

PRELIMINARY  
UNEDITED  
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE PERIOD:  
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 1981

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 661

EL - 1

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

Hon. members, I know, would like

to join me in welcoming to the Gallery today a delegation from the community of Ming's Bight in the district of Baie Vert - White Bay, Mr. Lloyd Jenkins, the Mayor, and two councillors.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, in August, 1980,

I announced that government had decided to bring before the House of Assembly legislation which would separate the posts of Comptroller and Deputy Minister of Finance. Although the separate appointment of the Comptroller cannot be legally made until an amendment to the Financial Administration Act, now on the Order Paper, has been dealt with by the House, certain administrative changes are being made in the Department of Finance which will facilitate separation with respect to the duties and responsibilities of the Comptroller and the Deputy Minister.

I would like to inform the House at this time that government has approved the creation of a new post in the Department of Finance at the Assistant Deputy Minister level to be titled Assistant Comptroller, Tax Administration and the appointment thereto of Mr. Robert G. Clarke, C.G.A.

Mr. Clarke, who is 37 years of age, was born in Bonavista, entered the Provincial Public Service in 1961 and served in various capacities in the Department of the Auditor General until 1974, when he joined the Department of Finance. Since that time he has progressed through various levels of management, including Manager of Tax Audit and, since 1977,

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 661

EL - 2

DR. COLLINS: Director of Taxation. He also served as acting Assistant Deputy Minister of Finance for some six months during 1980.

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, for our part, those of us sitting on this side of the House welcome the announcement made by the minister. The decision to split the duties of Comptroller away from those of the Deputy Minister of Finance and to create two separate positions and to appoint two separate officials to fill those positions is a very reasonable one, in our point of view. It could be said, I suppose, that it is an historical evolution, and at one stage I understand the position was called Comptroller and Auditor General and in due course, I suppose, twenty maybe thirty years ago - I am not sure, but it was about the time of Confederation that one man was appointed Comptroller and Deputy Minister of Finance and the second gentleman was appointed to be the Auditor General. Well, now we have come a stage further.

Mr. Clark is obviously admirably qualified, a distinguished career in the Public Service to date going back twenty years and steadily rising in responsibility. I assume that he will be appointed the Comptroller. I am not asking the minister to confirm that, but I would hope he will be. He seems to be the obvious candidate and I assume that is why the minister has made this move at this time pending the approval by the House of the legislation.

MR. S. NEARY: And mainly because of the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. E. ROBERTS: My friend for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) as always is stoutly off-key with me, in this case slightly ahead of me. I was just about to say that, of course, it should be noted as well that this is one of the many fine legacies left to this House by Mr. Simmons, Mr. Roger Simmons, the member for

MR. E. ROBERTS: Burin - St. George's in the House of Commons at Ottawa, a gentleman who is making his mark there.

MR. J. MORGAN: Who is?

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Roger Simmons. A name that will be remembered long after the name of the present Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) is forgotten. Mr. Roger Simmons as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee presided over that committee in a memorable fashion and one of the many recommendations they made that ought to be implemented was the one which led to this decision today by the government. I believe it was in the report for the year ending - I am not sure what year ending, but it was the report which they tabled a year or so past during Mr. Simmons' membership in this House. It is a good recommendation. I am glad that the government have

MR. ROBERTS:

accepted it and we look forward with optimism to the good results which will flow from it.

MR. NEARY:

A few more recommendations this year.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

We also have in the gallery today, and I am pleased to welcome them on behalf of all hon. members, a delegation from the Town Council of Gaultois in the district of Fortune-Hermitage, Mr. Wayne Kendell, Mr. Wayne Baggs and Mr. Ron Simms.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:

Further statements?

ORAL QUESTIONS:

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

My question is for the hon. the Premier. Since Newfoundland Hydro is a creature of the government, since PUB-the Public Utilities Board -is a creature of the government, would the Premier now tell the House whether or not he is prepared to reconsider the decision to increase Hydro rates in this Province as announced by the Chairman of Hydro, an increase that may go as high, between eighteen and twenty-three per cent, would the Premier tell the House whether he is prepared to reconsider that increase to the electrical consumers of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, we have not decided to increase electrical rates in the Province. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has not decided to increase electrical rates in the Province. Newfoundland and Labrador

PREMIER PECKFORD: Hydro has decided to apply to the Public Utilities Board to increase rates.

MR. NEARY: The same thing.

PREMIER PECKFORD: After Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro applies, and public hearings are held and all sides of the issue are debated, the Public Utilities Board then makes a recommendation to the government and at that point in time the government will decide whether in fact that recommendation - whether it is for increased rates, decreased rates, the same rates - will be made.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why we are prepared to go to PUB - I do not accept the Premier's position - that PUB is a creature of government, appointed by government every one of them and will rule in favour of government. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that last year PUB permitted Newfoundland Light and Power -

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! A point of order has been raised by the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: The purpose of the Question Period, Mr. Speaker, is to ask questions, not to enter into debate or to debate the answers that have been given.

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

MR. ROBERTS: He is awful touchy.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief and make my comment worthy of merit of the point raised by my learned friend. He has stated the rule correctly, he just misapplied it: My friend from Windsor-Buchans was not debating it, he was simply giving the question. He has not got an answer. He cannot give one and he has not gotten one. He is simply

MR. ROBERTS: giving the question, giving the normal prefatory remarks, he is doing it of course in his own inimitable way and that, Sir, is his prerogative. So including even the gentleman from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) who performs copiously and frequently in his own inimitable way, Sir, which we deeply appreciate.

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

MR. MARSHALL: In the interest of equal time, because I was very short and I will be short again, if the hon. gentleman -

MR. HANCOCK: (Inaudible) wasting the time of the House with points of order.

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

MR. MARSHALL: If the hon. gentleman gets up and prefixes his remarks by, 'I do not accept' etc., etc., he is obviously introducing areas of debate. There is a procedure later on today for debating the Question Period and perhaps the hon. gentlemen would like to use it this week where they did not use it last week.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the Standing Orders are quite clear for all members to observe and adhere to. Debate is not permitted during Question Period. I believe it is a legitimate point of order and if the hon. member was beginning to move into the area of debate, I ask him to restrain himself in that respect and to direct his supplementary question.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the people of Newfoundland would have too much confidence in PUB. Last year, as the Premier knows, the Board of Public Utilities approved an increase for Newfoundland Light that allowed Newfoundland Light and permitted them to overcharge



MR. FLIGHT: consumers in this Province by \$1 million. And the way Newfoundland Light decided to reimburse the people was by taking of the fuel adjustment charge. Would the Premier indicate to the House whether or not - and Mr. Young goes out of his way in his statement to point out that the 1980 fuel adjustment charge was low - and would the Premier confirm that the reason it was low was because that was the way Newfoundland Light chose to reimburse the people for the million dollars that they overcharged?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker if it takes that long to ask a question, then I have the rest of the Question Period to answer it based on proportionate time, and then the Opposition would surely be - Mr. Speaker, I have explained, we have explained, this government has explained from time to time the situation as it relates to Hydro increases in this Province. The Public Utilities Board protects the public interests and it has done, in my view, over the last couple of years relating to Hydro increases and other instances and other increases and other applications a very, very good job. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have not heard one iota of evidence to suggest that the Public Utilities Board has done anything but an expert job. I would like for somebody to show me some evidence, Mr. Speaker, not to make statements, I would like them to show evidence as to where the Public Utilities Board has not done a good job. They have done an excellent job.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Now this is a process. If, Mr. Speaker, this is left to be in the political arena every time increases come forward, then may I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Province is going to be in a chaotic situation. This is the whole reason for doing it this way, so it is independence, so that the Opposition party, so that the Federation of Municipalities, so that the Consumers Association, who do not have representation as an organization in this hon. House, for example, will have an opportunity to say their piece and to oppose or otherwise intervene into that hearing of the Public Utilities Board. It is an independent, quasi judicial body which does a good job of assessing the merits of an application for an increase by a public utility, and it is recognized as such all throughout Canada and throughout the Western World. It is an excellent way to go about trying to operate public utilities.

And as far as the oil price goes in the question, the reason why Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro said what they said is that they were very fortunate, and again we must compliment them on this, on negotiating fairly good prices for oil in the last year to two years. Now whether in fact Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro are going to be able to negotiate those kinds of low prices for oil in the coming year is a real good question, because the price, as everybody knows, is going up. Now and then, if you are in the marketplace at the right time and you have the right window of time to go into the marketplace, there might be a flush market for oil and you might be able to get a good price for it. And that is the reason for it. So they do not know,

PREMIER PECKFORD: It looks like now that the trend for price increases on oil are such that Newfoundland Hydro will not be able to get as good a price for a barrel of oil next year or this coming year as it got last year, and therefore they must reflect that increase of oil in the price that they have to charge the consumers of the Province, and that is a fair equitable way to do it. So the Public Utilities Board is a very, very responsible body to try to hear all sides of the question and then to make recommendations to government as to how to proceed with the public utilities of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): A supplementary, the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker,

MR. FLIGHT: the Premier knows that PUB allowed last year an increase to Newfoundland Light that allowed, permitted Newfoundland Light to overcharge the consumers by \$1 million and that is why the fuel adjustment charge was low in 1980 because that is the way they tried to reimburse. But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, my final question: The increase of anywhere between 18 per cent and 23 per cent is going to impact very, very badly on the senior citizens of this Province, the people on fixed income. Now the Premier is on record in supporting our move to world prices, an immediate move to world prices. He is also on record, and the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) indicated last night in his TV coverage that the Premier was going to look at programmes - he announced he would - that would lessen the impact on the people of this Province of the ever increasing cost of electricity and the ever increasing cost of electricity here is justified by the ever increasing cost of oil, and that increase is going to impact in the cost of goods and services as well as directly on electrical bills. What programmes is the Premier thinking about bringing in that will lessen the impact on the people on fixed incomes, senior citizens and what have you, the programmes that he promised a year ago?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) is completely incorrect. This government does not stand for going to world prices.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

PREMIER PECKFORD: This government stands for gradual increases in the price of oil to 75 per cent of the Chicago. Now that is a big difference than going to world price. And, Mr. Speaker, for the hon. member's edification that is going to help Newfoundland because the

PREMIER PECKFORD: day that it is announced that we have ownership of our oil and gas the same way as we do of our trees, then we will have a commercial development of offshore oil and gas which will provide revenue for this Province which will keep other prices down and to be able to give people on fixed incomes more money than they now have.

Now if we had an agreement from the Opposition, from the Liberal Party of Newfoundland, like we do from all the other provinces of Canada on this whole question of offshore ownership, perhaps it would help us a lot, Mr. Speaker, in ensuring that that came about.

As it relates to fixed incomes, Mr. Speaker, and other people who are in less fortunate positions in the economy, we are now in the process of going through our budgetary items and we will be trying to provide through those mechanisms that are in place and others to help people who are on fixed incomes. We did last year,

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, introduce a drug programme to help people and senior citizens who get the guaranteed income. We did increase the amount of money for people who are getting social assistance.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: So, Mr. Speaker, we have in the past year or so, done a fair amount in trying to provide additional money, and put money in the hands or in the pockets of people who are on fixed income and we will continue to do that in the future.

