and the arrow is pointing backwards. That is not bad, you know. So here is an example that if we mind to take this flag, we can really pick out that if that means that this arrow points to a bright future as our athletes are marching forward, I believe the flag is either upside down or inside out.

Mr. Speaker, today I received a telegram, I believe the other hon. members from Labrador received a telegram, and I want to read this telegram into the record of the House. It is from the Labrador Heritage Society, the main branch in Happy Valley-Goose Bay. Here is the text of the telegram, which may be interesting, however, very debatable. It is just as debatable as we are debating this flag today. It says: "We remind our representatives that the Labrador Heritage Society is expecting the Labrador flag to be officially sanctioned and named officially by the Government of this Province and declared as the official flag of Labrador. The provincial flag will be flown alongside the Labrador flag. There is little interest in the flag issue from Labrador, clearly and simply because the people of this part of the Province have their own flag in the Labrador flag.

MR. WARREN: "At the conclusion of the Flag meeting of January 16, 1980", when the members of the Committee were there and I was there also, "our case was stated - and stated they would seek and recommend that the Labrador flag be officially adopted by the government to represent Labrador along with a provincial flag. We believe that failure to see the importance of doing that and carrying out the recommendations will further foster a poor relationship between the two parts of the Province, that is Labrador and Newfoundland, and we look forward to a reply." Now, I am sure that that is just as debatable as this flag is. I am sure if there was a resolution brought forward for this House to debate on Labrador having its own official flag, it would be debated just as importantly as this flag would be. I do not see why the rush of getting this flag carried forward so fast.

Mr. Speaker, one of the Committee members said that six months was lots of time for people to react. At that time, Mr. Speaker, one thing the Committee is forgetting, one thing we are all forgetting, is at that time, within six months, the people of Newfoundland and Labrador did not have anything to react to. There was not anything to react to. If this Committee went out now and had their twenty-six hearings throughout Newfoundland and Labrador with this example, then they would get a reaction, but they did not have anything to react to at that time, and now this is the reaction and this is why the people across the Province are reacting to this monstrosity.

Mr. Speaker, if this is passed, which, in all probability it will be passed, although it is said it is a free vote but I doubt it, I am just wondering if the people three years down the road will forgive this administration for the unjustness that it has done to this Province. Now, I would like to see a flag that has some symbolism in it. Now, there could be many, many forms of symbolism, and it is not going to suit everybody but as other speakers who are going to vote

MR. G. WARREN:

against this flag have said, at least we should let the people decide. I think the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas) brought out a good point, he brought out a good suggestion and I would definitely support it, that the next time around in the polling booths give an example of different kinds of flags and see what kind they would select, just see what kind they would select. And I will bet my bottom dollar that this flag, if this is shown, I bet it would not get ten per cent of the voters okay across this island.

Mr. Speaker, also Mr. Pratt says in his little bit of literature on the flag, he says, for example, the Christian Cross, the Beothuck and the Naskaupi ornamentation. Now, we have 227 Naskaupi Indians in the Province, we have 517 Montagnais Indians so, you know, all of a sudden we have projected, for some reason or another, we have projected a little symbol of the Naskaupi. I do not see anything in there about the Inuit, not a thing at all about the Inuit, and there are close to two thousand. There are all the other groups throughout Newfoundland that have settled here. So, you know, I believe that - the member from Twillingate (Mr. Rowe) said earlier that we should have gone out to all the artists, to all the artists here in Newfoundland and Labrador and said "Here are 400 examples try to select a flag for us" Give all the artists a chance, why just give one man recognition for drawing up a flag and a flag that we want. Give all the artists a chance to submit a flag that they think that Newfoundland wants. This is the big important thing, this is the flag that Mr. Pratt wants but it is not the flag that Newfoundland wants. I think we should get that quite clearly that this is what the people in this Province are saying.

