

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, APRIL 7, 1981

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Forest Resources and Lands.

MR. POWER: Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to outline the details of my department's timber exporting programme. The programme is mainly designed to salvage budworm infested wood and to facilitate integrated saw log operations.

Mr. Speaker, export permits have been issued and commitments given for wood to seven companies to date. This will involve the export of approximately 130,000 cords of wood this year. When this wood is actually cut and shipped out of the Province, it will mean the creation of up to 300 jobs in the forest industry.

The companies involved are: Canada Bay Lumber Company, St. John's; the Newfoundland Wood Export Company, Grand Falls and Goose Bay; Ocean Harvesters Limited, Harbour Grace; Resource Developers Limited, Hawkes Bay; Spracklin Enterprises, Charlottetown, Bonavista Bay; Henderson Lumber Company of Montreal, Quebec; and Otto Huck and Associates from Boucherville, Quebec.

In addition other proposals are being considered from other interested companies wishing to become involved in such budworm salvage operations. Mr. Speaker, the amount of wood to be harvested yearly is expected to increase over the next several years as more infested timber becomes accessible.

The areas involved stretch across the Province, with major emphasis in the areas of Bay d'Espoir, Roddickton, Main Brook and the Baie Verte Peninsula where budworm activity has been heavy or where integrated logging with major sawmills is needed.

MR. POWER: This initiative to salvage budworm-infested wood is part of my department's integrated management programme designed to protect, utilize and manage the forest resources for the maximum benefit of all Newfoundlanders.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, we are delighted that at long last the government, and particularly the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Power), has decided to take some affirmative action with respect to the infested forest throughout the Province and it is a move that is long overdue, nevertheless a welcomed move and we are just wondering whether or not the cordage alluded to there is sufficient, 130,000 cords of wood this year. It is not a lot of wood but we would hope that this is just a starting point and that the government would increase this figure and that they would make a move to see that this is spread through all parts of the Province in an attempt, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that that infested wood is harvested, and accompanying that, of course, we would also urge the government to ensure that the forest management programme is put into place there immediately so that we just do not get the wood taken out without any action taking place to make sure that our forests are ready for regrowth.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the two concerns; one, that we would hope

MR. LUSH: that the figure is flexible, that next year we would see more wood being harvested. And secondly, that the forest management programme is put into effect immediately so we are just not harvesting the wood but we are also ensuring that we have a forest for the future.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and it has to do with the Budget. We have had a number of indications from the minister as to when the Budget is going to be brought down and there is now a press report, that apparently the minister released, giving some overall details of the Budget. Could the minister indicate to the House whether or not the Budget is now in its final process? Is it in its final form and has it been completed?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if the hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware of the date of the Budget. He was not in the House when I announced it. He had asked me a question in that regard. I did announce the date of the Budget. I do not know if the hon. Leader of the Opposition is aware of that or not.

MR. STIRLING: Yes, I am aware that the date has been announced.

DR. COLLINS: Well I might say, Mr. Speaker, that the preparation for the Budget traditionally goes right up to the time the Budget is presented in the House, within days, certainly within hours so the Budget is in preparation.

MR. STIRLING: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. STIRLING: As I understand from the Minister

MR. STIRLING: of Finance (Dr. Collins) that even at this stage then, a few days before the Budget is to be presented, as I understand it from what he just said, that the Budget is not in its final form and he does not at this stage know what the final Budget will be. Is that correct?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I think I could probably respond more cogently to the hon. Leader of the Opposition's questions if I knew what he had in his mind. I can only suppose, therefore, if he does not actually state what he has in his mind there, but I did say that the Budget would be presented at the earliest possible moment, the earliest possible time, or some phrase to that effect. Now there are certain things that have to be done to get a Budget ready for presentation after all the decisions are made. There has to be printing done, they have to be tables drawn up, there have to be bindings put on and so on and so forth. All these are part of the mechanics of getting a Budget in place. So if one wants to present the Budget at the earliest possible moment, you do not wait to announce the time until all that is done, you announce the time in anticipation of those mechanical things being done because there are other preparations. There are certain invitations going out to dignitaries to attend and so on and so forth. So when I

DR. COLLINS: announced the time of the Budget, I announced the time where I anticipated that the Budget would be actually ready, physically ready for presentation.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: I understand, then, from what the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is saying, that he cannot be precise and that the April 14th date is not now a firm date for the Budget. Are you saying that the Budget may be delayed further because it is not finalized yet?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, the difficulty here may be that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition is so unfamiliar with how government and how the House works, you know, he just does not seem to have much conception of how these things are done, and he is not to be blamed for that, but I think it would be desirable if he did inform himself about these matters.

When I announced the date of the Budget on April 14th, I announced the date of the Budget on April 14th.

MR. STIRLING: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. STIRLING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

It is very obvious what the technique of the government is is that on this side we are not informed. And because the minister has established a new precedent, the Budget is now going to be delayed. Since this government has been in place there seems to be no degree of determination to bring the Budget in in advance and this is why I would like to find out-in advance of the

MR. STIRLING: date when the government runs out of money. In the Interim Supply bill, can the minister tell us whether or not the Interim Supply bill is for a three month period only or is this for a longer period?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, we project how long the amount of money in the Interim Supply bill in relation to each department will last. We try to make a projection so that it lasts until such time as we can anticipate the Budget itself or the final estimates being accepted by this hon. House. We do not know precisely when the Budget will be passed by this hon. House, that is up to the hon. House, but we project that it will be passed by at least, by the latest, the end of June, so we project in the interim supply enough money to last until the end of June. These are all projections but I think they are fairly reasonable and intelligently arrived at projections.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance. It is in connection with a number of 'phone calls that I have received in recent weeks from former students who had at one time during their lives when they were

MR. S. NEARY: students at the university had student loans, There seems to be a bit of activity in that area. Would the hon. gentleman care to tell the House what is happening with regard to collection of student loans that are in arrears?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, that is a responsibility of the Department of Education essentially and I believe the Department of Education pursues the collection of outstanding loans and arrears on loans throughout the year and pursues that fairly vigorously. And I am not aware of any increased activity in that regard; I would think the activity has been going on all along, and when loans get in arrears that there is something done about it as quickly as possible and as persistently as desired.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, the hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. MEARY: Maybe the hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) can tell the House whether or not the Department of Education has asked the minister's department to employ a number of law firms downtown to deal with the collection of outstanding student loans?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, I certainly have not participated in any such discussions or had any such representation from the Department of Education, You know, that does not, obviously, necessarily mean there may not have been some conversation with somebody in the Department of Education and a solicitor in the Department of Justice, but I am not aware that anything, apart from any usual practice, has started, nor to the best of my knowledge has the Department of Justice ever been directly involved with the student loan programme with collection of debts owed.

MR. NEARY: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) would undertake to get the House the information because obviously he does not know the answers to the questions. It seems to me to be rather cruel the way they are going about it. One caller told me that he was served a summons and the court handed down a decision and I believe they were taking \$300 a month out of his pay. Now that seems to be rather strange, Mr. Speaker, so I am asking the hon. gentleman to get the House all the facts in connection with this matter. And if it is true that they are putting on the drive to collect the outstanding student loans, perhaps they might do it in a more humanitarian sort of way rather than just take practically half the cheque of the individual and leave them nothing to feed and support their families on. Would the hon. gentleman undertake to look into that? And tell us also how these law firms are selected, because this particular individual had to go to the law firm to try to get the amount that was being deducted from his cheque reduced so that he could feed his family.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. NEARY: I did not get that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. member has asked a question?

MR. NEARY: Yes. Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS: I believe the hon. member said the Minister of Education (L. Verge) who is not in the House at the moment. Possibly he just meant myself as the Minister of Finance but if he does want me to get information on that, I will get whatever information is available.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Grand Bank.

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

I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Justice (G. Ottenheimer) - if I could have the minister's attention for a moment. Mr. Speaker, I understand that, for want of a better word, the RCMP services contract has run out between the Federal Government and the Provincial Government for policing in this Province. I was wondering if the minister, if he could be brief, could just give us a brief update on what the status of the negotiations are right now?

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

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the contract between Newfoundland and the other seven provinces, there are eight provinces which have contracts with the Federal Government for provincial policing in those provinces and that expired the end of March, March 31st, last week. I should point out that it is not the first time that has happened. As a matter of fact, the last contract was for a four year period and the previous run-out time - I was not minister but I know - that also the contract expired and it was a number of months before a new contract was signed, so it is not unusual. The negotiations are continuing. There have been in the past roughly six weeks a number of meetings at the official level, one meeting of the Provincial ministers and the federal Solicitor General. Another such meeting will be scheduled in the future but no firm date has been set. The negotiations are ongoing.

I would inform the hon. member

MR. OTTENHEIMER: and members of the House as well that we do not anticipate during this period, until a new contract is negotiated, any change in the level or quality of policing of the RCMP areas of the Province. On Friday, I had communication, a telegram, from Mr. Robert Kaplan, the Solicitor General, stating that and also yesterday I was in touch with the commanding officer of the RCMP in the Province, Chief Superintendent Schramm and was assured by him on the local provincial level as well that there will be no change in the quality or level of policing during this period when a new contract is still being negotiated and that those negotiations are not final.

MR. THOMS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. THOMS: I gather then, Mr. Speaker, from the minister's answer that he is anticipating some delay of maybe months in signing a new contract. There seems to me to be an undue delay, an unnecessary delay. Are there any particular problems that would hold up the contract for that period of time?

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

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, it would be very difficult and I suppose it would just be wild speculation for me to endeavour with any accuracy to say when I think the negotiations will be completed. I really do not know; it could be a matter of weeks, it could be a couple of months.

The essential matter is the cost sharing. Under the last contract, the one which expired March 31st., the cost sharing for provincial policing was 56 per cent by the Province and 44 per cent by the federal government. When that proportionment was agreed to four years ago, both sides, the provinces and the federal government, were agreed that this was a fair and equitable proportionment irrespective of the total cost because obviously there was, I mean, inflation in this area as well as other areas. Apart from what the amounts would be, the proportionment was a fair one. The federal offer, the offer of the federal government made - whenever, a couple of months or so ago, was for a 75 per cent; from 56 to 75 per cent, and asked the provinces to pay 75 per cent of those costs. And the provinces, who to a very large extent negotiate as a unit - it is something like a collective bargaining, it is very much like a collective bargaining, I suppose, kind of frame of reference - the provinces said that this was, you know, totally unacceptable and that it had been agreed previously, apart from costs escalating, that the general proportionment was a fair and accurate one. And then went back and maintained, 'Fine. We the provinces feel that the percentage of 56 is still valid', and then went back and said, 'And we ask you, federal government, to give us the reasons and the details why, you know, justification for this increase in the percentage.' And there have been some meetings on that and I think that will be the next step, where the federal government will come in presumably with what it will regard as its justification or perhaps some counter offer. I think that is the stage where we are now.

MR. L. THOMS: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. L. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the minister is whether or not there is any anticipated reduction of services after this particular contract is to be signed and whether or not with what is obviously now going to be an increase in our costs of providing these services, whether or not he thinks this might accelerate making the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary a truly Royal Newfoundland Constabulary and spread it out all over the Province?

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

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the first part of the question, whether as a result whenever the contract is completed-and obviously even if the same percentage is involved the costs are going to be more - whether this will lead to a decrease or a minimization or an adverse affect on policing in the Province, less services, no, I can say no that will not be the case. That cannot be the case;

MR. OTTENHEIMER: the Province and people require an adequate level of policing and I think that is among the first responsibilities any government has to maintain, along with education, health and others, is an adequate level of policing. Without sounding like a right winger, everybody agrees that a certain level of law and order is necessary for society.

The second part of the question, hon. members no doubt are aware that we are at present planning to increase the area of jurisdiction of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary to cover the, say, entire Metro area. We also had a recruitment programme some months ago with cadet officers now undergoing their training and hon. members may have noticed in the paper one or two days ago further advertisements for recruits. So we are certainly planning to increase the geographic area of jurisdiction for Mount Pearl, Donovans area, the whole Metro area, and we are seriously looking at further increase, further development of the force in the geographic sense.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): I indicated a final supplementary. Does the hon. member for Twillingate (Mr. W. Rowe) yield?

MR. W. ROWE: I yield to the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Grand Bank.