The other answer to it, Mr. Speaker, if I can just clue up now my few remarks on this supplementary question from the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight) is this, that the long-term, if you want to look at the benefits for the Province, the long-term answer to our problems is the development of the Lower Churchill, which gives stably priced power and then the increases will be less each year. And we are trying to persuade the Liberal Opposition to please support the government on the Gull Island project, to please support the government on offshore oil and gas; and if we have that kind of unanimity here within the Province it will increase our chances of ensuring that we will provide more wealth for all our people and even increase over time, the salary of the member for Windsor-Buchans.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier and it has to do with a Ministerial Statement that the hon. gentleman made yesterday in connection with the behaviour of ministers. Now, would the hon. gentleman indicate to the House if he has any knowledge

MR. NEARY: of ministers, either in the former administration, the Moores' administration, or in his own administration, does he have any knowledge or has it been reported to him that any of these ministers bought stock or shares on the stock market in connection with the oil discovery off our shores?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) asked that question because I am very proud of that Ministerial Statement of yesterday; that is a major reform by this administration and by this government, and we are very proud that we have had the opportunity here to make these kinds of reforms to the government operation, to the operation of the ministry, to the operation of the senior public service. It is a milestone and it is a

PREMIER PECKFORD:

great day to be able to say now that we are going to put in place these regulations and these guidelines.

To answer the hon. member's questions directly, if in fact I do come in contact with that kind of information, I will inform the hon. member.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman did not answer my question. I asked the hon. gentleman if he had any knowledge of any of his ministers playing the stock market or any of the ministers in the Moores' administration playing the stock market. And that is the question I asked. It is just a simple yes or no answer, that is all I want from the hon. gentleman.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the hon. member for LaPoile (S. Neary) should limit it to that. I would like to, you know, I have other knowledge besides knowledge about ministers in one government and ministers in another government. I think the hon. member for LaPoile was a minister in the government at one time and I think I have certain knowledge about some of the activities during that time as well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: As a supplementary, I would ask the hon. gentleman to put information that he has on the Table of the House whether it is about the Moores' administration or about the administration before that. If the hon. gentleman



MR. NEARY: has evidence of wrong-doing or abuse or-what do you call it? - a breach of trust on the part of any ministers in any administration, would he please tell the House and lay the documentation on the Table of the House?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, who is talking about wrong-doing or abuse? I never mentioned anything about wrong-doing or abuse. I do not know why the hon. member for LaPoile(S.Neary) would bring up abuse and wrong-doing. I thought the hon. member for LaPoile was asking if I had information. Now, if the hon. member's question was not whether I had information, it is rather whether I had some kind of information which had to do with abuse and wrong-doing, well, my gracious, that is another question, Mr. Speaker. That is a pretty important point the hon. member for LaPoile makes, and I thought he was looking for pure information but now that he is looking for wrong-doing and abuse of power and all these kinds of things, that will take a fairly lengthy investigation into the activities of the hon. member for LaPoile when he was a minister, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (E. Roberts) when he was a minister, and all the ministers over here -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER PECKFORD: and the ministers in the former administration, and perhaps we could go back to the ministries before 1949 and so on and get all this information and then we could look to see whether there was wrong-doing and abuse that the member for LaPoile talks about.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame, shame!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, this has all the evidence to me of a very massive investigation.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I do not know but we had better start getting the CIA involved.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

PREMIER PECKFORD: This looks like a pretty massive investigation. I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that the Royal Commission on forestry -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - or the Royal Commission on the inshore fishery would even come close to the kind of investigation we are talking about here.

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

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

MR. S. NEARY: Apparently the Premier has adopted a new technique now, Mr. Speaker, he is stepping outside of his desk as if he is still in the classroom, becoming a kindergarten debater now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. S. NEARY: I challenge the hon. gentleman now that if there is - if he has any knowledge of any wrongdoing or any breach of trust on the path of any minister -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. S. NEARY: - in any administration, it is his duty to put it on the -

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has been raised by the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. W. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the Question Period, as I say, is for the purpose of asking questions. The Opposition asked the question and it would appear to me that the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has taken the guise of answering questions.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Further to that also, I do not believe it is the purpose during Question Period to issue challenges. The purpose is to ask questions. The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has a question.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I will ask the hon. gentleman another question. Does the hon. gentleman have any knowledge that a minister in the former administration or in the present administration used information for his own advantage? For instance, went out and bought land in a certain area where he thought that some developments related to the offshore oil might be going to take place or any other matter? Does the hon. gentleman have any knowledge of any former Premier or any ministers breaching their trust and using the information for their own advantage?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I did not mean to get out here like this in school-like fashion but sometimes the questions emanating from the other side does remind one of

PREMIER PECKFORD: some of the questions I was asked when I taught Grade V and Grade VI, and -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - I automatically revert to another occupation and I am very sorry and I apologize to the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) for doing that because perhaps -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible) Ottawa.

PREMIER PECKFORD : - it is not really proper. When I have information, Mr.

Speaker -

MR. FLIGHT: (Inaudible) Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: When I have information that I want to pass on to the hon. member for LaPoile about activities when he was a minister or when the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) was a minister or other people were ministers, I will let them know in due course.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this is the gentleman who is trying to portray the impression of honesty and integrity.

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, right on.

MR. NEARY: And here he is sidetracking some very important questions and refusing to give the House the information.

I want to ask the hon. gentleman now in connection with this Ministerial Statement,

MR. NEARY: this window dressing that he gave the House yesterday, if the hon. gentleman intends to insist that ministers in his government now stop practicing law, now stop representing the Bank of Montreal, is the hon. gentleman going to insist on that? That two of his ministers who are, one practicing law actively downtown representing the Bank of Montreal to the Premier's right, and the other gentleman with his name on the letterhead as counsel for that law firm, is the hon. gentleman going to put an end to that dangerous practice?

MR. MARSHALL: (Inaudible).

MR. HANCOCK: Answer the question. Answer the question.

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: The Question Period now, if one notices now, Mr. Speaker, the Question Period, as the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) does not get his own way it gradually starts to deteriorate, and then we start to hear some innuendo as the member for LaPoile starts to refer to the different members on this side of the House. Now why do we not keep this on a high level and let us get through -

MR. NEARY: That is right.

PREMIER PECKFORD: - the Question Period.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

A point of order has been raised by the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible) to lecture the Premier on high levels or low levels. I mean he has his own knowledge of low levels.

MR. LUSH: How about low-beds?

MR. ROBERTS: He may even have some knowledge of low-beds or high levels. But what I do feel, Sir, is it hardly in order for the Premier to launch into the sort of vituperation and abuse-of which he is a master, I will grant him - in answer to a question. If he wants to show his kindergarten tactics, Sir, let him do it in debate and not in the Question Period. He is not answering the questioner. He is imputing motives to my hon. friend -

MR. NEARY: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: - he is questioning his integrity. If he wants to make a snappy answer to a question, that is up to him, that is within the rules, Sir, if that is his style, let him do it. But I do not think the abuse and vituperation that the Premier was launching into really is part of this House at all, and I do not think it adds to the Question Period. Sir, I suggest it is out of order.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): To the point of order, the hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I never imputed motives. As a matter of fact, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) who brought up references to individuals on this side and their activities. So if one is going to talk about points of order related to that, then one has to talk about where this kind of language originated, and it originated in the question from the hon. member for LaPoile. In any case, it is not a point of order.

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

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the hon. member for LaPoile.

March 26, 1981

Tape 670

PK - 4

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I submit that the hon. gentleman did impute motives on my part, Sir, when the hon. gentleman said that I used innuendo - which I did not Mr. Speaker. I merely asked -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: I did not through innuendo or any other way

MR. NEARY: make an accusation against the hon. gentleman that there was any wrongdoing. I merely asked the Premier if now he was going to put an end to that dangerous practice.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Well, to the point of order I rule there is no point of order, a difference of opinion.

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. NEARY: Let him answer.

MR. THOMS: You want to - Does the Premier want to answer.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, when I make changes, or when the guidelines are released for the ministers, and when they are for the public servants it will be clear what is within the guidelines and what is outside the guidelines, and whether I include matters of law firms for ministers or whether I include whether they can do that or something else, that will be in the guidelines.

AN HON. MEMBER: Undertakers.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Yes, undertakers, whether they can continue to practice their trade, and so on. So -

MR. HANCOCK: The dead do not talk.

PREMIER PECKFORD: There is no particular one person. There are principles that are going to be applied and I do not think any reference to any individual member is going to necessarily be picked out of the whole works. In any case, I do not know why the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is asking the questions because he has already indicated that this and another series of great reforms is only window dressing in his opinion and it is really strange how he keeps answering questions about window dressing.



MR. NEARY: I am trying to find out how sincere you are.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Right. Right.

MR. THOMS: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. If I could just get down to asking a couple of mundane questions relating to my own constituency, I would like to ask the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) a question. On March 10th., when I questioned the minister on this in the House of Assembly in relation to a commitment made to the Fishermen's Committee of St. Lawrence, his reply at that time was that he would discuss this commitment with the Fishermen's Committee in the very near future. My question is has he discussed this with the fishermen of St. Lawrence?

MR. HISCOCK: Is that your only question? Do you have a supplementary?

MR. THOMS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I think it is unfortunate that this kind of question be put forward in Question Period. I will be glad to sit down and talk to the hon. gentleman outside the Question Period about such a small matter but still important to St. Lawrence, I assume. And the fact is that the St. Lawrence Council asked for a meeting about ten days ago, I told them any day of the week

MR. MORGAN: this week and I understand that Mr. Leo Slaney, I think it is, the contact person for the council, will be coming in either today or tomorrow to meet with me, and at least I am hoping for the meeting with them, and also they will discuss fishery's matters and bring with them a member of the Fishermen's Committee. But surely these kinds of questions, Mr. Speaker, could be brought forward to me outside the House any time at all rather than be brought before the House of Assembly.

MR. THOMS: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. THOMS: I can advise the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan), Mr. Speaker, that I wrote to the minister a good month ago in connection with those particular questions and he has not given me the courtesy of an answer yet. That is the kind of co-operation that I am getting outside the House from the Minister of Fisheries and that is why I am asking the questions in the House.

Mr. Speaker, on the same day, on March 10th, the minister said that he would be meeting, and he gave the impression they would be meeting in St. Lawrence with the Fishermen's Committee. And his exact words were: "And within the next few days, in fact, I will be sitting down with the Council of St. Lawrence and all members of the Fishermen's Committee". Now has this meeting taken place, has there been any contact with the Fishermen's Committee? I am not interested in whether he has been in contact with the town manager, who has no connection with the Fishermen's Committee.

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious the hon. gentleman is so out of touch with his district that he does not know what is going on down in St. Lawrence because

MR. MORGAN: the fishery's matter in St. Lawrence has been put forward to the Council of St. Lawrence and they have been asked by the fishermen -

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible)

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, please, if I could only answer the question in a proper rational form without interruptions.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

AN HON. MEMBER: Be quite, 'Les.'