Mr. Speaker, if this flag goes through I would probably -

if this flag does go through with one change I would probably support it. I am going to say this in conclusion, because if it does go through -

if you take the arrow out completely, get rid of the arrow completely and put three big letters in there, CPP in place of the arrow and if this flag is passed I think the people of Newfoundland

MR. G. WARREN: will definitely support it because then it would be the flag of Carter, Pratt and Peckford.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear !

MR. G. WARREN: So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I would probably support it and all the rest of the people because then it would be an indication that is a flag that those three gentleman really want. The Premier came out on the first day when he saw it and he was in favour of it and Mr. Pratt was saying ' Do not change it' and the Chairman of the Committee is saying. 'It is the best flag ever' and the chairman also said in releases that it is going to be passed. So- regardless of what the people think. So, Mr. Chairsmn, I think we definitely should delay our tactics. We should wait awhile and let the concerns of the people across this Province, let the concerns of the people trickle in to government, to their elected members and if it needs to be changed-maybe not too many changes need to be made to this flag-but if there are changes needed and if it is satisfying to most of the people of the Province and Labrador then we should have our flag. I am convinced that we need our own flag, I am convinced that we have been under the Union Jack for too long, I am convinced that the Union Jack probably could be incorporated in a flag but we need our own distinctive flag, I am proud that when our Athletes can go and march with all other athletes across the Province and in the commonwealth, that there will be a flag that they can carry instead of not being allowed to carry the Union Jack as happened in the past. So, I am in support of a flag, I am in support of a flag for this Province and the sooner the better for the proper flag but not for this piece of paper that illustrates what this flag will be. And I hope that Government Members who have not fully made up their minds on which way they are going to lean, in support or non-support of the flag, will take into consideration the concerns that have been expressed by members on this side and by the member from St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas). Let us take

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MR. G. WARREN: our time, let us wait three or four months and get rid of some of the employment bills. Make sure that the fishermen of this Province have Workers' Compensation. Make sure that there is an environment bill in place that will be satisfying to any further development in this Province. But let us wait on this flag and wait until the people are satisfied and make sure that we ourselves are satisfied as the elected representatives.

SOME HON MEMBERS: Hear, hear !

MR. SPEAKER: (Butt) The hon. the Minister of Health.

MR. W. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, will we call it 5:30?
I wish to adjourn the debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed to call it 5:30.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: It being 5:30 a motion to adjourn is deemed to be before the House.

The matter for debate raised by the Hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) is QPP carrying guns in Newfoundland.

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. L. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, we can get down to the serious debate. Seriously, Mr. Speaker, to me the answers given by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) this afternoon were absolutely incredible, absolutely, Mr. Speaker, incredible. We have had a situation in this Province, the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, where our own Newfoundland Constabulary are permitted to carry guns only in certain and special circumstances. Yet, in the past few days we have a situation where the Quebec Provincial Police - and after the treatment that we have given Quebec over this last few weeks it makes one suspicious why the QPP would be here with their guns to start with. But here we have the Quebec Provincial Police coming into our Province and armed with guns, something that our own Newfoundland Constabulary cannot do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice in answer to my questions this afternoon stands on his feet and says, "Basically I do not know, I do not know if they have had permission. I do not know whether they were granted a permit. I do not know by whom they were - if they did have a permit, I do not know who granted them that permit. Now, Mr. Speaker, I ask you, I ask this House, how long, how long does it take to obtain that information? I asked

MR. L. THOMS: that question at about 3:35 this afternoon. The Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) should have been back in the House with an answer to that question by 4 o'clock. It was as easy to obtain the information as that. But I view the matter with some concern. The question of whether or not our own police should be permitted to carry firearms has been debated. There has been no change in that decision. They cannot carry firearms except under certain and special conditions. But yet here we have a foreign police force because, judicially speaking of course, Quebec is a foreign jurisdiction. Nova Scotia is a foreign jurisdiction. And I do not want to see the Quebec Provincial Police Force be permitted to operate in this Province with guns.

MR. F. WHITE: Hear, hear!