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

What I want to know is whether or not the minister anticipates that in the future the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary will replace the RCMP in this Province? Does he see this occurring?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: What the hon. gentleman means is in total -

MR. THOMS: In total.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - where there would be no further provincial policing by the RCMP, and all provincial policing done by the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary?

MR. THOMS: We would still have the RCMP, of course.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The RCMP are here as a federal force. They are even in the two provinces which do not contract, Quebec and Ontario, they are there as a federal force. I understand there are about 1,000 RCMP in Quebec, and they are not paying the contract at all. That is a lot of federal police but, you know, that really has nothing to do with me.

I think really I would be trying to exercise prophesy if I were to answer that, and I am not being evasive, I think that is something that has to be judged in time. I do not think that really it would be realistic for me to give a yes answer or a no answer to that now. We are committed to increasing the area of jurisdiction with respect to this entire metro area and to seriously considering and examining ways of further expansion. But I think if I went beyond that -

MR. THOMS: But is it your goal?

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - do I envision a day when the entire Province, I think really I would be then rather than giving a rational answer based on facts which are known now, I would be envisioning or getting into - close to prophesy -

MR. STIRLING: You will not have to decide after the next election.

MR. NEARY: Another government will have to decide that.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: - and I leave to that Issiah, and Joshua and all these people who are much more gifted in that way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): The hon. member for Twillingate.

MR. W. ROWE:

I would like to direct a question to the hon. the Minister of Social Services. As he is aware, over the past year or eighteen months, I and a group of interested residents of New World Island and Twillingate Island have approached his department with regard to government policy on the establishment of an institution in connection with the school in the district for the training of mentally and physically handicapped adults. The group and myself have been waiting for a reply from the minister as to current government policy on that particular problem. I will ask the minister, has the policy changed from the time that the minister's department assisted a group in Lewisporte to do the same thing or is the policy, that he has been reconsidering, Is it the same as it was at that time?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY:

Mr. Speaker, the policy of my department is naturally one of expansion in this very vital area, an area in which we have realized some real success. There is presently one at Lewisporte. There is an effort in St. John's, of course, which was commenced by the late Vera Perlin and which continues and which functions very successfully. There was an effort also in Corner Brook.

We have a number of requests, one from Labrador, one from the hon. gentleman's district and some others, and I suppose the best way I can give him an answer to the actual question asked is to say that depending on funds - and whatever funds we have, we will expand as quickly as we can, but certainly there is no doubt about our commitment to the policy and programme and it is our wish and desire to expand throughout the Province wherever that need is and to fill it and to realize the same success stories that have come to us from St. John's and

MR. HICKEY: Corner Brook and especially Lewisporte.

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

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

MR. W. ROWE: Well, I am glad the minister said that, Mr. Speaker, because there is some confusion in the minds of this group of concerned citizens as to the actual present government policy on the matter. As I understand the minister - he can correct me if I am wrong - there is a policy to assist groups to establish a Calypso-type operation to help train adult physically and mentally handicapped persons, job training and so on.

I will ask the minister, is it then purely a question of money at this time? Can I tell the group in my district that the policy is in effect, that the government is acting on that policy and that they should get after the minister's department - I suppose, quite bluntly and frankly- get after the minister's department in order to get the necessary assistance? Would the minister also indicate, while he is on his feet, what is the basis of the assistance? Is it for purely capital or is there also an operating grant? What, in effect, should they put in their new brief when they approach the minister's department?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Social Services.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, we assist in two ways. The programme commenced with assistance by way of capital in a very small way, and to a larger extent operating money, funds to operate the centre. And recently there was a need identified to subsidize the employment of some individuals who showed some real potential but because of their handicap or disability a would-be employer would not be able to hire because of the low productivity. Government has, wisely, I believe, taken some initiative to subsidize that kind of situation so that now there is to the largest extent three areas where we become involved. One, by way of capital; two, by way of operational costs; and three, by way of subsidy of sheltered employment. I might also add, Mr. Speaker, that for fear that anyone should doubt government's commitment to the policy and programme, our every effort today in the development of especially the mentally retarded in the Province is geared ultimately to this kind of programme. All of our efforts to deinstitutionalize our children who are at Exon House into group homes, into sheltered foster homes, this whole programme and whole effort is always geared to the ultimate in the development of the skills of those people by way of sheltered employment, subsidized employment and in some instances, surprisingly enough in some instances, Mr. Speaker, full scale employment where individuals become totally self reliant after going through this process and are shown to be exceptionally good workers and certainly the employers who have them are very, very proud of them. So this whole programme starts right from the very small children in an institution such as Exon House and goes right on up in stages until they finally find their way into the programme that the hon. gentleman refers to and ultimately into either part-time or full-time employment.

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Tape No. 1005

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MR.SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for Terra Nova.

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MR.LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr.Dinn). I wonder if the minister can indicate to the House whether there have been any significant developments or any news in the past twenty-four hours with respect to the labour disputes within the public service, and also indicate what specific and substantive action he personally has taken with respect to resolving these labour disputes? And for preciseness, Mr. Speaker, I refer in the main to three main groups. One, the

MR. LUSH: workers at the College of Trades and Technology; the warders; and three, the teachers.

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, teachers; I received a communication from the Newfoundland Teachers' Association in which they indicated that they had rejected the conciliation board report and they itemized some of the points in the report that they rejected.

The warders; as I understand it the warders, these talks are on-going with the warders, The College of Trades and Technology and the Workers' Compensation: I would rather not get into any detail in the House with respect to those disputes because I do not think that saying something here in the House would help the situation.

MR. LUSH: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, certainly the public of Newfoundland have a right to know, and the workers certainly, of what is transpiring with respect to these disputes. And I wonder in view of that if the minister could indicate just what now is the status with the workers at the College of Trades and Technology re getting back to the bargaining table? Last week they seemed to be very optimistic that both sides should be getting back to the bargaining table and right now we do not seem to know what the situation is. So could the minister comment on that? Is there still a willingness on both sides of getting back to the bargaining table and if so when will this action result?

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, the situation with the College of Trades and Technology and the Workers' Compensation is that they are still in a strike position, they are still on strike, that contact is being made by my Deputy Minister, my Director of Labour Relations, in an effort to attempt to resolve the dispute, but there is nothing to report. Anything that I would say here in the House would adversely affect what is going on behind the scenes so I am not going to say anything here. It is as simple as that.

MR. LUSH: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Supplementary, the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not want to be responsible for the minister saying anything that would adversely affect these strikes any more than what he has already done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. LUSH: And, Mr. Speaker, the minister has indicated that his officials are in constant contact with NAPE or some words to that effect. Can the minister indicate when the last contact was made by either him or by his officials with NAPE respecting the workers at the College of Trades and Technology, when was the last contact made?

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman should know that there are two sides to a dispute -

MR. LUSH: I am asking for one side now.

MR. DINN: - and the last meetings that were held, I believe were with officials of -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) him.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. minister has about ten seconds.

MR. DINN: If the hon. member wants a little more egg on his face, he can just keep talking, he will get all I can throw.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, there was contact made yesterday with Treasury Board by officials of my department and officials of Treasury Board and I am not sure if any contact was made this morning. I will check with the Deputy Minister and I will report to the hon. member tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

The hon. the President of the Council.

NOTICES OF MOTION:

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I rise for the purpose of moving a motion of sympathy for the hon. member for St. John's West (H.Barrett) and his mother, Mrs. Olive Barrett, on the passing of Mr. Harold Barrett, the hon. member's father. Mr. Barrett was a well known gentleman who had worked in St. John's for a number of years. He had been a member of the police force from which he retired well over twenty years ago. In his last working days he was employed with Bowring Brothers

MR. MARSHALL: here in St. John's and was very well known by the people of St. John's. In recent years, he and his wife have resided in Harbour Grace. As indicated in the paper today, the remains are resting at Carnell's Funeral Home until ten o'clock this evening when they will proceed to Harbour Grace for burial on Thursday.

I know all hon. members wish to be associated in this motion of sympathy to Mrs. Olive Barrett, the member for St. John's West (H. Barrett) and his two brothers and sisters.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, simply to say that we do certainly support the extension of sympathy to the member for St. John's West.

MR. SPEAKER: You have heard the motion. Those in favour, 'Aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Contrary, 'Nay.'

Carried.

Any further notices?

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, in consequence of the appointment of the hon. member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (H. Andrews) to the cabinet, he is no longer a member of the Resource Management Committee, the Select Committee on Resource Management. And I would like to move that to replace the hon. minister, the hon. member for Fortune Hermitage (D. Stewart) be a member of that Committee in place of the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Opposition.

The hon. the Leader of the

MR. STIRLING:

House Leader (W. Marshall) for the courtesy of discussing this appointment in advance and we certainly support the appointment of the member. We have seen him operate -

Yes, Mr. Speaker, I thank the

MR. LUSH:

this side.

We would rather it was someone on

MR. STIRLING:

on the Committee and I do say that the member has worked very hard on any of the committees and I am sure that he will be a good addition to this committee.

We do have our representation

MR. SPEAKER:

You have heard the motion.

Those in favour, 'Aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Aye.

MR. SPEAKER:

Contrary, 'Nay.'

Carried.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN

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

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I do have some information for the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). He asked about the collection procedure with regard to former students at Memorial University. I think I may have been a bit incorrect in my previous statement when I said that the Department of Education was responsible for collections. The students at Memorial can get grants for their tuition and other expenses from the Department of Education but they actually get their loans from the federal government. So that if there is an ongoing collection campaign, it is either by the banks, through whom the federal Department of Finance operates, or it would be the federal Department of Finance itself or a collection agency working on their behalf. In any case, it does not have anything to do with the provincial government because the loans, if they are in arrears are in arrears to the federal government so any collections would be by the federal government or by an agency of the federal government.

today

MR. SPEAKER: Any further Answers to Questions?

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Justice.

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, the day before yesterday, I believe it was or sometime fairly recently, the hon. member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) asked me for the costs with respect to the movement of prisoners or inmates within the Province and also the amount for the moving of prisoners from Labrador to the Island portion of the Province. The

MR. G. OTTENHEIMER: total amount for the last fiscal year for movement of inmates in general throughout the Province for provincial prisoners for the past fiscal year was approximately \$31,000. The amount involved exclusively for movements from Island to Labrador and vice versa was approximately \$21,000. So \$31,000 in total, and \$21,000 specifically with reference to Labrador.

Hon. members will recall some time ago a question was asked with respect to receiving reports of various Royal Commissions. I wish to inform hon. members with respect to two of those. On March 30th., which I think was last Thursday, I received from Judge McCarthy Volume II of his report, The Royal Commission into the Industrial Accidents occasioned at the Iron Ore Company property in Labrador City, and I have given that to my colleague, the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn). Bk. 6

Yesterday afternoon-actually it was after this period in the House, around 4:30 yesterday afternoon-I received a copy of the Mahoney Inquiry into the Public Works Department. We received five copies and are having additional copies of it made so that all members of the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, will have access to a copy and, indeed, further additional ones made as well. And after the Cabinet has had an opportunity to study it and consider it, it is the government's intention to table it, to make it public and this, I would assume, would be in approximately a three week period.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Any further Answers to Questions?

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon, the Leader of the Opposition.

X
MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, and the hon. House of Assembly, I beg leave to present a petition on behalf of 445 residents of Bonavista North. The prayer of the petition is as follows: "We the residents of Bonavista North do hereby request the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador to provide funds for the upgrading of the road leading to Ten Mile Pond. We feel this road is of prime importance to the people in Bonavista North for a number of reasons; the road provides access to a source of wood both for commercial and domestic purposes, it also serves as an access road for fishermen and hunters. We also feel the road would enhance the tourism industry immensely, thus contributing not only to the local economy but it would benefit the Province generally".

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this petition be placed upon the table of the House and referred to the department to which it relates.