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, all the problems in these fishing communities are important to the respective communities and I have been trying to meet with the committees in their own communities. For example, a few days ago I went to Carbonear and visited the Fishermen's Committee out there, I went to Port de Grave, went to Trinity Bay, went to Placentia Bay and out in Bonavista Bay, but we cannot go to all places around the Province in a short period of time with the House in session. Therefore because of the distance away from the House of Assembly, St. Lawrence being so far away, I told them ten days ago I would be glad to meet with them any day at all in St. John's and the

MR. MORGAN: council agreed they would come in and bring with them all the problems pertaining to fisheries in St. Lawrence, and I was assuming they would bring with them members of the Fishermen's Committee. I can assure the hon. gentleman that the representations made by the council of St. Lawrence will get every consideration by the provincial Department of Fisheries, and do not try to play politics with the problems of the fisheries.

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

MR. HANCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Forestry (Mr. Power). I would like to know what is the minister's department's policy on issuing cutting permits for firewood?

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

MR. POWER: Mr. Speaker, we have a system for issuing forest cutting permits that cost two dollars per person. They are available to any person in this Province who wishes to get one. We are endeavouring, certainly, to make the forest resource available to all persons in the Province, whether they be on the Avalon, where you do not have a commercial pulp and paper operation, or whether they be in Grand Falls or Corner Brook, the West and Central parts of the Province where you do have fairly substantial commercial operations.

We are endeavouring, Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with Grand Falls and West Newfoundland to have the pulp and paper companies make available their cut-overs, where there is a lot of hard woods left remaining, for the purpose of cutting firewood. On the Avalon Peninsula, anyone who wishes a forest cutting permit to get firewood can do so simply by going to any

MR. POWER: Forestry Office in  
the region.

MR. HANCOCK: A supplementary, Mr.  
Speaker.

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

MR. HANCOCK: Is the minister saying  
that there is not intention, in his department, of cutting  
out those permits in the future?

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

MR. POWER: Mr. Speaker, from time  
to time we may as a government evaluate the necessity of  
having given types of cutting permits, or any permit that  
the government issues. It is certainly not our intention  
at this time to cut out the permit as such. It is very  
important for us, as managers of the forest resource, to  
know exactly how much wood is being cut, whether it is  
being cut for a sawmill, a pulping operation, such as  
Grand Falls, Corner Brook or Stephenville, or whether it  
is being cut for firewood.

It is estimated, Mr.  
Speaker, that there are close to 100,000 cords of wood cut  
in Newfoundland per year that can go into sawmilling  
operations or for the purpose of firewood useage. We are  
very concerned as a department that the federal Department  
of Energy, I suppose, will shortly be giving energy tax  
credits of some type up to \$800 for allowing persons to  
convert to alternate sources of energy from petroleum  
based energy. It is certainly our concern, because it is  
putting a very great demand on places like the Avalon  
Peninsula where there is not an unlimited supply of wood  
products. But certainly we intend to manage the resource.

At this stage of the

March 26, 1981, Tape 673, Page 3 -- apb

MR. POWER: game, Mr. Speaker, we have not considered either cutting out the permits or doing any other type of severe type of regulations to allow persons to get firewood. A firewood cutting permit is available to anybody in this Province who wishes to have one, simply as long as they follow the guidelines, the rules and regulations that are laid down.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say

MR. POWER: for the hon. member and for the sake of the House and the public of Newfoundland that it is a serious concern to the government in the sense that persons are on one hand getting forest cutting permits and on the other hand may be abusing the permits in cutting very small diameter wood, cutting wood very close to the main highways of the Province where they have some aesthetic values, cutting close to or within Provincial Parks where the minister has to enforce regulations and those types of things.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!  
The time for Oral Questions has expired. I would like to welcome to the Gallery today a former member of this House of Assembly, Mr. Clyde Wells.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Harbour Main - Bell Island.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, I stand here to present a petition on behalf of approximately 2,200 people on Bell Island. I did not really count the number of names involved here but I am told that there are approximately 2,200 names on this petition. And the prayer of the petition reads as follows, 'Because Bell Island is an economically depressed area and is presently doing battle with what is probably one of the highest unemployment rates in all of Canada, it is the wish of the undersigned residents of Bell Island that a proposal currently before the Provincial Department of Fisheries to acquire a general seafood license which includes primary and secondary processing of all species caught in Newfoundland for the area be approved without delay.'

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of support letters that have come along with this petition and I have absolutely no reservations in lending my support to and associating myself with this particular request being made by

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 674

EL - 2

MR. DOYLE: 2,200 people on Bell Island. And along with the petition I have had a number of letters come, one from the Bell Island Development Association, who are responsible, I understand, for the circulation of that petition, one from the Wabana Boys and Girls Club, one from the Town Council on Bell Island, and one from the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch No. 18.

Now, it is rather interesting, Mr. Speaker, to refer to one of these letters, the one that was written by the Bell Island Development Association, in that it sums up rather well in that letter the case to be made for this type of particular proposal on Bell Island in that it says that Bell Island was once a prosperous mining community boasting a work force of approximately 2,200 and in 1966 it lost its only economic industrial base with the closure of those mines, back in 1966.

They also make reference to the



MR. DOYLE:

fact Mr. Speaker that a similar situation did occur some years ago in the town of St. Lawrence when the mining operation was closed down there as well and it saw the loss of that mining industry. But various sectors of government, of course, did move quickly to establish fish plants in that particular area and put St. Lawrence back on a sound economic footing once again and I would imagine this is what the people in that area are referring to, that they would like to be given similar treatment as well. The fact that there are approximately 2,200 people associated with this petition indicates to me that the people of Bell Island do have a very great concern and do have a desire to become gainfully employed once again, because Bell Island, Your Honour, is an economically depressed area and Bell Island probably does have the highest unemployment rate if not in Newfoundland, well maybe in all of Canada. And in doing some research today, Mr. Speaker, on this particular proposal, I had occasion to call the Department of Labour and Manpower and the Unemployment Insurance Commission and the Department of Social Service and I was absolutely astounded at the number of unemployed people on Bell Island. It is nearing, I believe, sixty-five to seventy per cent unemployment, so as you can well imagine, Mr. Speaker, the case to be made for processing in the secondary or the primary sector is a very good case indeed. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that Bell Islanders are no different than any other people in Newfoundland in that they should be given the same opportunities as all Newfoundlanders to earn a living, to become good productive members in society and they should be given a chance to make it on their own. This particular proposal that I am supporting will employ approximately eighty people, and

MR. DOYLE: we do not advocate or purport that this number of people will solve the current unemployment on Bell Island, nor do we believe that it will appreciably affect the unemployment statistics in Newfoundland, but it does represent in my opinion a good positive step forward for the people of Bell Island to get back on a good, sound economic footing once again. The people also refer in this letter to the fact that Bell Island, when it did open its mining operations, saw the fishing industry in Newfoundland on the decline, Mr. Speaker. And people from all over Conception Bay, and from all over the Avalon Peninsula as a matter of fact, rushed to Bell Island at that time to take advantage of the good, sound economic footing that these people were on. And of course now they deserve and now they expect similar treatment in that the fishing industry in Newfoundland is on the upswing, so they should be given the opportunity as well to take advantage of a revised fishing industry here in Newfoundland. And I might also point out, Mr. Speaker, that because of the geographic location of Bell Island, and because of the current ferry problems that they do have, people on Bell Island are being discriminated against by employers here in St. John's who refuse to hire people because they are from Bell Island because they do experience a certain amount of difficulty in getting back and forth from Bell Island to St. John's and as a result Mr. Speaker - I know I am rapidly running out of time. I wish I had fifteen or twenty more minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Is there leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 675

AH-3

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Agreed.

MR. DOYLE: But what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the people on Bell Island have been discriminated against over the years by employers in St. John's who refuse to hire these people because-in some cases they are just as qualified even more qualified to take jobs in St. John's-but because they will experience a certain difficulty in getting from Bell Island over to the city they have been told on a number of different occasions, and I have dealt with this problem on fifteen or possibly twenty occasions, they have been told that the job is just not there for them for one particular reason, that they are from Bell Island and they will experience some difficulty in getting from Bell Island during the Winter over to the various employment areas in St. John's. Now that,

MR. N. DOYLE: in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, is blatant, open discrimination against the people of Bell Island because of their geographic location. And I think this is the opportunity for the people of that area to be put back on a good, sound, economic footing once again.

They should be given that opportunity, Mr. Speaker. Now it will employ eighty people and, as I said, this will not appreciably affect the unemployment statistics in Newfoundland but it will affect the unemployment rate on Bell Island in that we will have eighty more people employed. Now I could go into the fact of the number of welfare recipients on Bell Island and I could go into the unemployment insurance recipients and the number of these people on Bell Island: The statistics are absolutely astounding and because of that I feel very, very strongly indeed that Bell Island has to be given the opportunity, the same as all Newfoundlanders have been given the opportunity over the years to get back on a good, sound, economic footing once again.

I think the people of this particular area and the people of Newfoundland in general owe that to Bell Island in that they at one point in time, back before the year of 1966, contributed quite heavily to the economy of this Province. And now what they are asking for is a chance themselves to contribute to Newfoundland, to contribute to their community and as a result I have absolutely no reservation in supporting the prayer of this petition, and I wish to lay it upon the Table of the House and relate it to the department that it represents.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I believe I could be tempted to support the petition presented by the hon. gentleman on behalf of 2,200 of my fellow Bell Islanders. As hon. members know, I was born on Bell Island and spent most of my life on Bell Island. I have only been a city slicker, I would say, since 1969, I think it is. When I was in the Cabinet I moved from Bell Island and I represented Bell Island fourteen years here in the House of Assembly, fourteen years, and was elected twice after the mine closed, by the way.

AN HON. MEMBER:

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the organizations that the hon. gentleman referred to, the Development Association is my godchild. I formed that Development Association on Bell Island. The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch No. 18, I am an associate member of Branch No. 18 over on Bell Island. And I spent twelve years on the town council, another letter that he mentioned there. And during the time that I was the member over there, Mr. Speaker, when the mine was in the process of closing down the Liberal Government of that day built a vocational school on Bell Island, a district vocational school. And I was instrumental in getting a hospital built on Bell Island, and the first organized water and sewer system on Bell Island was put there by me when I was the member. The first paved roads were put there by me and, Mr. Speaker, the fish plant that the hon. gentleman is now trying to persuade his colleagues to turn into a processing plant, a fish processing plant, that building on the government wharf is a federal building, owned by the federal Department of Public Works, I believe it is; I was instrumental in getting that building for a fish plant for the Bell Island Development Association.

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 676

DW - 3

MR. S. NEARY: So the point I am making, Mr. Speaker, is this - and not only that, but after the mine closed we made a valiant attempt, effort at rehabilitating Bell Islanders so that they could go back to their old - what do you call it? - their old work of farming and fishing. And we managed

MR. NEARY: to get them some boats over there and some nets to get them started because they had nothing when they came out of the mine. So the foundation is laid, Mr. Speaker, the foundation is there. Now what the hon. gentleman is trying to do is to build on that foundation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. NEARY: And I wish him luck, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately the hon. gentleman is not in the Cabinet, maybe if he was in the Cabinet he might be able to push a little harder, but he is in the Premier's Office; he is a special assistant in the Premier's Office and so let us hope that he can use his influence on the Premier and on the Premier's colleagues to try to make this secondary processing of fish on Bell Island a reality. Everything that the hon. gentleman said about employers discriminating, the problems with the ferry service, etc., I agree with him, Mr. Speaker. But I want to say this, that when I was representing Bell Island, Mr. Speaker, day in and day out, as my hon. friend the former member who is sitting in the gallery knows, day in and day out I took more abuse and more criticism from the Tories, who were in Opposition at that time, about Bell Island -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

There is generally a certain amount of courtesy allowed to members in presentation of petitions, but the rules say that you must direct your comments towards the prayer of the petition. And I believe we are not really getting comments directed towards the prayer of the petition but perhaps more attuned to the representation of the hon. member when he was a member.