MR. L. THOMS: Because, Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured, you can rest assured, that there is going to be a life taken if this is to continue. There is going to be a life taken and then you are going to see a border war. Then you are going to see - If you think the flag debate is going to create controversy in this Province let a provincial policeman from the Province of Quebec either accidentally or otherwise, drunk or sober, cause the death of a Newfoundlander in this Province and then we are going to have the war that my friend from LaPoile says we are going to have over the flag.

MR. THOMS:

And, Mr. Speaker, it is just so unbelievable that this could happen without the knowledge of the Department of Justice in this Province. It is just unbelievable! And it is unbelievable that the question could be asked in this House and the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) stand up and say, "I do not know. We are investigating that". Well, Mr. Speaker, he should know whether or not the QPP are coming into this Province with guns and carrying guns because it could have to do with the life and safety of Newfoundlanders. And I would suggest to the Minister of Justice that he take this matter in hand immediately and prevent the QPP from operating, investigating, for whatever reasons, in this Province with guns. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, number one I will say that I question the hon. gentleman's wisdom of using these terms, war with Quebec, the Quebec Provincial Police in here drunk or sober, people could be killed and all of this. I really think that this is taking it out of the area of the factual and rational and serious, admittedly serious, but it is taking it out of the area of the factual and putting it into the area of emotionalism and alarmist. So I certainly deprecate -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I strongly criticize and take exception to his use of the terms of war with Quebec, that Quebec Police drunk or sober, and the references to people being killed. Now to deal with the facts rather than the emotion and the alarmist statements and the hysterical, almost, position taken by the hon. gentleman.

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Now the hon. gentleman please will do me the same courtesy that I have done him and that was not to interrupt him. And I think it is only fair, it is a serious matter and I intend to deal

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

with it in a serious and not an emotional, alarmist or hysterical manner. And I listened to the hon. gentleman's alarmist presentation quietly and I ask him to listen to my rational presentation quietly.

I informed the hon. gentleman earlier today that approximately forty-eight hours ago it came to my attention that Quebec Provincial Police were in Wabush City, Labrador City in uniform and part of their uniform, indeed, is wearing the firearm. I immediately asked for an enquiry and to be fully briefed on all the facts. Now I may not have all the facts now and that might displease the hon. gentlemen but it has never been my habit nor is it my present intention to speak on a specific matter until I have all the facts. Now that might be somewhat different from some hon. members perhaps. You know there are those who have no aversion to speaking without having the facts and that is their privilege but I am going to stick to my procedure and that is to speak with the facts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER:

And the facts that I have now and that is all I am going to give the hon. gentleman, the facts that I have now is that when this came to my attention approximately forty-eight hours ago I asked for a complete briefing on it. The information that I have, not the speculation or the possibilities but the information, data, facts that I have now is that the Quebec Provincial Police in Fermont and areas adjoining Labrador and the Newfoundland Police Service, in the persons here of the R.C.M.P. performing provincial police duties, frequently confer at the office of either one or the other, sometimes in the Newfoundland part of the Province, sometimes in Quebec, and they confer because the two areas, you can drive from one to the other in a few minutes and because of our matters of crime prevention and crime detection on which they co-operate, have co-operated for years and will continue to co-operate, so that it is not unusual to have these consultations and good working relationships.

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MR. OTTENHEIMER:

The one specific matter on which I am waiting for information, and I am not going to say anything until I have the information, and that is with respect to the wearing of firearms. I know

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MR. G. OTTENHEIMER:

it is part of their uniform and the question comes up whether, when they are in this Province, they should indeed be required to take off that part of their uniform, not to wear the fire-arm. But whether they were authorized or they did it assuming an authorization or they did it improperly that, until I have all the facts, I am not going to comment on. I will have all of the facts by next week and then I will give all of the facts to the House. So I think, Mr. Speaker, that that should clarify the matter for the time being in a rational as opposed to an alarmist manner.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Friday at 10:00 A.M.