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

X
MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to support the petition so ably presented by the Leader of the Opposition. This is a most important road, Mr. Speaker, to not only the people of that immediate area but, indeed, to a large section of Newfoundland. The road to Ten Mile Pond is a road that is used extensively by tourists, by fishermen, and hunters. Mr. Speaker, it relates to a much larger issue than simply this specific road, it relates to a policy, firming up a policy, I should say, by the government, relating to roads to resources. This particular area has become a real problem right throughout the Province where you have roads leading to resources, be they fishing,

MR. LUSH: or hunting, or for harvesting of wood, for commercial purposes or for residential purposes. This is becoming a real, real problem. These roads are not being maintained and it seems as though the government have no policy at all with respect to these roads to resources.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise to support this petition, but would urge the government to come up with some firm and positive policy with respect to roads to resources the lack of which right now is causing great inconvenience to a lot of the people in rural Newfoundland with respect to getting domestic wood, with respect to commercial wood as well, and with respect to the tourist. And as I indicated, this road is but an indication of the total need right around rural Newfoundland and I would certainly hope that whatever department is responsible, that we shall hear shortly of some firm, positive, specific action by this government

MR. LUSH: with respect to roads to resources, something that is badly needed in this Province, Mr. Speaker, and causing a lot of inconvenience. The lack thereof, the complete lack thereof is causing a lot of anxiety and a lot of frustration in many parts of Newfoundland at this moment.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Further petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Order 2.

MR. SPEAKER: Order 2.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

I would just like to point out to all hon. members before commencing debate today on interim supply that we have used ten hours and thirty minutes.

The hon. the member for LaPoile.

X

MR. NEARY: That means, Mr. Chairman, that we have sixty-five hours left to debate interim supply, and we are almost tempted to do it, to use up the sixty-five hours. If it were not for the possibility that innocent people may suffer because of the government's arrogance and contempt for this House, we might be tempted to use up that extra sixty-five hours.

Now, I might say at the outset, Mr. Chairman, that last night at home I had seven or eight calls from people who said, 'Carry on, force the government to give you that information on the use of the government aircraft.'

MR. BARRY: Name them.

MR. NEARY: No, I do not have to name them, seven or eight calls.

MR. NEARY: This morning I was at a meeting with the Newfoundland Fish, Food and Allied Workers' Union downstairs here in the office, Richard Cashin and the executive of his union, and when I came out I said to my secretary, 'Did you have any calls about the civil service getting paid?'

MR. BARRY: Were they in to see you?

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. BARRY: They were in to see you, were they?

MR. NEARY: They were in to see the Opposition. We had a meeting this morning for over two and one-half hours. So I had no 'phone calls when I was in there, but when I came out I said to my secretary, 'Did you have any calls about whether or not the public servants are going to get paid?' She said, 'Yes, there were two or three inquiries from people who wanted to know if they were going to be paid on Wednesday. So that was seven or eight at home last night saying, 'Carry on,' and two or three this morning wanting to know when they were going to get paid. So if the hon. gentlemen dare to get up and say that the Opposition is losing its nerve, Mr. Chairman, I hope that is an indication to the hon. gentlemen of the feeling of the people of this Province.

What has happened here, Mr. Chairman, is that the government have set up a wall of secrecy about the use of the government aircraft by the Premier's office, and they have done it in one of the most cowardly ways that you could possibly do it. They have used the threat of not paying the public servants

MR. NEARY: as a lever to avoid giving the House this information. They set up, as I say like the Great Wall of China, they set up this great wall of secrecy using the threat right up to the zero hour that the public servants would not get paid. They refused to give us the information and they figured that time was running out and that the Opposition would relent and we would have to cave in and allow them to pay the public servants.

Now, Mr. Chairman, they did this despite the fact that we had offered the government a compromise. We had said to the government, "You can take the essential money out of the interim supply to pay salaries, you can take out the money for essential services, but the non-essential stuff must be left in." They would not even go for that, they just completely stonewalled and refused to give the House the information. And in the process, Mr. Chairman, who has suffered? Who has suffered, I ask my hon. friend the member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey), who has suffered? It is the government's credibility and the government's believability, especially that of the Premier, that has suffered. Because the message has gone out from this House in the last few days that the government, despite the fact that the Premier has been stating inside and outside of this House that they were going to provide the Opposition and the people of this Province with information on the spending of taxpayers' money, that the Premier was going to run an open and free government. Now, Mr. Chairman, we find out that these were merely pious words, that there is going to be no open and free government, that the government is not going to give us the information that we ask for. They will only give us the information when it is convenient for them to do so and the kind of information that will not be embarrassing to the government. So what they have done, Mr. Chairman, they have undermined their credibility

MR. NEARY: and their believability, especially that of the Premier, and they have done it in the most cowardly way that it could be done. They set up this wall of secrecy and are using the innocent people to keep this information from the House and from the taxpayers of this Province. And as I said, I am almost tempted - my head says yes, yes, and my heart says no, no, because, Mr. Chairman, I have such compassion for the ordinary people, for the

MR. NEARY: for the ordinary people, for the workers in this Province, that I would not dare, I would not dare be so cruel as to see anybody suffer as a result of the government's arrogance and their contempt for this House. And that is what it is, Mr. Chairman. They have, in the most blatant way, in the most partisan way, they have refused to give this House the information that the House is entitled to have and information that the taxpayers of this Province are entitled to have. And we heard the most flimsy excuses of why the House could not get this information. They refused to deal with the question head on. They completely evaded the issue. They went on just about every attack that you could name: Low blows, personal attacks, they did it all, they dragged in red herrings, they did it all to try to keep the public from getting this information, they tried just about every dirty trick in the book. They tried dividing the Opposition, the old divide and conquer rule, they did it all, Mr. Chairman. And in the process, as I said, the damage that has been done because no doubt the public service will get paid, it may be unfortunate that a handful of public servants up North may not get their cheques. If they do not it is the government's fault. I would say there is a good way to use the government aircraft, instead of allowing it to be misused the way it is: Send the government aircraft up with the cheques. There is no need for anybody in this Province not to be paid tomorrow, no need of it at all. And if they are not paid it will be the government's fault.

They have got helicopters flying around right, left and centre, dropping people here and there on hunting and fishing trips, and they have got the government aircraft taking inlaws and outlaws home for Christmas, and Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman can argue all he like about the only name that is signed on the requisition is the one who uses the aircraft. Well, that would be good enough for me; bring us in these requisitions and see who signed for that

MR. NEARY: famous trip, or a number of trips to Gander before Christmas? I would like to see the signature.

Obviously, Mr. Chairman, the government have a lot to hide in this particular case. And if they think for one minute that this is the end of it, well they had better think again.

You know, Mr. Chairman, too often in this Province we have to rely upon people putting notes and information in your mailbox, anonymous phone calls, unsigned letters, letters pushed under your door, because that is the only way, the only way up until now in the last ten years that we have had a Tory Administration in this Province, it is the only way that we have been able to expose impropriety and wrongdoing and extravagance and waste and abuse of the taxpayers' money. That is the only way it is being done, Mr. Chairman. Anybody who follows this House will note that the information does not come from the government. The only information we have had, we have been misled by. We saw that the other day. And how can we take the word of anybody on that side of the House ever again? We heard the Premier saying, "We are going to run an honest and clean government." And then they dig in their heels and refuse to give us the answer to a simple question of how often the Premier's office requisitioned the government aircraft since January 1, 1980? Who were the passengers carried on the aircraft? And what was the purpose of the trip? If we cannot get the answers to these questions, we cannot get the answer to anything in this House. And never again will the people in this Province believe the Premier when he stands or takes to the television and says, "Oh, we are going to run an open and honest government." Pious words, rhetoric, that is all it is. They are not serious about it. They have no intention, no in-

MR. NEARY: Maybe we will have to hire a private detective agency. I do not know how we are going to get the information. The government so far has refused, especially in this session of the House, to give us information that we are entitled to have. Today I have fifty-four, I think it is questions on the Order Paper, fifty-four written questions that I have taken the time to sit down, consider and to write out, process through the -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - Speaker's office, fifty-four, and so far only two have been answered. But, Mr. Chairman, this is only round one. We will get the information in due course.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for St. John's Centre.

DR. McNICHOLAS: Mr. Chairman, I had not intended taking part in this interim Supply debate but, you know, over the last few days I have listened to such a farce, you know that I felt I just could not take it any more.

The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) he is here, I believe longer than anybody else and how he can carry on this, what I would call a farce, I do not know. The member on the opposite side who is the financial critic promised this House on, I think, last Friday that this supply would be cut short, if I remember, on Friday. Obviously he does not have any control whatever over the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and equally so the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stirling) does not have any control over him either. So who is running the ship over there I do not know.

I think it is a shame. We are not suffering here. The people who are really suffering are the civil servants. And you might say what you like, a lot of them have commitments, mortgages, food and other

DR. McNICHOLAS: things and they are going to suffer. They are innocent victims. And the people who concern me far more and should concern my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) are the people who are on welfare. There are a lot of them in St. John's Centre as well as in LaPoile. He might get up and say there were six people phoning him last night to carry on this charade, but not the people who are on welfare. I think it is a shame. I think these are innocent people who are victims just of his crookedness and I object to it. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Simms): The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

X
Mr. Chairman, the job of the government is to govern.

MR. STIRLING:

Let us take a look at what has happened in this particular question. The Budget ran out on March 31st-or the fiscal year ran out, no Budget brought in, no Interim Supply Bill. And as you will gather from the questioning today, the Budget is not now in its final stages. It is not now complete. They may be making additional corrections.

Mr. Speaker, the job of this government is to get supply. Now, let us see what were their alternatives on March 31st. One alternative is to do what they have done very well and that is to say, 'This is our position; we want a three month blank cheque, When we get around to it, we will bring in the Budget.' Normal procedure has it that they come and say, 'Look, we need to get these bills paid, Will you agree to this, this and the other thing? Will you agree to one month supply?' No discussion, Mr. Speaker, no approach to this side, no suggestion of the needs that the Province has, just the arrogant, simple statement that 'this is it.'

Mr. Speaker, let us just carry that through. Let us suppose that we are as stubborn and as uncaring as the government. Just let us suppose that we say, 'No, you have not answered the questions', the time has come tomorrow to send out the cheques, and they will take the attitude that they do not care. What they are concerned about, Mr. Speaker, is making the kind of political points - and I have been out in the Bellevue district listening to the reports of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the Premier saying, 'Well, it is shocking that the Opposition is holding this up.'

Mr. Speaker, what were the alternatives to the government? When this Opposition did not grant them supply, did they go for a night session? Did they say, 'We are going to drive through and get the job done?' No. Did they threaten any kind of closure? No.

MR. STIRLING: Did they say, 'Okay, a three month supply is not a reasonable request but a one month supply is. Let us continue and we will have the debate.' No, Mr. Speaker; they did not take any other alternative except the same alternative that they have taken from square one which is a game in which they put her on, like the Japanese kamikaze pilots, just a suicide course, just head her down the freeway, just head her down and as long as they come into defeat or throw the attention away on a political point, they head for utter destruction.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is that they do not care, and that word is going all across this Province. And if it was only hurting, it was only hurting the members who have spoken on the other side, it would be alright. But it is that same kind of attitude, Mr. Speaker, that is going to wreck this Province.

You go out in Bellevue district

MR. STIRLING:

and talk to some of the people who are unemployed. The frustration of the people looking for work, the frustration of municipal councils that have had their grants cut back, the frustrations of fishermen who see this Province in an absolute mess, the frustrations of people who have gone to a meeting with the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and find out that he knows absolutely nothing about what is happening, no kind of co-operation! A minister who is a P.C. minister from Nova Scotia comes on Atlantic Provinces-wide television and says, 'We are not getting any communication from that government' - that is what has been illustrated.

MR. ANDREWS:

They are getting none of our fish either.

MR. STIRLING:

That is right, Mr. Chairman.

The fact that all of the Newfoundlanders may starve, the fact that she gets wrecked, does not make any difference as long as they do not give an inch. Well, Mr. Chairman, as long as I am leader of this party there will not be any attempt in which this government can use the Opposition to punish and force the civil servants, force the people on welfare, because, Mr. Chairman, up to this moment, not a single thing has been delayed. From the news reports and from the comment that was just made by the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas) - he says, 'The poor civil servants are suffering and the people on welfare are suffering.' And he knows that that is not true, that not a single cheque has been delayed. The cheques have been prepared but they are not due to be sent out until next week. So this is the old smoke screen, Mr. Chairman, the old attempt.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING:

Mr. Chairman, we have not had a request from the other side to come and say, 'Look, let at least \$50,000 go through, or \$100,000, or one month's

MR. STIRLING: supply.' None - absolute arrogance. Because, Mr. Chairman, they knew that when it got down to the end that we are not going to participate with them in this game of 'chicken' and this game of destroying Newfoundland regardless of the consequences. Because that is what is happening in everything this group, this government, is doing, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right.