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe the point -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. NEARY: - the point I was trying to make, Mr. Speaker, was that after ten years of a Tory administration

MR. NEARY: in this Province, now we finally get a petition brought into the House to do something for Bell Island. They have had ten years to do it and now we get a petition. Well, let us hope that that petition will only be the beginning of helping and trying to rehabilitate the the unemployed over on Bell Island. They are not the kind of people, Mr. Speaker - we are, I say we are not the kind of people who came to the government with hat in hand begging governments for favours. We built this Province; communities like Bell Island, Buchans, the paper companies built this Province, before Confederation we were one of the biggest contributors to the Public Treasury in this Province. And our money was taken and spent in other parts of Newfoundland, our money, our tax money. We built hospitals and we built public buildings and we paved roads and we put in water and sewage. We paid for it, the people of Bell Island paid for it, and now they are entitled to something in return.

I am merely trying to reinforce the member's argument, his case, Mr. Speaker. I wish him luck. If he needs any help from me to try to get this fish processing plant established, I would be very happy to do it. Incidentally, I still have



MR. NEARY: my card in my wallet in the Bell Island Development Association. I am an honorary member of the Bell Island Development Association.

MR. HANCOCK: Rightly so. Rightly so.

MR. NEARY: And so, Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation at all in supporting the prayer of the petition. Maybe in future debates in this House, Mr. Speaker, I may have a few more words about my old hometown on Bell Island.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak briefly on the petition from a little more than 2,000 people from Bell Island, and to say to my hon. friend and colleague, the articulate spokesman from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) who just sat down, that thank God that the Newfoundland Government has jurisdiction and responsibility over licencing of fish plants because if it was now in the hands of the federal government, according to the federal minister's policy announced no longer than two days ago before a standing committee of the House of Commons, that they would not support this kind of petition. They would not support any more licencing of fish plants in Newfoundland. In fact, the federal minister's statement was there are too many fish plants in Newfoundland now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That is right.

MR. MORGAN: So irrespective of the sixty-five to seventy per cent unemployment on Bell Island, which I have no reason to question is a fact, irrespective of what it means to the social and the economic viability of Bell Island, that the federal government if they had jurisdiction over licencing of fish plants they would not look at or even

MR. MORGAN: consider licencing a fish plant for Bell Island. But, Mr. Speaker, fortunately we do have jurisdiction over this aspect of the fisheries, fortunately, and I can say to my hon. friend and colleague from Harbour Main-Bell Island (Mr. Doyle) that I am sure the Licencing Committee in the Department of Fisheries will give every consideration to the application from two gentlemen, Messrs. Mike Maher and Martin O'Brien, two enterprising Newfoundlanders. I know both of them, both connected with the fishing industry. They have made an application to establish a processing plant to process such species as cod, groundfish, salmon, lobster, lump fish, and other species like squid, mackeral, eels, dog fish, mussels, and I can say that I think automatically they should get the right to process these species like mackeral, and squid and lump fish roe, and eels and dog fish and mussels. Why? Because they are underutilized. They are underutilized species and I think no matter where the application comes from in our Province when we have species not being utilized, that the application should be given every consideration to create jobs and to get these specialty products into the marketplace. In connection with the species of herring and crab, there are some questions on these species because of the quotas on them and the stocks itself.

But, Mr. Speaker, I will say that I know the Licencing Committee will give the petition and the application, in this case the petition supporting the application, will give it every consideration and even then if the Licencing Committee says no to the application, says no because of the effect it may have on the plant already existing in Pouch Cove and a plant already existing in Portugal

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 678

NM - 3

MR. MORGAN: Cove, and they look at both these factors, how these factors what they mean to the existing plants, even if the Licencing Committee said, "No Messrs. Maher and Messrs. O'Brien you are not going to get that licence," they have the right to appeal and rightly so. They have a right to appeal. There is a province-wide appeal committee, chaired again by a prominent Newfoundlander, Mr. Graham Mercer, and that appeal committee I am sure will again give every consideration to the application. But from where I sit, Mr. Speaker, I see no reason

MR. MORGAN:

at this time, I see no reason why we should not automatically give consideration to the species I mentioned which are under-utilize species and to get a plant established on Bell Island which will provide jobs for Bell Islanders.

Thank you; Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Any further petitions?

The hon. member for St. Mary's-  
the Capes.

MR. HANCOCK:

Mr. Speaker, thank you, Mr.

Speaker. I hope also to get the support of the Minister of Fisheries (J. Morgan) in this regard because although it is a petition on roads, Mr. Speaker, there are a large amount of herring and other species of fish being trucked over this section of dirt road. The petition comes from some 112 residents of the community of Mall Bay and surrounding areas, Mr. Speaker. The prayer of the petition reads as follows, 'We, the residents of Mall Bay, humbly swear that for our safety and protection the road from Riverhead to Mall Bay be upgraded and paved, that guardrails for protection be erected on Riverhead Road entrance to Mall Bay, and that there is an enormous amount of traffic with the movement of various species of fish from Mall Bay to Riverhead, that large trucks also move from Mall Bay to other places and they also have large trucks going in there with goods to that small community, Mr. Speaker, and that guardrails be erected at dangerous places in Mall Bay.' And I might add, Mr. Speaker, that there are a number of high embankments in that area, that if you went over you are as good as gone, Mr. Speaker.

One of the steepest hills in the Province is also located on that road from Riverhead to Mall Bay, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HANCOCK:

'Our prayer is that this work be done as quickly as possible to ensure safety of lives and a more efficient movement of traffic to and from the area.

"And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray."

Mr. Speaker, that is the prayer of the petition. I would like to add a few remarks in supporting this petition, Mr. Speaker, and I support it wholeheartedly. We have some of the most energetic people in Newfoundland living in that small community. And it is only a small community, Mr. Speaker, and that is probably why it has been ignored. The people of that community cannot even hang clothes on the line, Mr. Speaker, because it is one of the few communities remaining in this Province where the community itself has not got pavement. Mr. Speaker, you can go up to the member's district of Fortune-Hermitage (D. Stewart) where you almost have to bring it in there in coal boats, Mr. Speaker. And almost every community up there is paved and I have several in my district, Mr. Speaker, for political reasons or otherwise have not been paved in the past.

There are a number of school children, Mr. Speaker, who are travelling back and forth from Mall Bay to schools in Riverhead and St. Mary's, Mr. Speaker, that have to travel over this dirt road. In the Winter time it is very dangerous, especially with the hill that I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker. And the people of Bell Island feel that they have been neglected in the past; well, Mr. Speaker, they should come out to my district and the people out there feel the same way.

The government is not living up to the expectations that the people put into them some two years ago when they gave them a vote of confidence to carry out the wishes of the people for the next three to five years. I wish

MR. HANCOCK: there was an election called tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, to get this Province on the right track again.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, I support this petition and I hope it does not slide. I have presented a number of petitions in this hon. House, Mr. Speaker, since I have been elected and I have yet to see any action being taken on any of them. I hope this one does not go in the same category as the last, Mr. Speaker. I support this petition, Mr. Speaker, and ask to lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the -

MR. HISCOCK: The Premier is not here.

MR. ROBERTS: - conspicuous absence of any member on the other side wishing to speak, and if there be one who wishes to speak then I will gladly stand aside and let him or her have his or her say, but in the conspicuous absence of anybody on the other side who is even interested enough to indicate any support for this petition,

MR. ROBERTS: let me say quite simply for those of us on this side that we do support it. We commend the gentleman for St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr. Hancock) for presenting it. He is one of the newer members of this House, but a most vigorous, strongly spoken and well-spoken man, and he states a very strong case and he states it very well.

I do not know, Sir - I am not in the business of bashing the press - but I do not know why the Newfoundland press looks only at St. John's and at one or two other places in the Province to try to get some indication of what is happening in this Province.

MR. MORGAN: Hear, hear! I agree.

MR. ROBERTS: Well the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and I agree on that point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: I do not say that by way of bashing the press, but I say it by means of pointing out that there are many places in this Province, including Mall Bay, particularly and significantly, many others where the level of public service being offered is absolutely appalling. Now that is bad enough, Sir, but in itself that is probably not news because we have put up with these conditions in this Province for four hundred and some years now.

What is news is the appalling inequities which this government not only tolerates, but encourages, and there is a great story to be written by some investigative reporter who simply gets in his car, or going on some of these roads his pick-up or his four-wheel drive vehicle, and goes around a little bit and makes a note of what is being done in any given year by the

MR. ROBERTS: government in one district and another and comparing the needs that are being met in one district with needs which are not being met in another. And I would say that there are no people in this Province any more needy of assistance with their roads than are the people in Mall Bay, and I say there are no people any more deserving of assistance from the government than are the people of Mall Bay.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: But I will wager my parliamentary pay, and my friend's parliamentary pay, that this government will do nothing this year for the people of Mall Bay. And I will tell you why, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you why I fear this petition will not be honoured and accepted, and that is because the Premier of this Province, a most arrogant, intellectually self-righteous gentleman, went down into Mount Carmel and other places in the district of St. Mary's-The Capes - what? a year and a half past and said -

MR. CARTER: Who are you talking about?

MR. ROBERTS: Who am I talking about? I am talking about the Premier, the same gentleman that the member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) follows so assiduously and so lasciviously.

MR. CARTER: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: And I would say, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the Premier went down into Mount Carmel and there he made a public speech saying that if the people of that district did not elect a Tory candidate they would not receive any assistance, I think his phrase - you can correct me, I say to my friend - was he would cut it off at the Salmonier Line if they did not vote Tory. Well, the people in St. Mary's-The Capes were not to be blackmailed



MR. ROBERTS: or by any of that ilk, they voted as they thought best and they elected the gentleman for St. Mary's-The Capes (Mr. Hancock). And there has not been, I will wager, a nickel spent in that district since.

So I support the petition, Sir.

And I say to my friend for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) that I hope that he too will support the petition. I hope he will support it not only in the House but will support it as well in all the other circles of power and influence in which he no longer moves. And I would say to him, Sir, that he could do far more for his Province by supporting this petition than by the sort of interjections which he delights in making, and if only he made them well, Sir, we would delight in them too.

Mr. Speaker, I support the petition.

It is a good petition. It is a worthy request. I hope it is granted.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): Further petitions?

MR. NEARY: No, I want to support  
the hon. gentleman's petition.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Order!  
There has already been  
one speaker aside from the member presenting on that  
side.

MR. NEARY: Oh, I see. I thought  
we were allowed two.

MR. SPEAKER: No, there is allowed  
one speaker from each side aside from the member presenting.

MR. NEARY: Nice try. A nice try  
anyway, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, an excellent try.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Motion 1, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Motion 1. The hon. the  
Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I have  
received a message from His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor.

MR. SPEAKER: A message from His  
Honour the Lieutenant-Governor. All rise, please!