MR. STIRLING: Everything that they do, every part of negotiations is saying, 'Here is the position we are taking and we are not budging. You fellows can go over the cliff if you like.' It is the position that they took with NAPE. They have now taken a position of accepting a nine and nine kind of position. It is the position that they took with fishermen when they flung them off the Fisheries Loan Board, Mr. Chairman -

AN HON. MEMBER: Now.

MR. STIRLING: - the same kind of position that they took with the policemen. When they had a problem they suspended the President of the Brotherhood and then they would not allow him by law to comment to the press. And that is why they will not allow the T.V. cameras into this House, Mr. Chairman.

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. STIRLING: Because their attitude is one of an elite who is going to dictate to the rest of the people in this Province, all through Newfoundland and Labrador. Well, Mr. Chairman, we are not going to participate.

I thank my colleagues who have been in the House the last few days, while I have been out talking to the people in Bellevue, for bringing to the attention of the people of this Province that although the government has the responsibility to get interim supply

MR. STIRLING: through, that they do not care, they just do not care about people, and if they had their way, those cheques would sit on the desk, people would suffer, and all that they would get out of it is the political joy of saying the Liberal Opposition would not let the supply bill go through.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleagues for getting that message across to the people of Newfoundland that the people over there just do not care. They do not accept their responsibilities. Their responsibility is to govern. They did not look for a night session, they did not look for a one month's supply, they did not look for salaries, they did not look for any of the things that a concerned government would look for. All they did was make their position and sit down because they knew on this side we care about people, that we care and that we are going to make sure that nobody suffers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING:

So, Mr. Chairman, without any more comments from anyone on our side, I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, we are ready to pass interim supply at this moment.

On motion, Resolution carried.

On motion, clauses one through three, carried.

Motion, that the Committee report having passed the Resolution and a bill consequent thereto, without amendment, carried.

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

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): The hon. the member for
Conception Bay South.

MR. CHAIRMAN(Butt): Mr. Speaker, the Committee
of Supply has considered the matters to them referred and
directs me to report that it has adopted a certain
resolution and recommends that a bill be introduced to
give effect to same.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!
The Chairman of the Committee
reports it has considered the matters to it referred and
directed him to report that it has adopted a certain
resolution and recommends that a bill be introduced to
give effect to the same.

RESOLUTION

That it is expedient to
introduce a measure to provide for the granting to Her
Majesty for defraying certain expenses of the Public Service
for the financial year ending the 31st day of March, 1982,
the sum of four hundred and forty-eight million four
hundred thousand dollars (\$448,400,000).

On motion, resolution read
a first and second time.

Motion, the hon. the Minister
of Financeto introduce a bill entitled, "An Act For
Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying
Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial
Year Ending The Thirty-First Day Of March One Thousand
Nine Hundred And Eighty-Two And For Other Purposes Relating
To The Public Service". (Bill No. 60), carried.

On motion, Bill No. 60
read a first, second and third time, by leave, ordered
passed and its title be as on the Order Paper.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Order 20, Bill No. 3.
Motion, second reading of
a bill entitled, "An Act Respecting The Freedom Of
Information." (Bill No. 3).

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Perhaps the Clerk could
advise me who adjourned the debate the last day.

Order, please!

On the last day, the debate
on Bill No. 3 was adjourned by the hon. the member for the
Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts).

MR. MARSHALL: On a point of order.

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

MR. MARSHALL: By way of explanation and to
show the way in which this government carries on, the hon.
gentlemen there opposite have indicated that they were
not prepared for the Freedom of Information Act. I had
informed the hon. the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder)
that we would go Freedom of Information and then we would
go -

MR. THOMS: When? When?

MR. MARSHALL: Look, Mr. Speaker, if the
hon. gentlemen wish me to continue -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: When?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: Perhaps the hon. gentlemen would
permit me to get the next word out of my mouth. I told the
hon. the member for Port au Port that we would be going with
the Freedom of Information, then we would follow with
Government Reorganization Bill and the Pension Funding - I
was not sure whether Pension Funding or Government
Reorganization. I now find that the hon. gentlemen there
opposite, apparently through -

MR. MARSHALL: I do not know. The hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) has not been here for a few days, perhaps they were not aware of it.

MR. NEARY: His young fellow had an injury.

MR. MARSHALL: I am not -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible) - Bellevue.

MR. MARSHALL: - I am not stating the reasons as to why he is here or not, but if, Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentlemen are not prepared to go ahead with Freedom of Information this afternoon, I am quite prepared to call another bill if that is what the hon. gentlemen want.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do you want it to go ahead or not?

MR. MARSHALL: But I want it to be known that we will be going ahead the next day on Freedom of Information.

MR. NEARY: Let her go.

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

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

MR. THOMS: There has obviously been a breakdown in communications between the hon. the House Leader and the Opposition House Leader so that my friend from the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), who I believe had just begun speaking on this particular bill, and I believe that he would wish to speak on it, we would appreciate it if it could be deferred.

MR. SPEAKER: If I might for clarification, the records indicate that the hon. member, I think he just adjourned the debate at 12:52.

MR. MARSHALL: He adjourned the debate, Mr. Speaker. Now I will say, yes, sure we will do that, Mr. Chairman, but it has got to be understood that we are not going to hold it up forever for any member to speak.

MR. THOMS: No. No. No.

MR. MARSHALL: We will be bringing this ^{on} on on Thursday. So I withdraw the call of that Order of the Day, Mr. Speaker, and if the hon. members -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Withdrawn? Agree? Agreed.

MR. MARSHALL: I would like to get on to one I think is a general one.

It is the one last appearing on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker. Give me the Order Paper and we will call it.

MR. SPEAKER: What is the bill?

MR. MARSHALL: Order 52, Bill No. 58, funding of certain pensions.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Funding Of Certain Pension Plans And Retirement Benefits Sponsored By The Province And Con-sequential Amendments Of Certain Pension Acts Related Thereto." (Bill No. 58)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, this is a very important bill. It is in line with an initiative taken by this government to fund our pension plans so that generations to come will not have loaded onto them an undue amount of costs to service the pensions of individuals in the public service and in agencies of government.

Now I will not speak too long on this, Mr. Speaker, but I would like to go through the bill in some detail. Just by way of a general remark, it enables the province to fund its various pension plans. These include the public service, the police, and MHAs, amongst others.

DR. COLLINS: There are other plans that are not covered by this. CFLCo, for instance, has plans, a government agency, that is not covered by this. It may be covered at some stage. Ex gratia payments, pension payments, are not covered by it. They are still paid out of the provincial consolidated revenue fund.

Now an important aspect of this bill is that it embodies what is called a pool pension investment fund. That concept is one whereby the contributions to the fund will earn an income and then that income will be apportioned to the various plans that make up the total on a basis proportional to the equity in those plans. Now the reason for going this way, it is somewhat like a mutual fund. You get the benefits of scale, the total amount of money there is invested and this allows a better rate of return than if each individual plan itself went and invested the contributions to that plan. It is better to pool them all, you get a better rate of return on it, then when that return comes in you can split it up and give it to the various constituent parts of the plan.

There are two other major elements to this bill. Section 7 allows the fund to actually borrow for short periods and this is to improve the operational

DR. COLLINS:

efficiency of the plan. The fund itself may temporarily not have sufficient cash for its requirements, that is, sufficient cash without liquidating some of its investments. Well, section 7 will allow the fund to actually make some short term borrowings to get over that difficulty and still maintain the integrity of its investments.

Section 8 ensures that the plan is guaranteed by the Province; in other words, the Province will guarantee all the deficiencies incurred by the plan or any part of the plan, any participant in the plan. Now that is necessary, of course, to protect every member of the fund and the total employee population.

MR. NEARY:

What was that last one?

DR. COLLINS:

That is section 8. The Province guarantees the plans, the financial integrity of the plans.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to perhaps as quickly as I can go through the various sections of the bill. The first section is the name. It cites that this is a Pension Funding Act. Now it makes no reference to the Province and it does not refer in the title to the employees of the Province. Now that is done quite deliberately to ensure that the teachers can be included and, of course, teachers are not employees of the Province, they are employees of the various school boards.

Section 2, this is the interpretation section, and in part (c) of that section it ensures that the definition of the plan is broad enough to include any retirement arrangements. And it is done for this reason, that there are a number of plans that I mentioned, such as CFLCo and also Memorial University, which are not currently in this plan, but the definition of this plan, this pension fund, is broad enough to bring them in; they also are not, strictly speaking, employees

DR. COLLINS: of government. But the definition is broad enough to bring them in if it is desirable at some point in the future for them to become part of the pension fund.

Section 3 is also interpretative and it ensures that plans presently in effect do fall within the ambit of the pension fund. And I have mentioned most of them before; they are the police, the teachers, MHAs and public servants generally.

Section 4 enables other funded plans to join the funding arrangement provided by this act. And it states: 'That the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may by order include under this act any pension plan that covers an employee or pensioner (a) of the government of the Province; or (b) of any corporation, agency, commission or board created by or under a statute of the Province in respect of which control, directly or indirectly, whether by the appointment of members or otherwise vests in the Crown, or a corporation of which fifty per cent of the outstanding common shares are owned by 'such a body'. So again this leaves the ability of very broad coverage by this pension fund.

Section 5 covers the point that I have already alluded to, that is, the pooled nature of the fund and I will not go into that any further. This allows the best possible return from investment of the pension funds.

Section 6 indicates how the pension funds may be invested. It puts certain restrictions on that; for instance, it states: 'That investments must conform to the following requirements. One, section 11 of the Pension Benefits Standards Act (Canada); and two, section 8 and Schedule III of the same act', and the reason for that is that whereas it does allow investment in stocks, bonds, real estate, mortgages, cash and short term notes and so on, nevertheless it does provided a measure

DR. COLLINS: of protection to the plan so that very speculative investments are not made. This section states that the funds are held in trust by the Minister of Finance.

Section 7, this section provides that each plan can participate in the earnings of the fund in proportion to its equity-and I have already alluded to that. For instance, just as an example, supposing the teachers' pension plan made up half of the total equity in the fund, that would mean that although the earnings, the

DR. J. COLLINS: contributions to all of the plans in the fund would be invested as a single pool. Nevertheless the earnings, when they are received, will be broken down in such a way that half those earnings would go into the Teachers' Pension Plan. And there are a number of ways of doing that.

Section eight indicates that the minister may establish temporary lines of credit, and I mentioned that already, and that is to make sure that to avoid a temporary embarrassment from a cash point of view that the fund is not forced to liquidate investments already in place, highly desirable investments already in place, just to meet a cash deficiency. And this will allow smooth operation of the plan and borrowings may be contracted up to a level of about \$1 million for short periods of time.

Section nine, this is a very important section because it guarantees that the Province will guarantee the safety of the fund. And this will not only prevent the fund from becoming bankrupt, because the Province's guaranteeing is behind it, but it will also guarantee that each individual plan within the fund is similarly guaranteed. So for instance, shall we say, the M.H.A. Pension Fund could not go bankrupt either.

Section ten points out the contributions that will go into the fund. And these are all contributions - the monies that may be deposited in the fund, these include all contributions by employees, all assets held under each plan prior to July 1st., 1980, the earnings from investments will go into the fund, any other income arising from operations of the plan and any amounts that may be voted for whatever reason by the Legislature from time to time.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Section eleven deals with what may be paid out of the fund and these include all pensions, refunds and payments, all unpaid liabilities under each of the plan, which will be in the pension fund prior to July 1st., 1980, and any other expenditures arising from each of the plans.

Section twelve indicates which accounts must be kept. The Minister of Finance shall cause to be kept full and complete books on the fund. Also, books related to each of the plans and also it may establish bank accounts required for the operation of the plan.

Section thirteen relates to audit and it states that the minister, not later than the 30th. day of June in each year, shall submit to the Lieutenant Governor-in-Council, that is the Cabinet, the financial statements in connection with the plan and then these statements must be tabled in the House within certain periods of time. And it also indicates that the Auditor General is the individual who will audit the plan.

Section fourteen, the minister may appoint officers, agents and other staff in order to administer the plan.

Section fifteen, regulations may be established for the operation of the plan.

And section sixteen, this section sets out the consequential amendments to various Acts that will be necessary to allow the various plans presently in place to participate in this fund. And, basically, these amendments will allow funds to be deposited into the fund instead of into the consolidated revenue fund and will also permit payments out of the pension fund rather than, as at the present time, out of the consolidated revenue fund.

DR. J. COLLINS: Section seventeen, this will permit the Province to pay into the fund monies which are in its possession as of the first of July and also will allow the Province to pay out of the fund pensions that - and other payments from the first of July.

Section eighteen, the last section in the Act, indicates that this Act will come into force on the first of July, will be deemed to come into effect on the first of July 1980. That is the date in which the setting up of the fund was announced in the 1980 Budget Speech.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, there is a schedule attached which shows

DR. COLLINS: the consequential amendments that have to be made to various acts so that the fund may operate. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, this is a very important bill. It sets up a pension fund, it combines all the pension funds that government is responsible for at the present time in one fund, it permits payments into that fund, it permits the funds to be invested to get a return and therefore enhance the value of the fund itself, and it permits payments out of the fund rather than out of the consolidated revenue fund. I think it will be remembered by hon. members that government in the last Budget indicated that we would match into this fund the contributions by employees so that these funds are now segregated, they are there only for the purpose of pension functions. They are not part of the consolidated revenue fund and this is a measure of protection not only to those pensioners who are already receiving the beneficence of government but also the employees of the government who in the future will so receive but also it is a protection for generations to come that these monies are already there now and they will not be dependant purely on text collections at some point in the future.

So I move the adoption of this bill. X

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

X MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this bill can carry in short order. We are going to support the bill. There are one or two questions I would like to ask the minister though before we finish with second reading. What happens now to all the pensioners who are the recipient of pensions from the consolidated revenue fund who did not contribute to any pension plan? Will they continue to be paid from consolidated revenue or will they be paid from the new fund?

MR. NEARY:

I know the minister referred to it briefly there in his remarks, but I presume they will be paid in the same way as they are paid now; they will not be paid out of this new pension fund. I presume that is the way it will be but I would like for the hon. gentleman to confirm that and also while he is confirming it to tell the House whether or not there is a cost of living clause attached to the pensions, not only for those who did not contribute or who are getting their pensions from the consolidated revenue fund but those who will be receiving pensions from the new fund? Will there be a cost of living clause based on the increase in the rate of inflation in this Province? I think that is very important. If we are going to now set up a fund I believe some provisions should be made to have that COLA clause included in those who receive pensions in future.

Now, I realize, Mr. Speaker, also that this funding may involve massive amounts of money initially. There may have to be a substantial amount of money put into the fund. I do not believe it is the intention to make the fund retroactive, to put the money into a fund since the pension plan began because as hon. members know the contributions collected from the civil servants from the public service employees goes now into consolidated revenue, it just goes in as a lump sum and pensions are paid out of consolidated revenue and any time that the government felt like it, if they became strapped for funds, for instance, the first ones they could hit would be the pensioners. If the government went broke, the pensioners under the present system would not get their pensions, if the government ran into financial difficulty. And there is every indication, according to the Minister of Finance

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Tape No. 1020

AH-3

MR. NEARY:

(Dr. Collins), that we are in for a very bleak Budget. So he has tipped off the press, he has already started his brainwashing procedure, he is already preparing the people of Newfoundland for the jolt that they are likely to get from this Budget. And I might say, Mr. Speaker, in connection with the Budget - unfortunately I have to leave tomorrow at one o'clock for Port aux Basques where I have to attend a very important meeting with Mr. Messenger and the officials of Terratransport in Port aux Basques and I do not know if I will be here to cast my vote on the request from

MR. NEARY:

the Press Gallery to have the proceedings of the House on Budget day televised.

MR. CARTER:

You are weaseling out.

MR. NEARY:

No, I am not weaseling out. I have to go. There is no way -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY:

I already -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

MR. NEARY:

If I was here I would vote against it. I have already communicated the information to His Honour as a matter of courtesy. It is something I cannot help. There is no way I can get out of it. I am committed to be in Port aux Basques at four thirty tomorrow afternoon.

MR. CARTER:

You could have settled it today.

MR. NEARY:

I beg your pardon.

MR. CARTER:

You could have settled it today.

MR. NEARY:

No, I could not have settled it today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. NEARY:

But anyway, Mr. Speaker, I have communicated that information to His Honour, and that is all that counts.

Now, getting back to this matter again, it is a giant step forward, I might say. It is the first time in the history of Newfoundland that the public service employees had a pension plan that is funded and that is the way it should be, Mr. Speaker. All pensions and plans -

AN HON. MEMBER:

Do not call it until you get back.

MR. NEARY:

Do not call it until I get back? Well, if Your Honour will agree, I will be back on Friday. I cannot get back to the House until Friday.

MR. NEARY: I have to leave tomorrow at one o'clock -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): We must be relevant.

MR. NEARY: - I have to leave at one o'clock and I cannot get back until late Thursday afternoon.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentlemen are baiting me, Mr. Speaker, and I have to respond. Well anyway, it is the first time we are going to have a funded pension plan in this Province, and that is the way it should be, so that in future public service employees who are retired would be guaranteed to get their pensions. But the only thing I am not clear about, Mr. Speaker, is who is going to decide what kind of investment will be made from the pension plan contributions? Who will decide?

MR. STAGG: The Minister of Finance.

MR. NEARY: Well, that is the trouble. If it is just the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Cabinet, then I have strong reservations about that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STAGG: You trust nobody.

MR. NEARY: Because I feel that the people who contribute, the public servants, should have representation. They should have a say into what kind of investment and how much of the fund should be invested. I think that is very important. I do not know if there are provisions - I do not have the act in front of me and it is a couple of weeks ago since I read it - I do not know if that proviso is in there or not, but if it is not, it should be. I do not think the Minister of Finance should have the right to unilaterally make a decision on how the pension plan money should be invested. I think there should be a committee and on that committee there should be representation of the various groups who are contributing to the pension plan.


MR. NEARY:

But, having said that, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the hon. gentleman might tell us, might repeat for my ears, if not for the ears of other hon. gentlemen on this side of the House, what it is going to cost the Public Treasury initially to get this plan funded, to start the funding? What will be the cost? What will be the initial cost? And will the funding be spread over a period of years? Will it all be done this year?

For instance, the Minister will tell us, no doubt, that X amount of money will be needed right away to start the pension plan fund. Or will that money be borrowed? Will it be taken from General Revenue or will it all be put in in one year or will it be spread out over a period of time? I think that is very important to know, Mr. Speaker, if the fund, when it is set up, will have - how much money will be put into it from the Public Treasury and if that amount will be borrowed or if it will be put in, taken from General Revenue, spread out over a period of time?

Now, these are all the questions I have so far for the minister, Mr. Speaker, and if I get satisfactory answers, maybe in a matter of five or ten minutes we will have another historic first in this House. We will have a bill going through the House that will give the public servants a funded pension plan for the first time.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker. 

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

If the hon. the minister speaks
now he will close the debate.

DR. COLLINS:

A number of questions there.

In regard to who will control investment of the monies in this fund, that is still a matter of study. We have consultants who are very knowledgeable in this area presently studying the matter and they will be reporting to us. And it may well be that they will advise - I am just stating that this is a possibility, but I think not an unlikely possibility - they may well advise that some sort of commission be set up to handle the investment of these funds and if such a commission were set up, it may well be that representation from pensioners, from government employees, possibly even from the general public may be on that commission. But that is a matter that is under study at the present time. In the interim, the investment of the funds will be the responsibility of the Minister of Finance and, as you know, in the Department of Finance we are investing monies all the time and get a pretty good rate of return on them. In other words, there are monies flowing into the Exchequer which are not immediately needed for expenditure purposes and, of course, these are re-invested on a short-term basis. Similarly, when we borrow money in our borrowing requirements, these are re-invested so that we get a return whilst we are paying interest on the original borrowing.

So there is a lot of capability in the Department of Finance already to take care of investments. But this is a matter under consideration and it may well be that there will be a commission set up.

With regard to the cost of living, Section 10 does allow - the government does provide a mechanism whereby if government does want to increase the rate of pensions, the fund can accept further in-flows of

DR. COLLINS: money from government for that purpose.

Now, hon. members will recall that last year government set aside a number of millions of dollars to match the contributions that the employees in the public service were contributing out of their pay cheques and that amount of money, that is, the contributions last year from employees, plus the amount that is matched by the government, is held in a separate account in the meantime, and once this bill is passed, that is, if the House passes this bill, that account will be immediately transferred into this fund.

I think, as far as the cost this year, that is this 1981 - 1982 fiscal year, when the Budget comes down, the Budget will indicate what monies government will be putting in to match employees' contributions for this -

AN HON. MEMBER: So it will not be all at once?

DR. COLLINS: Yes. We clearly cannot fund all our outstanding liabilities, I mean, it is hundreds of millions of dollars arising out of past years. We will have to work away gradually at that. And the Budget will be indicating how much we are contributing in this current year.

On motion, a bill, "An Act To Provide For The Funding Of Certain Pension Plans And Retirement Benefits Sponsored By The Province And Consequential Amendments Of Certain Pension Acts Related Thereto," read a second time, ordered referred to a Committee of the Whole House presently by leave. (Bill No. 58). X

MR. MARSHALL: Order 6.

Motion, second reading of a bill, "An Act Respecting The Reorganization Of Certain Government Departments And Matters Related Or Incidental Thereto." (Bill No. 1).

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

X MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, although a fairly thick bill, it is quite straightforward in its intention. Essentially, what it does - as hon. members will recall, some months ago there was some internal reorganization of government departments whereby in some cases there were changes of names of departments and in other cases certain responsibilities transferred from one department to another. That is what it is all about and the only thing it is all about. I think in about two minutes I can summarize it.

There was a department that used to be called the Department of Industrial Development; it is now to be called the Department of Development. Matters of housing and tourist services now become the responsibility of the Department of Development, of the minister for that department.

The next area is that matters with respect to Consumer Affairs, insurance, Registrar General, corporate affairs, in other words, the whole Consumer Affairs division now

MR. OTTENHEIMER: is responsible to the Minister of Justice.

Another matter is that there are some amendments to the Department of Municipal Affairs whereby that department is no longer responsible for Housing. That responsibility as alluded to earlier, goes to the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor).

The Department of Rural, Acrivultural and Northern Development assumes responsibility for co-operatives. There was a department called Transportation and Communications which will now be called, merely, Department of Transportation.

There is an amendment to the Intergovernmental Affairs Act whereby Communications becomes the responsibility of the Intergovernmental Affairs Secretariat of the Executive Council.

-A department which previously was called Tourism, Recreation and Culture is now called, or will be called after the enactment, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

The leading Civil Servant, or the permanent head, the non-political head of the Intergovernmental Affairs section was referred to as the Secretariat and he is now to be called the Deputy Minister.

The Department of Fisheries Act, as amended, it did make provision for one Assistant Deputy Minister and now makes provision for three Assistant Deputy Ministers. Those, to the best of my knowledge, are the basic matters covered in the bill, and, as I say, what it does is it will give legislative authority for certain realignments of responsibilities which have taken place within government departments. X

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

X
MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time that we have had a bill introduced in this hon. House to restructure government departments. Those of us who have had the honour and the privilege to be in this House for a considerable period of time, those of us, I would say, who have been members of this House for the past eight years, at least eight years, know that this is not the first time that government departments were restructured. As a matter of fact, one of the first things that Mr. Moores did when he became Premier of this Province, back in 1973, about eight years ago, was to restructure various government departments and in the process, Mr. Speaker, they restructured themselves out of business. And now the government is at it again, now they are changing and realigning the departments back to what they were before the Tories took over in this Province, back in 1972; they are dropping some names, they are wiping out some departments, and they are practically putting the situation back to where it was in 1972 when they took over from the Liberals.

Almost ten years have gone by, Mr. Speaker, and they cannot seem to make up their minds, what kind of departments we should have, how many Deputy Ministers we should have, how many ministers we should have. I do not know if the present Premier is just doing this out of spite just to make sure that he manages to put the miles and the distance between him and Mr. Moores. Mr. Moores put some grandiose titles and some grandiose names on civil servants and on the departments and perhaps now this is the last move, the last attempt by the present Premier to disassociate himself with the previous administration. Perhaps that is what is behind this, Mr. Speaker, I do not know.