The following message  
is addressed to the hon. the Minister of Finance: "I, the  
Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Newfoundland,  
transmit estimates of sums required for the public service  
of the Province for the year ending the 31st. of March,  
1982 by way of interim supply and in accordance with the  
provisions of the British North America Act of 1867, as  
amended, I recommend these estimates to the House of Assembly.

Signed

Gordon A. Winter

Lieutenant-Governor."

The hon. the Minister

of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I move that his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor's message be referred to the Committee of Supply.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

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 (\$448,440,000).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall the resolution carry?

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. ROBERTS: I would like to see if I have one thing clear. This is the first time we have been in Committee this session, I just want to be sure we all agree on the rules; twenty minutes in each individual's speech and we may speak more than once if we so wish -

MR. NEARY: Right.

MR. ROBERTS: - provided there is an intervening speaker.

MR. CARTER: As long as you are polite.

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Sir, there was a burp from the member from St. John's North (Mr. Carter), I do not know if it meant anything. I wish his bringing up, Sir, was equal to his upbringing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, I just want to be sure these are the rules, you know, so there is not misunderstanding. And that we are in the resolution stage; the practice is we debate this extensively at resolution stage, the clock is now running, tick, tick, tick, tick, and that the times comes off the seventy-five hours. When we pass the resolution, as we will within the month - that is the month, thirty days, not this calendar month - the bill will go through: Is that the ground rules, Sir?

MR. CHAIRMAN(Butt): I refer hon. members to Standing Order 117, subhead (5): "The Minister introducing the estimates and the member speaking immediately in reply shall be given fifteen minutes. Each other member will have ten minutes".

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour, these are not estimates, Sir.

MR. NEARY: No, you are wrong there, you are wrong.

MR. ROBERTS: Am I wrong?

MR. NEARY: No -

MR. ROBERTS: No, I do not think. That is why I want to be sure we all understand rather than have a slanging match. These are not estimates, Sir, it is Interim Supply. Now, last

MR. ROBERTS:

year you will recall, Your Honour, if I may, the House got itself in a terrible bind: You passed all the supply bills and you had to do them all over again. Now let us be sure this time; this is Committee of the Whole.

MR. NEARY:

Right.

MR. ROBERTS:

We are on supply. We are considering- in a moment the minister will get the opportunity to introduce a motion for interim supply. I just want to understand what the rules are, Sir, and if I am wrong, fine. But I suggest Sir this is not under Rule 117, but rather we are under the section dealing with committees - I am sorry, the section dealing with debate. I do not have the number but I had it a moment ago. Thirty-nine, is it?

AN HON. MEMBER:

Forty nine.

MR. ROBERTS:

Forty nine. I thank my hon. friend. No, that is the one that deals with times. Here we are. I cannot find it offhand. It is here but -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt):

I will refer the hon. member to Rule 116 subhead 2. "For the purposes of Standing Order 116(1) Committee of Supply includes the Committee of Supply on the main estimates and on interim supply forming a part of the main estimates."

MR. ROBERTS:

There is no question about that, Mr. Chairman, because that is what I already said, that the clock is running and that is the rule that gets the clock running. All I am saying is that the minister is not introducing estimates, he is introducing a resolution. We are not in Committee of Supply. We are in Committee of the Whole.

MR. NEARY:

Right on.

MR. ROBERTS:

There is no Committee of Supply on the Order Paper, Sir. We are in Committee of the Whole, the Committee of the Whole House. That is the resolution that the clerk

March 26,1981

Tape No. 682

AH-2

MR. ROBERTS: just read. I mean, Your Honour, heard it read, to be submitted to a Committee of the Whole House. We are not in Committee of Supply. It is important only in that we must know what the rules are, then we will attempt -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): As I interpret -

MR. ROBERTS: Hold on now, Mr. Chairman. I do not mind being interrupted by Your Honour, but the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) is being even more ignorant than normal. Now I do not want to have to put up with that tiresome effusion. I am sure Your Honour can bring him to order. If Your Honour would be good enough, I would be grateful. All I want to say is, tell us what the rules are? And I would suggest to Your Honour that 117 does not apply. The minister is not introducing estimates, he is introducing interim supply and we are in Committee of the Whole, Sir.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, further to what my colleague just said -

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

MR. NEARY: - I think the President of the Council knows what we are talking about here. Last year we had the same hassle. What we are doing, Mr. -

MR. ROBERTS: Forty-four is the rule.

MR. NEARY: Yes. What we are doing is we are debating the resolution and we have agreed - this is done through mutual agreement to this side of the House - that this will be considered as second reading -

MR. ROBERTS: Wide open debate.

MR. NEARY: - wide open debate. The President of the Council knows that. We had the same debate last year and the President of the Council got up and concurred that we were right, so I would submit you are looking at the wrong Standing Rule there, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, you know, the issue comes down as to whether, I think the hon. gentlemen opposite will agree, as to whether this is a Committee of the Whole, in which case if it is Committee of the Whole the rules of the House apply; or whether it is Committee of Supply. Now I believe the motion by the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Committee of the Whole.

MR. MARSHALL: You know, the motion is, and this motion is, Mr. Chairman, a motion that has been engrafted in our Standing Orders for a long period of time, And it is one that has been taken from the precedents of the House - in this particular area I do not say over the past ten years, I say over the past thirty years, if not before.

The Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) moves the Lieutenant-Governor's message be referred to the Committee of Supply -

MR. ROBERTS: Exactly what I -

MR. MARSHALL: - just one second now, you know - to the Committee of Supply. So you are sitting now, Mr. Chairman, you sit sometimes as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole and sometimes as Committee of Supply. Since this is a matter of voting money and, you know, I mean, Mr. Chairman, Your Honour might like to take this under advisement and look at them, and there are no set answers, you know, completely and absolutely; I mean, the government is not going to fall, the Opposition is not going to disappear and that, but we would like to be accurate in the thing. And, you know, the motion proposed was that you go into Committee of Supply for money, and then it goes on that the House resolves itself - so there is somewhat of an inconsistency here that can -

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible)

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, well the written procedures that we have here are -

MR. ROBERTS: Where?

MR. MARSHALL: Wait now, just let me finish now.

The hon. member, we would like to hear what the hon. member says and be interested in what he says. But the motion is then that the House resolves itself - how are you - into Committee of the Whole, Mr. Speaker leaves the Chair and the Chairman of the Committee assumes the Chair of Committee of Supply. Now, you know, that is the procedure that has been set down. Now it is my understanding, I mean, you are talking about here the matter of voting of money, so I have difficulty in my own mind, rationally and logistically of saying that this would be anything - when you talk about the voting of money you are talking about supplying money to Her Majesty for the purpose of the expenditure of it.

So that is the position I would tend to take. And I think for the purpose too of the type of debate we are in, the Committee of Supply rules would be better with the fifteen minutes and the fifteen minutes and the ten minutes for reply. But it is not what I think is better, it is what the rule is. Maybe Your Honour wishes to look at it because we do not want to make any particular errors on it.

MR. ROBERTS: I would like to say something.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Let us first clear away the undergrowth. The so-called procedures are not worth the paper they are written on. They have no standing in the rules of this - I do not mean to be offensive to whomever drafted them - they have no standing in the rules. And I would recall last year, you know, with all deference, if Your Honour will cast his mind back, the entire finance procedure went adrift. And then finally the clerks and law offices and the rest finally



MR. ROBERTS: admitted - now let us be clear what we are doing, we are not approving money with this resolution.

MR. NEARY: Right on.

MR. ROBERTS: We are debating a resolution which says that it is expedient to introduce certain estimates. I do not know how I can get it through but let me try! That no money bill - and this goes back to Simon de Montfort's parliament in 1295 which is generally accepted as being the first parliament. I would say to Your Honour, he lost his head -

MR. CARTER: Are you patronizing?

MR. ROBERTS: - yes, I am patronizing. To the gentleman from St. John's North (Mr. Carter), I am patronizing and I would patronize to him the same way I would patronize anybody in his position. I am not allowed to say what his position is because that would be unparliamentary. I would ask him, Sir, to restrain himself or else to void himself outside the House instead of in the House; all he is doing is delaying the Committee.

Now what we are doing, Mr. Chairman, right from Simon de Montford's parliament, no money bill can be introduced in this House unless it is first preceded by a resolution.

MR. ROBERTS: Now if the Clerks at the Table do not understand that, let them go back to law school. If the minister does not understand it, let him go back to medical school. We are doing a resolution. It has to be recommended by the Lieutenant-Governor under the British North America Act, and His Honour has done that, graciously as always. We are not at this stage debating - we are debating - where is the wording of this thing that was passed out? "That it is expedient to introduce a measure," okay? And furthermore I would say to my friend, the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall), there is no motion on the Order Paper for a committee of supply. The motion on the Order Paper is that we go into Committee of the Whole. We are in Committee of the Whole.

MR. BARRY: What is all the uproar about?

MR. ROBERTS: The uproar is because I want to be sure that we understand the rules. I do not want to go on for twenty minutes and have the - the Deputy Speaker (Mr. Butt), I say to my friend the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry), felt that we were under rule 117, the Committee on Supply procedures. We are not: We are under the Committee of the Whole procedures and I know he will agree with me that we are debating a money bill resolution. When we debate the resolution, when it is accepted, as it will be, then, you know, the bill in this House it goes through all three stages, one, two, three without further debate. That is probably a convention that has the force of precedent. I do not think conventions can have the force of law, that is a matter our Court of Appeal is having a look at, are they not?

But, you know, we are not dealing with a money bill. We are not dealing with any bill. The motion before the Chair now, Sir, is, as read by our Clerk, "That it is expedient to introduce a measure," or bring in a

MR. ROBERTS: resolution. Let us be clear on that and let us know where we are.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, there are other, I know, the hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) has matters to add to it, but I just want to add this, you know. I know the motion reads Committee of the Whole, which is the standard one for the purpose of considering resolutions or granting interim supply. Now what the resolution is is to determine whether or not it is going to be expedient to introduce a bill in this House for the purpose of introducing interim supply. So it is very difficult for me to understand how, if we are in the process now of considering a bill on supply for the purpose of determining whether this bill will be - we are considering a resolution to determine whether a bill to supply money to the government is to be enacted or not, how we are not in Committee of Supply. The Committee of the Whole is a definition that - the Committee of the Whole on Supply really because it is a whole committee of the House on supply.

Now page 170 in Beauchesne, "Interim Supply," and I quote this, Mr. Chairman, realizing that particularly the procedures on money measures of the House of Commons do not necessarily correspond with ours because we have our own traditions, but I think it is worthwhile referring to: "Interim Supply provides the government with money to meet its obligations during the time before the main estimates are approved. Interim Supply is normally requested in the first supply period for the first three months of the new fiscal year," which is what this is, "for all departments of government. In addition, Interim Supply is requested for other items in the estimates depending upon the need in each case. The main estimates and the bill based

MR. MARSHALL:                   thereon are not disposed of  
until the last allotted day for the supply."

And paragraph 490, "The  
motion to concur in Interim Supply is expressed in twelfths,"  
well, that is just the way they do it. The whole point is this,  
Mr. Speaker, we are now considering interim supply which is  
a part of the expenditures of the government and supply for  
the fiscal year 1981 - 1982. If the House passes this, the  
government will have authority to spend money. It is a  
part then, in a sense, it is part of the main estimates.  
Now, the main estimates, the hon. gentleman, I think, would  
not dispute the fact that you are in the Committee of Supply  
when you are on the main estimates. If this is a

MR. W. MARSHALL: part of the main estimates surely it should be a Committee of Supply. I would rather think -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Standing Order 46.