MR. NEARY: The minister certainly, in introducing the bill, did not make much sense, did not give us much information as to why it was necessary to make some of these changes.

I am particularly concerned, Mr. Speaker, about wiping out the Department of Consumer Affairs. I think that is a greivous mistake on the part of the Administration, to take the responsibility for Consumer Affairs and toss it over into the Justice Department, the last place in the world they should put it. There should be a separate Department of Consumer Affairs in this Province. It is just another indication, Mr. Speaker, of how little this administration cares about the affairs and the problems of the consumer in this Province.

Beryl Plumptre, back in

1974

MR. S. NEARY:

when she wrote her report on the Food Prices Review Board right across Canada, out of the ten or twelve recommendations that were made for Newfoundland one of the major recommendations was to establish a separate Department of Consumer Affairs in this Province with a separate minister responsible for consumer affairs. That was in 1974, that report was tabled in this hon. House, and the administration at that time decided in their wisdom to establish a Department of Consumer Affairs. And now what the present administration is saying is that there is no need for a separate Department of Consumer Affairs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I submit if that is the thinking of the present administration, why it is crazy. One of the biggest problems facing the people of this Province at the present time is inflation and the high cost of living and problems associated with consumer purchasing and buying. And this government places it well down on its list of priorities, Mr. Speaker. Well down! First of all, they take the department, what is left of it, and toss it over into the Justice Department and now they are wiping it out altogether. This is the last we will see of the Department of Consumer Affairs.

That is not right, Mr. Speaker, and I would hope that the minister and the government would re-consider this matter. As I say, this is the number one problem in our society today. Every day members of the House are confronted with telephone calls and letters not only from their constituents - I get them from all over Newfoundland - complaining about this or that, complaining about the way they were ripped off, complaining about the way they were chisled or gouged by some oil company or by some supermarket or by some fly-by-night outfit. And they have no recourse,

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, but to come to their member. One case that I have had repeated over and over again is the case of the person who was in the supermarket buying the week's groceries and while they are standing up reaching out for an item off the shelf, the clerk will rush in and say, 'Do not touch that, I have to put a new price on it'!

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, when that was not permitted. I do not know if it was illegal.

MR. YOUNG: That is not true.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, there was a time it was not permitted. At least, the supermarkets were afraid to do it. But not so today. The last lady who called me told me that she was standing there almost ready to reach out to take a can of something off the shelf when the clerk rushed up with the stamp machine and almost cut the fingers off her putting the stamp, the new price on the can. And apparently, there is not a thing we can do about it.

MR. CARTER: You are being absurd. Because the lowest price on a can - if there are two prices on a can the lowest price always gets rung through.

MR. L. THOMS: That is not the legal procedure.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman, I do not know if he does any supermarket buying, any shopping or not, but if he does not he should try it. There are prices on cans stamped over two and three and four times.

MR. CARTER: No, no. (Inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is, as usual, incorrect. To be kind to the hon. gentleman, he does not know what he is talking about, Mr. Speaker, because it does happen. And apparently, there is nothing we can do about it. I have had an awful lot of complaints.

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Tape No. 1024

DW - 3

MR. J. CARTER:

You are just wrong, plain wrong.

MR. S. NEARY:

No, I am just plain right.

I have checked it out recently and I am told there is not a thing, Mr. Speaker, that anyone can do about it. There are no laws that say that that is illegal. And so when the supermarkets want to put up the price of goods in their stores,

MR. NEARY: on the shelves of the supermarkets, when they want to put up prices, they can add it on to the stock already on the shelves. Right under your nose they do it.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) misleading the House.

MR. NEARY: What? No, I certainly am not misleading the House. They do it right under your nose and not a thing in the world we can do about it. The same way with the oil companies. When the price of gasoline goes up, do the oil companies wait, Mr. Speaker, do they wait until all the gas in the storage tanks is gone? Do they wait until all their stock on hand is used up, Mr. Speaker? Do they? Do they wait until all the gas is gone out of the tank in the ground at the pumps before they put up, add on another three or four, seven or eight cents? Do they, Mr. Speaker?

MR. CARTER: No, they will wait until all the gas is gone out of the hon. member, and they will wait a long time.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker, one of the big complaints we have been getting - and I am sure if Your Honour could answer me, he would agree that one of the big complaints that we get from consumers of gasoline and heating fuel is that the oil companies add it on, increase the rates on the gas and the heating fuel already in storage. It is not illegal, apparently.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is a federal matter.

MR. NEARY: It is not a federal matter. The tanks are on ground here in this Province. The supermarkets are in this Province, right down the road here. Some of the biggest supermarket chains in Canada, just down the road.

And, Mr. Speaker, apparently, the government is just ignoring these complaints, not interested in the little man. This government is not interested in the

MR. NEARY: ordinary Newfoundlander, the common Joe, the ordinary person, they are too busy cavorting around with the oil shieks and the fellows with the \$96,000 cars, Mr. Crosbie's man, the only ones who will benefit by the offshore oil, the fellows with the \$96,000 cars, Mr. Speaker. They are too busy catering and kowtowing to that crowd to worry about the little old consumer.

MR. CARTER: Who has the \$96,000 car?

MR. NEARY: I do not know his name, Mr. Speaker, but I saw the car the other day, about a week or ten days ago, down at one of the garages here.

MR. CARTER: What has that got to do with
(inaudible) here?

MR. NEARY: Well, that is the hon. gentlemen's buddies, that is who they knock around with. How can they be concerned I am saying, the point I am making, how can they be concerned about the consumer? Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, they are giving Consumer Affairs such a low priority? They are knocking around with the millionaires.

I mean, we could talk about the high cost of burial in this Province.

MR. YOUNG: Tell them. Tell them.

MR. NEARY: Yes, we could tell quite a story about that. One of the biggest rackets on the face of the earth.

MR. CARTER: We would bury you for nothing right now.

AN HON. MEMBER: How about lowering (inaudible)?

MR. NEARY: No, it is - what do you mean low?

MR. YOUNG: I am the last to let you down, when it comes to that.

MR. CARTER: Free of charge.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman and his colleagues are not the last though to sock it to her, Mr. Speaker, when they kissed the widow with the tear in her eye.

MR. THOMS: I would like to see one burial in this House now.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

The hon. member is somehow going to relate this to the re-organization of certain government departments, I am certain.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Consumer Affairs, Mr. Speaker. Now, another matter that should be investigated by the Department of Consumer Affairs, if we had one -

MR. YOUNG: I knew you were pretty low by trying to get on that ground.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we are very, very concerned about this matter, that the government should give the matter of consumer affairs such low priority and now they are wiping out the department altogether. And as I said a few moments ago, it is the number one problem in Newfoundland today and obviously this government have thrown up their arms in defeat. They always hide behind the excuse, Mr. Speaker, that inflation is rampant all throughout the world and there is nothing poor old Newfoundland can do about it. That is the argument we get every time, a very

MR. NEARY: weak case, Mr. Speaker, because there are things that this government can do about the high cost of living in this Province. All they have to do is check back on the Food Prices Review Report that I mentioned a few minutes ago. I think out of a dozen recommendations, I believe - no, it was ten recommendations, and seven out of the ten recommendations fall under provincial jurisdiction. Now, how is that for you? How is that for the member for Bay of Islands (Mr. Woodrow), seven out of ten recommendations? One was acted on to establish a Department of Consumer Affairs and now they are going to wipe that out. Now, how is the hon. gentleman going to explain that to his constituents when they come complaining about being ripped off or gouged by some oil company or by some supermarket? How is he going to explain that? How is the hon. gentleman going to explain it?

MR. WOODROW: Very difficult.

MR. NEARY: It certainly is very difficult because, Mr. Speaker, the government has its priorities all mixed up. And now they are back again asking to have a bill passed through the House to change names of some departments, to transfer names to other departments, the same tired old stuff that we saw back in 1974. The Tory strategy now is when you cannot do anything else, when you cannot develop industry, when you cannot find jobs for unemployed Newfoundlanders, when you cannot cope with the cost of living, when you cannot do anything, restructure the government departments. That is the strategy now, Mr. Speaker, and what a waste of the time of this hon. House, what a waste of time. Is this going to create any new jobs for Newfoundlanders? Is it going to put any more bread in the oven of people who are unfortunate enough to be on social assistance? Is it going to help people who cannot cope with the cost of living? Is it going to help people who need false teeth? Is it going to help people who need

MR. NEARY: 'the Premier, well he is on the telephone right now, but would you mind telling me what it is you wanted to see him about?' You say no it is personal, and that is my business. So he will go off and by and by some little blonde will come strutting down, 'Oh the Premier is still on the phone, I believe he is talking to the Prime Minister of Canada.'

AN HON. MEMBER: I must visit his floor more often.

MR. STAGG: Is it relevant?

MR. NEARY: Yes, it is relevant because this is restructuring we are talking about.

MR. POWER: 'Steve' has been up there, you see.

MR. NEARY: No, although I know people who have, and-

MR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, his time is up.

MR. NEARY: - the secretary will say, 'Look, he is still on the phone but can you leave your name and number?'
'No, I want to see the Premier.'

Well, after a full day of that and a battery of bureaucrats kicking your brains and trying to discourage you from getting in, you get back aboard the elevator and take off and you say, that is it. Game over.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: It was not the same when Mr. Smallwood was there.

MR. MOORES: No way.

MR. NEARY: It did not make any difference how big you were, how high up you were or how low you were -

MR. STAGG: As long as you were there.

MR. NEARY: - if you could go down and sit on that floor long enough -

MR. CARTER: As long as you were with Joey.

MR. NEARY: - some time during the day you would get into the office to see the Premier. And, Mr. Speaker, you have the same thing now with the ministers.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, boy!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: You try to get an appointment with some of the ministers when delegations are coming in from your districts. Just try it, Mr. Speaker. Some are good I will admit. The member for Ferryland (Mr. Power), a good minister, will see a delegation any time. But that is more than you can say about some of the others. The arrogance and the contempt -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Name them. Name them.

MR. NEARY: I would like to name them.

MR. YOUNG: He cannot name them.

MR. NEARY: I would submit to the hon. gentlemen that people who live in glass houses should not throw stones.

MR. YOUNG: I do not live in a glass house, but I do not want you throwing stones.

MR. MOORES: Industrial Development, you cannot see-

MR. NEARY: Industrial Development, I guarantee you now is a good one to try and get in, unless you are a come-from-away -

MR. MOORES: That is right.

MR. NEARY: - unless you land in St. John's in a big jet.

MR. MOORES: Labour.

MR. NEARY: Try to get to see the Minister of Development.

MR. MOORES: Municipal Affairs. You cannot see her at all.

MR. NEARY: It is a shame, Mr. Speaker, it is shameful the contempt that this crowd has for the ordinary people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: At least one thing I will say for the Liberals, they ran an open-door policy -

MR. YOUNG: Indeed they did.

MR. NEARY: - an open-door policy. And for the last nine or ten years all we have seen in Newfoundland is a closed-door policy. Why they would slam the door in your face. The ignorance sometimes, Mr. Speaker, when you are looking for information or asking questions or trying to get an appointment.

MR. MOORES: (Inaudible) civil servants
(inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Well, I will tell you - I was going to mention that, by the way. I would say since 1972 that this Province has been run by civil servants.

MR. MOORES: Very (inaudible), very corrupt.

MR. NEARY: I cannot think of a minister on that side of the House, cannot think of one who really can stand in this House and honestly say that he runs his department. I am sure the Minister of Health (Mr. House) could not say it.

MR. MOORES: That is right.

MR. NEARY: The Minister of Health has everything written out, put in his hand and sometimes in this House he can hardly read it.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: The bureaucrats are running her. The ministers are not running their departments. The government has given up, surrendered its responsibilities-

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. NEARY: - and turned over the running of the Province to the bureaucrats. It is the Planning and Priority Secretariat. The Planning and Priority Secretariat who are they, Mr. Speaker? You bring a delegation in to meet with a minister or to meet with the Premier, if they can get to meet him, or to meet with a committee of Cabinet, if you

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MR. NEARY: can get one to meet them, and do you know what they say? Well, this matter has to go before the Planning and Priority Secretariat. Why? They are not elected people,

MR. NEARY:

they are government flunkies. It is a pure waste of time, it is a stall. If an elected representative, a minister, who is the elected representative and the Cabinet cannot make a decision, Mr. Speaker, who can make it? Why should they pawn off sincere, honest people who are coming into this building to talk to elected people, pawn them off on some bureaucrat? And they keep passing the buck on one to the other all the way down the line. Now, I have seen people in this building so confused and frustrated, Mr. Speaker, that you would hardly believe it.

MR. DINN: You are a Liberal. You look at yourself a lot.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman should go down now and turn on his searchlights down at the - Hogan's Hero - No wonder they are calling him 'Mr. Dim'.

MR. THOMS: 'Mr. Dim'.

MR. NEARY: 'Mr. Dim'.

Mr. Speaker, this is quite a serious matter, Sir. Here we are again, almost ten years later, almost ten years later, restructuring again, and I have not heard one word yet of what good it is going to do. I suppose after this Premier goes out and another premier comes in, restructure again.

MR. STAGG: Twenty more years before he goes.

MR. NEARY: No, it will not be twenty more years this time, Mr. Speaker. The people of the Province now, the people of the Province have seen the light even the business people in St. John's are beginning to question the actions of this administration. So, Mr. Speaker, there is not much else I can say about this except that we would have been better off today if it had not been brought into the House. I mean, this is the crowd now, they will be out bellyaching and ranting and raving on television and on radio tomorrow and say, "Oh, the Opposition are being negative, they are lowering the

MR. NEARY: decorum of the House. We cannot get on with the business affecting the ordinary people of this Province." Well, now, I would like for somebody on the government side to stand up and tell me what this bill is going to do for the ordinary people of this Province. It is a sheer waste of time, Mr. Speaker. It is like a good many more pieces of legislation on the Order Paper. It accomplishes nothing, it wastes the time of the House, it does not put any bread in the ovens or on the table of the poor people of this Province. I do not know if it bolsters the ego of the ministers or of the administration or not. I do not know if they are sadistic enough to have something like this build up their ego. I do not know if they get their jollies out of restructuring, but it certainly would appear that way, Mr. Speaker. This is how they get their jollies, the crowd on the other side, restructuring. This is the second time in less than ten years that we have seen a major restructuring of government departments. And I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that this time it will accomplish less than it did back in 1973.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Is it the pleasure of the House -

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Grand Bank.

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

I was just waiting for somebody else, as is the custom in the House, somebody else on the other side to speak to the bill. Actually, I had no intentions of speaking to the bill but every time the hon. member for Lapoile (Mr. Neary) gets up he sort of psychs me up, Mr. Speaker, and I just cannot resist the temptation of standing - he motivates me - I just cannot resist the temptation of standing on my feet.

MR. THOMS:

Mr. Speaker, this particular bill really gives legislative approval to something that has already been done. Everything that is contained in this bill, as I understand it, has already been carried out: the restructuring, the reorganization of these departments, it has already been done, so what we are doing is just giving legislative approval to what has already been done. However, Mr. Speaker, it also gives us an opportunity to speak on some matters relating to the departments. The member for Lapoile (Mr. Neary), I believe, struck on

MR. THOMS: the one very important and what I believe to be a mistake for any administration, be that administration Liberal, P.C., NDP, Social Credit, I believe that it is a mistake for this administration to downgrade what was formally a Department of Consumer Affairs and throw it in with Justice. I fail to see in the first place, Mr. Speaker, what it has got to do with justice in the strict legal sense of the word. And I can assure my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) that he is absolutely wrong if he believes and he thinks that a price in a store cannot be stamped over right under your nose. Because there is no legal contract, Mr. Speaker -

MR. CARTER: No -

MR. THOMS: Now, do not argue against me when I know what I am talking about. There is no -

MR. STAGG: Is there a (inaudible)?

MR. THOMS: As the hon. member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) fully knows, there is no contract made in this connection. If he goes right back to his first year of contracts, he realizes the contract is made right at the cash register and they can change the prices in the back of the store or in the middle of the store or on either side of the store any time they want to.

MR. CARTER: The lower price is always made.

MR. ROBERTS: There is no law to that effect.

MR. THOMS: That, legally, has no basis, just like most of the arguments of the member for St. John's North, they have no basis either in law or in logic.

MR. MOORES: You are right.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I was saying, when we discussed the Interim Supply Bill, that we are in -

AN HON. MEMBER: As bad shape as possible.

MR. THOMS: - we are in bad shape, yes.

I think society in general is in bad shape. Mr. Speaker, I see no reason - and these are all reasons why we should retain the Department of Consumer Affairs, to give the people

MR. THOMS: somewhere, both the elected members and the people being represented, a department to which they can go and express their grievances. But the price of everything, the cost of everything is going up and up and up and up and a lot of it, Mr. Speaker, for no apparent reason. If anybody can explain to me in the city of St. John's why - and you hear of it every day - why a house that in 1979 or in January of this year cost \$80,000 to buy, a month or two later it costs \$110,000 for that same house. Now, there is no reason, Mr. Speaker, there is no good reason why the price of housing should jump \$30,000 on an \$80,000 purchase in less than a year.

MR. STAGG: Perhaps they did a lot of work inside, you know, how do you know?

MR. THOMS: No. I know of houses where they are bought one day and the price just - now, a lot of the blame for this in the city of St. John's, of course, has to rest entirely on the shoulders of this administration because they are the ones who have driven it up with their talk of offshore oil and gas.

MR. STAGG: They have created all these foolish jobs around.

MR. THOMS: All what foolish jobs? Go down to the new minister's district, down around Bay d'Espoir and talk about all the new jobs. Go to the district represented by my friend, the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) and talk about all the jobs that are created in this Province. I would like to know where all the jobs are, I would like to know where they are. I have not seen any sign of the 40,500 new jobs that the Premier of this Province promised the people of this Province, I have not seen them -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): Order, please!

MR. THOMS: - anymore than I have seen the opening of the Come By Chance oil refinery in ninety days. I have not seen that either. There are a lot of things that were promised in June of 1979 that we have not seen. We were promised the absence of scandal. We have seen that myth, in the last week or two, blown apart. We have seen that just disappear.

MR. THOMS:

Mr. Speaker, as I said before,
I believe that this administration -

MR. HOUSE: You should be ashamed personally.

MR. THOMS: What do I have to be ashamed
of, Mr. Speaker?

MR. HOUSE: (Inaudible) certainly be ashamed (inaudible)
talking about when you call it scandal (inaudible).

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, of course it was
a scandal, obviously a scandal. Are you going to try to
defend it? Look what happened to the Premier when he tried to
defend it.

Mr. Speaker, this is the one
thing in this whole reorganization that I disagree with,
the elimination of the Department of Consumer Affairs as a
department and throwing it in with Justice. It is a terrible
idea. It is a downgrading of a department that the people
of this Province should have and need to have, and it should
not be thrown in with Justice where justice cannot be done
to it. It should be a separate department.

Mr. Speaker, I was saying the
other day that wives are working in this Province, they are
working all across this nation, they are working all across
North America. Most wives would prefer not to work.

MR. STAGG: Most husbands would prefer not to.

MR. THOMS: There may be a lot of those too
if they had the money and they could afford not to.

MR. STAGG: Most people would prefer not to
work.

MR. THOMS: But these wives are working and
they are working out of necessity. How many wives does the
hon. the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) know in this
Province who are working so that they can buy a pleasure craft?

MR. THOMS: How many wives does the hon. the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) know who are working in this Province in order to buy a new car, a luxury, a second car? How many wives in this Province does the hon. the member for Stephenville know who are working to buy a Summer home? How many wives in this Province does the hon. the member for Stephenville know who are working simply to get a trip to Florida?

MR. STAGG: I do not know all these wives. Go on.

MR. THOMS: How many does he know in that category?

MR. STAGG: Now she is ticking.

MR. THOMS: Now, if I could ask the hon. the member for Stephenville, Mr. Speaker, or the hon. the Minister of Public Works, or anybody in the House how many wives are working, in society today how many wives are working to buy

MR. AYLWARD: Every wife works.

MR. THOMS: Outside the home, I am referring to, Johnny-come-lately.

How many are working, Mr. Speaker, to buy the necessities of life? How many of these are working to put groceries on the table?

MR. STAGG: Make your point, now. We will say there are a lot.

MR. THOMS: Because they cannot afford, Mr. Speaker, to stay home.

Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I wish the member for Stephenville was, in fact, physically a crackie so I could give him a root in the rear end and send him on his way.

MR. DINN: We would get the S.P.C.A. out.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt):

Order, please!

MR. THOMS:

Look, I would not compliment the hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) by calling him a crackie.

MR. MOORES:

Now! Now!

MR. THOMS:

These are the people who are faced day in and day out with higher and higher costs, every time they turn around. You know, like I say, it is not a question of talking about this administration or a previous administration or an administration in any other jurisdiction in Canada or North America, it is a problem that exists right across the - in the Western world and all over the world. But in this atmosphere where every time you turn around

MR. L. THOMS: prices are going up, and contrary to what the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) says, Mr. Speaker, prices are going up and up.

MR. CARTER: (inaudible) you know it.

MR. L. THOMS: When was the last time - if the member from St. John's North can tell me something that has gone down -

MR. CARTER: Savory.

MR. L. THOMS: - in this last -

MR. MOORES: No way.

MR. L. THOMS: - five, ten years.

MR. MOORES: Savory is gone up.

MR. L. THOMS: I would like to know Mr. Speaker, what it is. But every time you turn around -

MR. NEARY: Is savory gone up?

MR. MOORES: Yes.

MR. L. THOMS: And we are doing away with the department that can do something about this.

MR. NEARY: Right on.

MR. L. THOMS: We are doing away with the department that can do something about this. I fail to understand in this city, and it is probably true throughout Newfoundland, the difference when you watch the C.B.C. Television and you see the food comparison between one shopping centre and another or between one drug store and another, and you see those great gaps in between them. I just do not understand how a tube of toothpaste in Parkdale can be either cheaper or more expensive than the same tube of toothpaste at Elizabeth Drugs.

MR. CARTER: How about mouthwash (inaudible)?

MR. L. THOMS: I do not understand that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. THOMS: If the hon. member needs mouth-wash, I will buy him a bottle of it.

MR. CARTER: Soap (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: And we are doing away -

MR. S. NEARY: It is probably Gilletts lye he needs.

MR. L. THOMS: We have done away, as a matter of fact, with the department -

MR. S. NEARY: Lestoil.

MR. L. THOMS: - that can assist the ordinary people. It does not matter for the rich, it does not matter for the rich people -

MR. MARSHALL: No?

MR. L. THOMS: - they are going to have their trips to Florida -

MR. MOORES: That is Bill, look.

MR. L. THOMS: - they are going to have their pleasure crafts -

MR. MOORES: That is Bill .

MR. L. THOMS: - they are going to have huge Summer homes. It does not make any difference to them.

MR. S. NEARY : \$96,000 cars.

MR. L. THOMS: But the ordinary people of this Province -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Iaudible) like that?

MR. L. THOMS: - who are scraping and saving -

MR. S. NEARY: Crosbie's man, Spellacy.

MR. L. THOMS: -and trying to save -

MR. MOORES: (inaudible) is in with -

MR. L. THOMS: - and then they go out -

MR. MOORES: Yes (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: - one day one price another day another price. And here we are Mr. Speaker, doing away - lumping it all in with the administration of justice, this Province

MR. L. THOMS: of this Province, throwing it into the Department of Justice.

MR. MOORES: Recreation and (Inaudible) scandalous.

MR. L. THOMS: How can this administration justify that in this day and age particularly at the present time.

MR. S. NEARY: How can they look people straight in the eye.

MR. L. THOMS: Well, they cannot look people straight in the eye. Maybe this is why, maybe this is why the Premier of this Province - maybe this is why you do not see anybody on the eighth floor to see the Premier.

MR. MOORES: No, no.

MR. L. THOMS: Maybe he cannot look the ordinary people of this Province in the eye.

MR. J. CARTER: Rubbish! Just plain rubbish!