MR. W. MARSHALL: Standing Order 46?

MR. E. ROBERTS: Standing Order (inaudible).

MR. W. MARSHALL: As I say, I do not think the sun, moon and stars are going to fall one way or the other, but I do think that procedure is important, 'If any motion is made in the House for public aid or a charge upon the people, the consideration debate thereof may not be presently entered upon but shall be adjourned until such further day as the House thinks fit to appoint;' - is that the one the hon. -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Go on and finish it, the next verse.

MR. W. MARSHALL: - 'and then it shall be referred to a Committee of the Whole House, before any resolution or vote of the House do pass thereon'. I acknowledge that wording, Mr. Chairman, but I would submit that the Committee of the Whole determines really that you sit as a whole Committee of the House. Now I mean, I shall say no more. The point is an important point from a technical point of view, but as far as we are concerned, I do not think the sun, moon and stars are fastened to it.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, the parliamentary procedure is rather arcane and wonderful to behold, I am sure to the general public and, I think, to ourselves in many respects. But one point about it, not only do we go by what is in our Standing Rules or in the rules of other Legislatures or in the textbooks, but we also go by our own traditions. And I suggest that this is one of the difficulties we are dealing with here. At one time we did have this running in and out from the Chair -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

DR. J. COLLINS: If the hon. member opposite would like to listen, he brought up this point, I think he should have the courtesy to listen to other points of view when this same matter is being discussed.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

DR. J. COLLINS: At one time we used to run in and out of the Chair to the Committee and back and forth. And the House in its wisdom elected to short circuit what was a rather foolish procedure. And whereas it is technically correct to say that a resolution must be put up - it is referred to a Committee of the Whole House, then it is referred back to the Speaker, and then the Committee of Supply is set up - while that is technically correct, it was decided that once the Chairman got into the Chair in Committee of the Whole, the committee then deemed itself to be in Committee of Supply. And then we went on and not only considered the resolution, but we also considered the measure which was a measure to grant supply to Her Majesty. So the House sets its own rules and has a right to set its own rules; the House deemed itself having done this to be in Committee of Supply.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Chairman, a very brief comment.

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

MR. E. ROBERTS: The House does set its own rules. The House is master of its own rules. But the hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), without realizing it, I suggest, has just evoked a very dangerous document. Now he is not the one to tell us about traditions in the House. There are some around who had been here long before he has and will be here long after he is gone. He is the minister who stands as the man who last year his entire supply procedure was illegal, and it would have been turned down except we ratified it afterwards in the House.

MR. ROBERTS: But he will have to admit that, that the entire procedure was unlawful and improper according to our rules.

The point I am trying to make is that the rules are the rules. Now if we want to change them there is a procedure for changing.

DR. COLLINS: We did change them.

MR. ROBERTS: We have not chanced them on this, Sir. The rules are here in this House. And the Minister of Finance, just because he does not know what the rules are, can hardly suggest that we should change them. If he wants to chance them, there is a procedure. Short of that, Sir, the quickest way I can think of to destroy this House, and the one thing which I know Your Honour would never permit, is a neglect or an ignoring of the rules. You know, Your Honour has political differences with us, and we do not always accept Your Honour's rulings either - we accept them, we do not always agree with them, of course not - but the fact remains Your Honour is duty bound, and I know Your Honour will ensure that the rules are followed. We may differ as to what they may mean.

But the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) you know - well, I will debate with him a little later. Really it is -

AN HON. MEMBER: A question of degree.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, the minister was incorrect, yes. The minister was incorrect in that the rules are, we are debating a money resolution. We are not debating estimates, Sir, we are debating a resolution that a certain bill - it is no different than the resolution which precedes the Loan and Guarantee Act, which in due course will come in, which precedes the Annual Loan Act that comes in. If Your Honour finds that we are going into Committee of Supply - and I do not know what Your Honour is going to find - if your Honour finds that, then this House cannot go ahead on supply this day because there is no Committee of Supply on the Order Paper. The motion notice of which was given as set forth in the Order Paper is to move that the House resolve itself in the Committee of the Whole to consider certain resolutions. That is not the Committee on Supply. The Committee on Supply goes on the Order Paper in due course.

Now, I do not want to go and I think the case is crystal clear, but let us be sure what it is; then we will know.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. the minister.

DR. COLLINS: Can I just have one quick word? It seems to me that the difference of opinion we have here is whether the House did make that decision previously, i.e., that once the Committee of the Whole sat then deemed itself to be in Committee of Supply and we go on with supply, you know, that is a question that can be settled by referring to Hansard. Well, if that is incorrect, well obviously we have to go the way the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (E. Roberts) said. I suggest that it is correct, but one might see by looking up Hansard. Now, if that is correct, if that is a fact, I think the difference of opinion now is whether that established a tradition or a precedent



DR. COLLINS: in this House, and my proposition is that it did establish a precedent. Once that fact is verified, the point I am making is that the House then establish that precedent and we go on with that precedent.

Now, the hon. member opposite is either questioning that that fact is so or, if he is not questioning that, he is questioning whether the House established a precedent at that point in time, and that is a difference of opinion between us.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): I thank all hon. members for their submissions. I think what is a little bit confusing—and, I might add, to the Chair as well—is whether we are in Committee of Supply or in Committee of the Whole. And of course that is going to determine the amount of time each member will have to speak on this. So if you do not mind, I will just take a very brief recess to clarify that point, come back almost immediately, give a ruling and we will proceed.

RECESS

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): I have had a chance to review Hansard of last year, and, while I realize that there is some confusion about this matter, the Chair will certainly undertake now to have some work done on it to clear it up somewhat. But there is a precedent set from last year in which the Chairman ruled at that time that Interim Supply would be debated under Standing Order 117 (5); that is, the Minister introducing the bill will have 15 minutes, and the member immediately responding would have 15 minutes; each and every other member, 10 minutes.

MR. ROBERTS: In that case it is wrong.

MR. CHAIRMAN(Butt): That is a precedent that is set and that is -

MR. ROBERTS: A precedent does not overrule the rules.

MR. CHAIRMAN: My interpretation right now, and having that precedent, that is the rules we will follow.

MR. ROBERTS: But, Your Honour, precedent does not overrule the rules. The rules are clear.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have made a ruling.

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour, all I can do is appeal it. I am reluctant to, but I feel so strongly it is wrong, supported by my friend from Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms), I move we appeal the ruling of the Chair.

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. CHAIRMAN: As you wish.

MR. ROBERTS: No. Well, the rules are the only protection that anybody in this House has. Precedents do not overrule the rules.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is moved and seconded that the Committee rise to have the Chairman's decision appealed.

MR. ROBERTS: It does not need to be moved and seconded, Your Honour, Your Honour automatically rises the Committee - automatically.

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

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Speaker, my ruling with regard to the procedure we should follow in debating Interim Supply has been challenged by the hon.the member for the Strait of Belle Isle(Mr. Roberts), seconded by the hon. the member for Grand Bank(Mr. Thoms).

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): My understanding of the procedure, then, is that the ruling by the Chair during Committee stage has been appealed to the Speaker as the references provide for.

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour -

MR. SPEAKER: If I may, before I recognize the hon. member, I would like to say that I have heard a fair amount of the debate from the precincts of the House in my office and I do not believe it is necessary to have a lot of debate, but I would like to hear a further point, perhaps, from each side.

The hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Your Honour, I was going to say that my understanding is there can be no debate on the question of a ruling. The Chairman made a ruling which I challenged; I do not think it is in order for any comments to be made.

MR. MARSHALL: That is correct.

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry?

MR. MARSHALL: That is correct, Mr. Speaker. I think the procedure is there is no debate -

MR. ROBERTS: That is right.

MR. MARSHALL: - and what Your Honour does, Your Honour says that the motion is that the -

MR. ROBERTS: Ruling be upheld.

MR. MARSHALL: - ruling of the Chairman of Committee be upheld. It is put to a vote without debate.

MR. ROBERTS: It is not often my friend from St. John's East (Mr. Marshall) and I agree, but we do agree on that. There is no procedure for that.

MR. ROBERTS: Now, what I was going to say, quite simply, Your Honour, is that in view of the importance of this I wonder if it might be permissible for the matter to stand and let us go on back to Committee. I do not care if we agree to do it for ten minutes, but the point, as Your Honour picked it up outside, is that whether the rules of this House, which, there is a submission, are clear on the point, have, apparently been altered by some precedent and I do not think that is the sort of thing that should be dealt with lightly. All I am suggesting is that Your Honour might wish to have overnight on it and perhaps even invite comment. Your Honour is at liberty to do that. There is no debate. You know, the motion is simply that the appeal be upheld. It will be done on a partisan vote, the government will have its way, fair enough! But we are talking about more than the government having its way, Sir, we are talking about a matter going to the very heart of the operation of this House.

MR. MARSHALL: I think the hon.  
Chairman -

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

MR. MARSHALL: - Mr. Speaker,

MR. MARSHALL: here we are, debating. I think the hon. Chairman of the Committee had already indicated when he gave his ruling that it was something the Chair was going to take under advisement in any event, and was going to, you know, research a bit more. But, Mr. Speaker, at the present stage where we are now, is that the Chairman of Committee's ruling has been appealed, and I think the motion has to go now and what the Chair does afterwards—the Chair will have to, I know, consult the various authorities.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): That being the case, and obviously that is understood by everybody in the House, the ruling has been appealed. Shall the ruling of the Chair be upheld? Those in favour, 'Aye'?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. SPEAKER: Contrary, 'Nay'?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Nay.

MR. SPEAKER: Carried.

The motion is that I do now leave the Chair.

Committee of Supply.

MR. CHAIRMAN(Butt): The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, I think it is well understood now that we are debating a resolution and the resolution refers to a measure. It says it is expedient to introduce a measure. Now all hon. members have before them the document which that word refers to. The measure in effect is the bill, Bill 60, which is 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." This particular bill is an Interim Supply Bill. In other words, it is money that will be voted for the upcoming fiscal year and therefore this bill, if it is accepted by the House and passed by the House,

DR. COLLINS: will come into affect on the first day of the new fiscal year, that is April 1, 1981. And the intent and the effect of the bill if it is accepted is to allow government to fund its programmes and activities for an interim period until the Budget and the estimates that flow from the Budget will come into affect sometime later in the year and fund government's operations for the whole twelve months of the new fiscal year. So this Interim Supply Bill is designed to get us over that intervening period which occurs from the end of this fiscal year until the final acceptance by the House of the main estimates. We are predicting that that might be as long as three months, so we are asking the Committee and subsequently the House to accept this Interim Supply Bill for a three month period. Now attached to the bill itself is a schedule which gives the head of expenditure for the various departments and arms of government and gives an amount of money which we are requesting for each of these departments and arms of the government for this three month period, that is, until the end of June. The total amount is in the aggregate of \$448,400,000 and that, as I mentioned, applies for the three month period. Hon. members may recall that last year we asked for authority to spend on an interim basis just under \$300 million, it was \$299,950,000, but that was for a two month period and on this occasion we are asking for a three month period because we anticipate that it might be until the end of June before we can be assured that the main estimates as passed. Now the Interim Supply request is essentially for ongoing expenditures, that is, expenditures which apply to programmes and activities which are already in place and these need to be funded on a continuing basis or obviously the people of this Province would not be well served.