MR. L. THOMS: It is all plain rubbish to the hon. savory member from St. John's North (Mr. Carter), it is all plain rubbish.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. THOMS: The fact that prices are going up and up and that people cannot afford to eat the proper foods -

MR. CARTER: It is wrong to tell (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: - because there are people in this Province who cannot afford to buy milk for their children or eggs for their breakfast -

MR. CARTER: It is wrong to tell (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: - put food on the table, this is all rubbish to the member for St. John's North. It is

MR. L. THOMS: alright for the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) he is down on Rennies Mill road with his big house -

MR. S. NEARY: Aristocrats.

MR. L. THOMS: - and his two cars .

MR. NEARY: Aristocrats.

MR. L. THOMS: He may or may not have a palatial Summer place, I do not know. He might be one of the Deer Park crowd, as far as I know.

MR. S. NEARY: No, he is a Pippy Park crowd.

MR. L. THOMS: It is all alright with you, a true-blood.

MR. CARTER: It is wrong for you (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: It is alright, there are no problems at all.

MR. FLIGHT: What did you (inaudible) out of this?

MR. L. THOMS: You do not care about taking the Department of Consumer Affairs and throwing it out with the garbage, with the rubbish as you are so used to saying.

MR. CARTER: If you are going to debate (inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: Prove what?

MR. CARTER: Tell the truth (inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS: You will get an opportunity to tell the truth when you stand and speak on this bill, you will get your opportunity.

MR. S. NEARY: We will find out what kind of a snob you are then.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. THOMS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it is a sad -

MR. S. NEARY: Aristocrat.

MR. L. THOMS: - commentary, a sad commentary. -

MR. FLIGHT: (Inaudible) done away with.

MR. L. THOMS: - on this administration -

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AN HON. MEMBER:

I am looking forward to the

(inaudible).

MR. L. THOMS:

— when they do away with the Department of Consumer Affairs.

MR. CARTER:

Shocking.

MR. L. THOMS:

And this is the point, point and the only point that I wanted to make in speaking on this bill. I think it is a mistake. I think it is an attempt to hide what is really happening. It is like the ostrich putting its head in the sand. They are ignoring the problem, hoping it will go away. And what they hoping Mr. Speaker, of course, is this -

MR. BAIRD:

You have a dubious mind.

MR. THOMS: that these problems will go away when the oil comes ashore. But there is going to be an awful lot of suffering, Mr. Speaker, in this Province before oil is brought ashore, a lot of suffering. There is a lot of suffering in the Province today.

MR. MOORES: They will not suffer in St. John's.

MR. THOMS: A lot of suffering.

MR. NEARY: The aristocrats will not suffer.

MR. MOORES: No, I will guarantee you.

MR. THOMS: And this administration is hiding its head in the sand. It is not doing anything about it. They have been waiting now for ten years for the oil and gas and the promised land, but it is not going to come that easy. So, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that the administration has not seen fit to retain the Department of Consumer Affairs as a separate department. I have every respect in the world for the present Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer), a very able, capable man -

MR. NEARY: Mised though, he got off the track somewhere.

MR. THOMS: - has a tendency, Mr. Speaker, to rely too much on his advisors, just too much on his advisors, a very busy man. The administration of justice in this Province is not easy. He has got his problems trying to haul enough money out of this meagerly administration to provide proper facilities across this Province, to make sure that the administration of justice works properly. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the minister does not have time, and if the rest of the administration is any indication, does not have the inclination to handle a Consumer Affairs Division. And this is what has happened. The Department of Consumer Affairs - can you believe it? - can you believe the Department of Consumer Affairs downgraded to a measly little division under the ministerial control of the Minister of Justice?

MR. NEARY:
after him now.

But his buddy, Dick Green, is

MR. CARTER:
Justice.

You just slighted the Minister of

MR. THOMS:

I just finishing saying all kinds of nice things about the Minister of Justice. One of these days, you never know, one of these days, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) just might say or do something so that I can say something nice about him. I am not holding my breath though.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a point that should be made. I think it is a point that the people in this Province should realize, what this administration thinks about the department of the consumers of this Province. They do not care for the consumers of this Province. They are hiding their heads in the sand when it comes to the consumers of this Province. And this particular bill only confirms what we have been saying all along about the Tory Administration. Thank you very much.

MR. NEARY:

Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS):

Is it the pleasure of the House that the said bill be now read a second time?

MR. FLIGHT:

No, not quite, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

Oh, the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

I have to have a word here, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order! The hon. Minister of Justice. I am sorry, the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Mr. Speaker, the member for Corner Brook West (Mr. Baird) - this may not confuse

MR. FLIGHT: him but it is going to confuse everybody he pretends to represent in this House, Mr. Speaker. How one can justify, Mr. Speaker, putting the housing with the Department of Development. Could some minister, Mr. Speaker, on the other side, when he stands up in second reading, explain to the people of Newfoundland how it is a social responsibility, the responsibility for providing decent housing in this Province, could he reconcile the decision to put that with the Department of Development. The minister who was supposed to, Mr. Speaker, oversee the industrial development of this Province, the only service he has rendered so far as a minister, Mr. Speaker, was his announcement earlier today that there is another site selected for onshore development. It is in Arnold's Cove, in Bellevue. Yesterday he announced that with an election. Why would housing, Mr. Speaker - the people of this Province have gotten used to dealing with the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Mrs. Newhook). Municipal affairs and housing, one goes with the other, a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, for providing social services in a community.

MR. DINN: (Inaudible).
Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Manpower and Labour (Mr. Dinn), he may want to

MR. FLIGHT: keep quiet for a few minutes, Mr. Speaker. He should keep quiet. Members on this side of the House decided not to make as much of some of his actions as we wanted to make. Now, Mr. Speaker, all he has to do is keeping interjecting and he will find himself back on the hot seat -

MR. STAGG: Come on -

MR. FLIGHT: - that the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) got him off of.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) was fired.

MR. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister has to stand for once and justify how you can take a social responsibility of government, the responsibility of providing housing to the people of Newfoundland, through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, and put that with a resource department, the Department of Development. We really do not know yet what the Department of Development is going to accomplish in this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: But certainly, Mr. Speaker, there is no basis in logic to have the Minister of Development responsible for housing in this Province. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that point should have been made.

Now, Mr. Speaker, environment - maybe the minister can get up and explain to us what has happened to the Department of Environment.

AN HON. MEMBER: There was a little change.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: There is no Department of Environment as such. A few days ago the Department of Environment was in with another department, the Department of Consumer Affairs and Environment. Well, there are all

MR. FLIGHT: sorts of references to consumer affairs here, Mr. Speaker, -

AN HON. MEMBER: Take it out and sell it.

MR. FLIGHT: - but there is no reference to Environment. What has happened to Environment?

MR. DINN: It is a new bill.

MR. FLIGHT: It is a new bill. So while we are waiting for the new bill, will there be no Department of Environment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: There is no Department of Environment. As of today there is no Department of Environment.

MR. DINN: You can take the two words (inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, this government is insidiously trying to wipe out the few departments that most of the people in this Province would have a reason to deal with, as a department. Consumer Affairs, I cannot add anything only what has already been said for Consumer Affairs. It is an insult to the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker, to wipe out the Department of Consumer Affairs. It is downplaying, Mr. Speaker, the needs of the people of this Province who look to Consumer Affairs, their one last resort they had, to look to the Department of Consumer Affairs for protection against the gouging that we know is going on in this Province, and this government is prepared - and the proof that they are prepared is to wipe out the one agency that they had protecting the general public, Consumer Affairs.

MR. NEARY: Right on. Truer words were never spoken.

MR. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, we have the Department of Environment. We have a new bill - the old department, Mr. Speaker, was Consumer Affairs and Environment, now we have - you would have to be a Philadelphia lawyer,

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, to follow this - now we have a Department of Culture, Youth, and Recreation.

AN HON. MEMBER: No Environment.

MR. FLIGHT: No Environment, Mr. Speaker.

There have been some questions asked this past couple of weeks about a project that is going on in this Province in the development of Cat Arm.

MR. STAGG: Bill 4, is the one you are talking about.

MR. FLIGHT: Bill 4, a bill not yet tabled in this House, Mr. Speaker. Has the bill been tabled? When will the bill be called? The hon. House Leader (Mr. Marshall) -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) take a while (inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT: - might indicate when the bill creating a Department of Environment will be called, and what about the minister?

MR. ANDREWS: He is here.

MR. FLIGHT: Has the minister been notified that he will end up with both of these departments?

MR. ANDREWS: Yes.

MR. FLIGHT: The minister will be the minister for both departments. He has my sympathy, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ANDREWS: Who is more (inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT: He has my sympathy for being responsible for both departments.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Department of Environment?

MR. FLIGHT: The Department of Environment, and then the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Youth.

It just goes to show, Mr. Speaker, what emphasis this government is putting on environment in this Province.

MR. MOORES: No.

MR. MOORES: No, you will not. No. The member for Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout) is the next Minister of Environment.

MR. FLIGHT: The member for Baie Verte might well be, but then we will have eighteen Cabinet ministers.

MR. NEARY: They have too many now.

MR. FLIGHT: And this was the crowd that was going to operate with thirteen Cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker. They might as well, there are only about five active of the thirteen they have.

MR. ANDREWS: You want another one now, Consumer Affairs.

MR. FLIGHT: Let us look at Tourism, let us look at the Department of Tourism.

MR. STAGG: Let us not say (inaudible).

MR. MOORES: He deserves to be. He deserves to be.

MR. FLIGHT: There is no mention here, I cannot find when and why the Department of Tourism, the responsibilities under Tourism were split.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the present Minister of Youth, Culture and Recreation and Environment (Mr. Andrews) is responsible for some of the statutes under Tourism, are you not?

MR. ANDREWS: Will not be anymore.

MR. FLIGHT: Will not be anymore. Well, who will be? Who will be the -

MR. DINN: Who is reading the bill?
Mr. Speaker, by leave, we will give the hon. member enough time to (inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, look, we have now in this past six or seven months, we have two or three departments that were very important to the people of this Province. Tourism is one. A few days ago - last year we were being told by the Minister of Tourism that private enterprise was going to take over the parks in this Province. We were being told that the government was going to get out of operating the parks. The Minister of Tourism was responsible for the Wildlife Division, which is a natural, he should be. He should be responsible for parks. Now we are told, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Tourism is no longer responsible for the administration of - for deciding whether or not the parks will stay under government control or go to private industry. Now we are told that falls - that falls now, Mr. Speaker, with the Minister of Development.

MR. MOORES: Are you sure?

MR. FLIGHT: The Wildlife Act, Mr. Speaker, is administered by -

MR. MOORES: Are you sure?

MR. FLIGHT: - the present Minister of Development.

MR. MOORES: Positive?

MR. FLIGHT: Well, Mr. Speaker, you could go on -

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Mr. Speaker, his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor has arrived.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I adjourn the debate. X

MR. SPEAKER: Admit His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor. All rise.

Your Honour, it is my agreeable duty on behalf of Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, her faithful Commons in Newfoundland, to present to Your Honour a bill for the appropriation of interim supply granted in the present session.

A bill, "An Act For Granting To Her Majesty Certain Sums Of Money For Defraying Certain Expenses Of The Public Service For The Financial Year Ending The Thirty-first Day Of March One Thousand Nine Hundred And Eighty-Two And For Other Purposes Relating To The Public Service". (Bill No. 60).

HONOURABLE GORDON A. WINTER (Lieutenant-Governor):

X
In Her Majesty's name, I thank Her loyal subjects, I accept their benevolence and I assent to this bill.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to address myself to a question being posed by the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight). I think that the intention was that it would be a temporary adjournment for the time being, so the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans has the floor.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, so with the concurrence of the House I move the adjournment of the debate and call it six o'clock. It is not much longer, fifteen - Mr. Speaker, I move the - assuming that the House Leader (Mr. Marshall) is satisfied, Mr. Speaker, I move the adjournment of debate and call it six o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans adjourns the debate. Is it then agreed to call it six o'clock? Is that the understanding, is that the idea?

MR. MARSHALL:

No.

MR. SPEAKER:

No? The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, we have formalities here and I would not want the hon. member for Lapoile (Mr. Neary), as I said, I would not want to have to say to him, you know, he is trying to take the House on his back again because it is customary for the government to -

MR. ROBERTS: You are going to do the (inaudible) now, are you?

MR. MARSHALL:

I move, Mr. Speaker, that the House on its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3:00 P.M. and that this House do now adjourn.

On motion, the House at its rising adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 3:00 P.M.