DR. COLLINS:

That is the usual thrust of the Interim Supply Bill and that is the main thrust in this Supply Bill. But the administration is permitted to also fund a number of new projects on Interim Supply as long as this is clearly brought to the attention of the Committee, and subsequently to the House, and we have also done that in this Interim Supply Bill.

And I might mention these now: These are the new programmes which are not ongoing and which are not committed. These are new, uncommitted programmes. In the Department of Transportation, under the heading entitled Improvement and Construction, we are requesting an additional \$8 million. There are \$5,400,000 already committed. We do have the authority of the House from previously and those, therefore, are ongoing commitments. This will be \$8 million of new commitments that we are requesting be funded for this interim period.

Similarly, under the heading entitled Bridges, we are asking for an additional \$500,000. There are already commitments in place for \$1,200,000. We are asking for new commitments to be permitted to the sum of \$500,000. In the same department, under the heading entitled Machinery, we are asking for new commitments to the extent of \$3 million. So that is in Transportation, those three types of new commitment.

In the Department of Rural, Northern and Agricultural Development, there are also a number of new projects that we are requesting funding for. In total they amount to \$1 million and they are the headings of Refrigeration, Depot Furnishings and Equipment, and Depot Buildings. I might mention, Mr. Chairman, that those commitments in the Department of

DR. COLLINS: Rural, Northern and Agricultural Development are all contingent on the signing of the Native People's Agreement. If that agreement is not signed in the interim period, between now and the end of June, of course, that money will not be spent. But if that agreement is signed, it would be important to get on with those particular projects as soon as possible. There will be cost sharing if that agreement is signed so that this will be the expenditure- \$1 million. There will be countervailing revenues coming in.

MR. NEARY: \$900,000 coming back.

DR. COLLINS: No, not \$900,000; I think they are usually about 70 per cent, they vary a little bit.

MR. NEARY: Ninety/ten in communities that are 90 per cent Indian or Eskimo.

DR. COLLINS: No, I think it is 75/25, and in the other ones I think it is 60/40. I think it works out at about 70 per cent on the average.

MR. NEARY: Ninety/ten.

DR. COLLINS: So that is all I wish to say at this time, Mr. Chairman. I do have details available for hon. members if any particular heading is questioned, or any further information is required. And I would now move that this resolution be accepted and that the bill subsequent thereto be sent back to the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. the member for Lapoile.



MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to say that our Finance critic, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (E. Roberts), is presently in the Speaker's Office discussing this very serious ruling, this very serious precedent that has been set in the House. And hon. members will recall last year we had a vicious row over the same thing and I believe we appealed the Speaker's ruling then, I am not quite sure. But anyway, it does not make any difference whether we did or we did not, we were overruled and the majority carried. And Mr. Chairman, the only thing I can say is that I hope the matter is rectified because otherwise, with the attitude of the President of the Council (W. Marshall), the attitude that he has had so far of trying to muzzle the Opposition, trying to muzzle debate, restrict debate in this House, that if the hon. gentleman keeps it up he is going to destroy the House of Assembly.

MR. HANCOCK: Destroy democracy.

MR. NEARY: Obviously the government does not see any need for the House and the only reason the House is here, Mr. Chairman, I might say, the only reason it is here is to pass estimates, to debate and pass estimates. And the President of the Council, the government, a couple of years ago moved the estimates off the floor of the House altogether. And this session they are restricting debate, they called the Throne Speech two days a week to try to stop any momentum from the Opposition.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we feel that the government should not have interim supply because they are not competent to handle this amount of money. \$448 million, I figure, is about - what? - one third of the Budget, one third.

DR. COLLINS: It is for a three month period.

MR. NEARY: It is one third of the Budget.  
Roughly one third.

DR. COLLINS: It is for three months.

MR. NEARY: For three months. Obviously,  
Mr. Chairman, we are going to have a late Budget. It would appear  
from the Interim Supply Bill that we are going to have a late  
Budget. We are already told that the construction industry  
is chaotic, in chaos. The construction industry this year  
is going to be a disaster.

MR. HANCOCK: I know them now who are going to  
declare bankruptcy, right now.

MR. NEARY: My hon. friend to my right here  
just reminded me that an awful lot of companies have gone  
bankrupt. I look at the Dunn and Brad report every week in this Province,  
companies are going bankrupt every day. I would predict, Mr.  
Chairman, that this will be a record year for bankruptcies in  
this Province. 1981 will be a record year. This year will  
surpass 1980 because, Mr. Chairman, as hon. members know the  
economy of this Province depends largely on government spending  
and because of lack of government spending in the last couple  
of years, not only do we have record unemployment in Newfound-  
land, the construction workers out of jobs, but we have com-  
panies that are being forced into bankruptcy.

And I would submit, Mr. Chairman,  
that it is going to get worse. Mr. Chairman, it is going to  
get worse and therefore I submit, Mr. Chairman, that this govern-  
ment is not fit to have interim supply. I think the right  
thing for the government to do, the honourable and decent thing  
for them to do, is to not ask for interim supply but for the  
Premier of this Province to go down to the Lieutenant-Governor,  
hand in his resignation and have a general election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: That would be the decent and honourable thing to do, Mr. Chairman. They are not fit to have a half a billion dollars, almost \$500 million. And I would also further submit, Mr. Chairman, that the reason we are going to have a late Budget is because of the confrontation that the Premier and his ministers have with Ottawa. They have not been able to determine yet how much money we are going to get for DREE agreements in this Province, how much money we are going to get for DREE spending, for DREE roads in this Province, all because of the silly, foolish, childish behaviour of the Premier of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: There is only one agreement right now ready to be signed and that is the Coastal Labrador agreement. Not one other agreement.

Mr. Pepin was down here the other day, his second trip in less than three months, his second trip to Newfoundland, plus the fact that he had sent his officials down on numerous occasions, seven or eight occasions, and has not been able to get any sense out of this government. They have not been able to tell the Government of Canada where their priorities lie. The meeting the other day was a complete waste of time. The Minister of Transportation (Mr. Brett) in this Province had nothing to offer.

There are no negotiations with the Government of Canada. There are no agreements. I challenged the Premier yesterday in the House to produce an agreement that he told the whole world and told the House, the news media, and I presume the people of Newfoundland through the media, that the Trans-Labrador agreement was ready to

MR. NEARY: be signed, immediately when he made that statement I went out and I called DREE and DREE said there is no agreement.

MR. MARSHALL: There is a proposal.

MR. NEARY: There is a proposal, but there is no agreement. A proposal, a proposal. I mean there is a wish list.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) agreement.

MR. NEARY: There is the Minister of Transportation's (Mr. Brett) wish list. And that is all they have in Ottawa, a wish list with about ten or a dozen items on the list.

MR. MARSHALL: Not so.

MR. NEARY: And there have been no negotiations. I checked again this morning with Ottawa. There have been no negotiations on the Trans-Canada Highway, on the Trans-Labrador Highway. And I have to say this, Mr. Chairman, as a result of the negligence of this government, the incompetence, and the ineptness of this government, that there will be no money included in the Federal Budget for the Trans-Canada Highway this year.

MR. MOORES: Now. Now.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Pepin came the other day and said 'Tell us, tell us Mr. Minister, tell us Mr. Provincial Government where your priorities are and then I will go back to Ottawa and we will allocate the funds.'

AN HON. MEMBER: Your time is up.

MR. THOMS: Oh, you are in a good seat there now.

MR. NEARY: The Government of Canada have said to the Provincial Government we will pay 50-50, 50-50 on a cost-shared programme to upgrade the Trans-Canada Highway. And this government have not even responded. They have not thought it worth their while to tell the Government of

MR. NEARY: Canada whether or not they wanted a 50-50 deal, which is better than nothing.

And so, Mr. Chairman, these are the real reasons why we are going to have a late Budget. And this is why I say that this government is not fit to have this half billion dollars they are asking for. It is a general election we should be having. And , Mr. Chairman, with all the impropriety that has been brought out in the last few days,

MR. NEARY: the incompetence of ministers, ministers signing petitions denouncing government policy, ministers abusing their ministerial authority, Mr. Chairman, and nothing done about it, the Premier just brushing it aside, bringing in another Ministerial Statement saying, 'Oh, yes, we are going to forgive him for this now. We forgave the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) when he was Minister of Transportation. We have forgiven him.' Made a statement saying, 'Yes, we will forgive him. We will forgive the Minister of Manpower. We will forgive the Minister of Transportation but we will make a statement that we are not going to tolerate it in the future.' That is the new strategy of the Premier.

Well, there was a gentleman out there who thought this matter was important enough to write a poem about it and he sent me the poem. I do not know who the author is. Mr. Chairman, I have to read the poem. It is called The Gang Of Four, author unknown. We thought it was only China who could claim a gang of four/ But to our great amazement Newfoundland has four./ There is Jerry Dinn and Charlie Brett/ They are ministers in the Cabinet/ Dr. Paddy and Dr. Hugh /they are also mixed up in it too/ The petition they signed for the CCT/ was to tell the Premier they disagree /with government policy that is unfair/ to workers who are on strike out there/ Dr. Collins who is in Finance/ says he cannot take a chance/ To give them more than eight per cent/ for fear of causing discontent/ with workers who got a raise in pay/ Of eight per cent the other day/ And so we have the gang of four /who want to give the workers more/ Oh what a government have we/ that cannot find reason to agree/ to settle strikes and give men work/ but would instead its duty shirk/ Its time we come to realize/ that they are not men but only boys/ in whose hands now rest our fate/ Oh pity now my ship of state.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the author of that poem never stated truer words in his life. The Province is in the

MR. NEARY: hands of a group of schoolboys.

MR. WARREN: The Premier acted like it today, sure.

MR. NEARY: And the Premier is beginning to act like it in the House, as my hon. friend reminded me. He now steps outside of his desk, lectures the House like a school teacher. He cannot forget his old profession.

MR. CARTER: What is wrong with being a teacher?

MR. NEARY: There is nothing wrong with it except the Premier, when he was teaching, was never in a position of authority. He never had to fire anybody. That is why he cannot fire the Minister of Manpower (Mr. Dinn) and the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Brett).

MR. WARREN: That will be going though, they will be going.

MR. NEARY: But they will be going in due course. But, Mr. Chairman, another reason why the government should not have this interim supply is because of the labour trouble and strife that they have caused in this Province and because of the policy of strike breaking that they are pursuing. No doubt in this Interim Supply Bill, Mr. Chairman, is some money for the College of Trades and Technology.

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): Order, please!

I have to interrupt the hon. member for just a minute while the Speaker comes in to announce the Late Show.

MR. NEARY: Oh. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): It being five o'clock I can now inform the House that I have received notice of two motions for debate at five-thirty when a motion to adjourn will be deemed to be before the House.

Notice first of all was given by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) arising out of a question asked the hon. the Premier and the subject matter is ministers' conflict of interest. And the second notice is given by the hon. member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) arising out of a question

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 692

IB-3

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): asked the hon. Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) and the subject matter is the St. Lawrence bait holding depot.



MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: I presume I can start my fifteen minutes over again, Mr. Chairman.

MR. THOMS: You are already there, Sir.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes, I think so.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. NEARY: Oh, yes.

MR. BARRY: The hon. gentleman was interrupted (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. THOMS: Wait until the next election is called, we will show you (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Check the rules. Anyway, we feel that this government, Mr. Chairman, is on a disaster course. We feel that their confrontation politics have done Newfoundland an awful lot of damage in the last couple of years. We feel that their lack of dialogue, their lack of liaison with the Government of Canada has cost us literally millions of dollars, left in Ottawa, that Ottawa wants to spend in this Province and they cannot get the co-operation of the provincial government. The Premier's attitude towards Confederation is making an awful lot of people in Newfoundland nervous. As a matter of fact, it is making people right across Canada nervous. The Premier's statements, for instance, that he made in Montreal about taking Newfoundland out of Confederation - 'Newfoundland should hold a referendum to consider separating from Canada' - made an awful lot of people in this Province nervous. I only wish that he would follow through with his referendum, Mr. Chairman, and let us put it to a vote. Now, I have fifteen minutes. I will have any number of ten minute speeches that I want to make. I am only just getting warmed up but before I take my seat I still have three minutes.

I want to talk about the great lie, the great lie that is being pushed in this House and pushed in this Province, and I am amazed, Mr. Chairman, amazed

MR. NEARY: that the editorial writers in this Province have not exposed this great lie, this great deceit that we see day in and day out in this hon. House about a corridor across the Province of Quebec to transmit Newfoundland hydro power to the State of New York. Now, the Premier of the Province wrote the Prime Minister of Canada on two or three occasions about this matter. My God, Mr. Chairman, it would make you sick to your stomach when you hear members get up, like we heard yesterday, and say that the Prime Minister and the Government of Canada have ignored this matter. Well, let us see how much they have ignored it. On October the 20th - this is from the Prime Minister's office - the Prime Minister wrote the Premier of this Province, 'October the 20th, 1980, My dear Premier: This is in response to your letter of September the 24th, 1980, in which you reiterated your concerns about the federal government's willingness to use its constitutional authority to ensure the passage of Newfoundland electricity/energy through Quebec. In my letter of July the 29th, 1980,' the Prime Minister says, 'to you I indicated' - listen to this, Mr. Chairman, 'I indicated that the federal government stood ready to act if it could be clearly demonstrated that the exportation of electricity from Newfoundland was, in fact, being prevented by Quebec.'

MR. BARRY: We have shown him that.

MR. NEARY: You showed who that?

MR. BARRY: We have shown the Prime Minister.

MR. NEARY: I have it here what you showed the Prime Minister, the letter from the Premier -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: He says to the Premier of this Province -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 693

GS - 3

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt):

Order, please! Order, please!

The hon. member has about thirty  
seconds left.

MR. NEARY:

Well, I have thirty seconds to  
read the last part of this paragraph and I will read the  
whole letter and the Premier's letters when I get up later  
on, 'This

MR. NEARY: is, as you will recall, the Prime Minister says to the Premier, 'This is, as you will recall also the essence of my comments to you when we discussed the matter at the recent Conference of First Ministers on the Constitution.' Now, does that sound like a government that is willing to sit idly by and not help Newfoundland get a corridor across the Province of Quebec?

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!  
The hon. member's time has expired.

The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Chairman, members on each side can get up any number of times. I could wait until all members have spoken and give any information that is required, but the hon. member who just sat did not ask for any information. He made a number of statements and I suppose it is required of me to make some answers to them.

AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS: The first point he brought out was about the difficulty we just ran through, and that he wanted to get this clarified so that the House would proceed in an orderly fashion. Well, what we have just gone through is not so much to do with how the House works, it is just really a nit picking thing. The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (E. Roberts) could not see the wood for the trees and he came in with a sort of nit picking type of thing that had no real impact in how the House does its business and we wasted, I would say, a half to three quarters of an hour doing something that was entirely unnecessary.

The hon. member for LaPoile (S. Neary) also mentioned about a late Budget. He did not say what he meant, you know, later than what? I do not know what he means by a late Budget. I informed the House that this week I

DR. COLLINS: would hope to give, if possible, a firm date. I said around the middle of the week or thereabouts. If the hon. member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) wishes to question me, I would like him to be accurate. If you go back to Hansard, I said, by Wednesday or thereabouts, I would hope to give a firm date. Well, this is thereabouts, this is Thursday. I would suggest this is thereabouts Wednesday. And I did not say I would give it, I said I would hope to give it. I am not in a position now to give the firm date. I can tell hon. members that the Budget will be brought down before the middle of April but the mechanisms are such that I am not at this point in time ready to give the precise day but I should shortly be able to give that. Hopefully, after the weekend I can give the precise day but it will be before the middle of April.

Now, the hon. member for LaPoile (S. Neary) said that this is going to be a very difficult year for the construction industry. If that is true, it has got nothing to do with the date the Budget is coming down. The Budget date, whether it is early or late, has got nothing to do with it. I will tell you what it has to do with, if it is a poor year for construction, is due to a number of things such as the difficulty we have had in getting DREE agreements. If you compare last year's construction related to DREE agreements with what we can see in prospect at this point in time, there is a very marked difference and it is not been our slowness in trying to put DREE agreements in place. Again, the Opposition have so few substantial points to debate that they engage in nit picking again.

DR. COLLINS: The hon. member for LaPoile (S.Neary) yesterday nit picked about whether there is an agreement in place. We have proposals to the Federal Government. You cannot have an agreement unless the other side responds to a proposal. We cannot put an agreement in place all by ourselves. It takes two to make an agreement like it takes two to tango. We cannot even start negotiations if the other side does not negotiate. We have put in proposals. We have stated we are ready to negotiate. We are not getting any response from the other side, hence there are no negotiations, not because of our doing but because the other side is not doing. We have proposals in, we do not have agreements; not because we are not doing our side of it, it is because the other side are not doing their side of it.

These are just nit picking points that are brought up by our friends opposite. Similarly, if the construction industry is going to be in difficulty, it is because certain major projects that are vital to the future of this Province are not going ahead at the speed they should because we do need the co-operation of the Federal Government and we on this side do not hesitate to state that, that we often need the co-operation of the Federal Government. I thought that was what Canada was all about. There would be no point in being part of Canada if you could not co-operate with the central authority. If the central authority is trying to hold this country together, if they are trying to do their part and we are trying to do our part, there must be a co-operative attitude. We are striving for a co-operative attitude with the central authority and we want a co-operative attitude from them over the Lower Churchill development.

If the Lower Churchill development went ahead, it would change on its own the face of this Province. We are looking

DR. COLLINS: for them in terms of co-operation over the fishery. If the Northern cod stock question was settled, which is being held up through federal intransigency, we would be very much further ahead in terms of the whole economic activity along the Northeast coast of this Province and in other areas also, which would spin off into areas such as construction. We are looking to the federal government for co-operation in the confirmation of our offshore rights. This would also exacerbate and extend the activities offshore which would have very direct spin-off effects on shore, which would have beneficial effects for the construction industry.

So if there is a downturn in the construction industry, it is easy to find where the block is, where the obstruction is. It is certainly not because of the date of the budget.

The hon. member also rather facetiously said that the administration presently in power is not fit to handle this size budget. I would just like to mention for the hon. member's edification that when we recently floated a bond issue in Europe, that at the same time there were issues being floated by a European country - if I remember correctly it was Ireland - there was also a bond issue being floated by a very large industrial concern, it was DuPont, and there was also another province there, a much larger province than the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, it was our sister province, Quebec. I might point out, and this can be readily verified, our issue was much more acceptable and, indeed, sold better than those other three issues that I mentioned -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS: - and that can only be so if the investors have confidence in the issuer. I

DR. COLLINS: would suggest it does not indicate that we are incompetent to handle the type of money that we are referring to here.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member brought up a number of other points. I do not think I need to go into them all, but I will just make this one point: He suggested in a round-about way that we may be strike breaking. Now, I do not know exactly what he refers to there. I do not know if he refers to our not putting in place a different offer. You know, it is difficult to see how that could be termed strike breaking. I do not know if he is referring to our putting in people, maintenance workers to make sure that the buildings do not come to harm or whatever. I mean, the government, surely, would be failing its responsibilities, if because a number of workers take what is their democratic right to not work and to picket an institution, if government just stood by then and did not protect the assets of this Province - I do not see how that can be termed strike breaking.

I will tell you there is some breaking going on, or some attempt at breaking going on, it is not strike breaking, there is an attempt to break certain contracts which are in place for related workers to those who are on strike, contracts, I might add, that were not looked on favourably by the union and by the union executive, but which, against the wishes of the union and executive, were looked upon with great favour and accepted by workers in the public service. Now, I suggest that if there is any breaking going on, it is not our strike breaking, there may be an attempt to break contracts freely and actively entered into by employees in the public service.



March 26, 1981, Tape 695, Page 3 -- apb

MR. CHAIRMAN(Butt):

for LaPoile.

The hon. the member

MR. NEARY:

'Ed'?

Do you want to get up,

MR. ROBERTS:

word or two, if my friend would yield.

Well, let me say a

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Yield. The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Whereon we only have ten exciting minutes, ordinarily that would not be enough, but to deal with what the minister said of any substance one or two minutes would be enough. Let me deal with an issue that intrigues me. The minister was boasting as to how well accepted our issue was in Europe and I am delighted to hear that. I think that is splendid news. I do not know, I do not keep track of these things, I am not in a financial position where I am going to buy any issues of this government or any other government for that matter. My financial relations with government, particularly in April month, tend to be the other way around, I am sending a cheque into them. But I wonder if the minister could tell us the relative terms of the issues by the province of Quebec, by the Province of Newfoundland, by the European country to which we referred? I believe he referred to the government of Eire, to the government of Ireland, the twenty-six countries and he referred to an American firm, as I heard him, Dupont, a very large firm. I am just interested to know what were the terms of them in all the things that go on? What were the basis points? What was the temporal term or were there any convertibility, any renewability features and so forth? Because even the minister would understand, I am sure, and given the fact that he would understand it, it is obvious it is a very simple concept indeed, that he should compare apples and apples.

DR. COLLINS: I am a very simple fellow.

MR. ROBERTS: I am sorry.

DR. COLLINS: I am a very simple fellow.

MR. ROBERTS: Yes I agree the minister is a very simple fellow. In fact, there are those who feel the minister is a simpleton. But he is a very simple fellow and I just want to ask quite straightforwardly if he will give us the figures? It is all very well to say-and I am glad to hear our issues are selling. Given the government's borrowing needs we have got to sell issues. And while he is so forthcoming with the information, I wonder if he would also tell us about something I have been hearing from time to time, around and about, that the government are becoming abnormally slow in paying their bills.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: In fact I understand, I hear from constituents, I hear from others that six, eight, ten, twelve, fourteen months are going by and accounts are outstanding, that businesses who supply services to the government or who sell goods to the government find that their bills are not being paid promptly. The government is very quick, and properly so, to collect the taxes due to them all except the eleven or twelve million dollars in SSA that seems to be consistently and continually outstanding. Some of it I suspect the same money, some of it new debts being incurred. I wonder if the minister could tell us as well, when the time comes, about that? Now, the minister in an example of his nit picking accused us of nit picking and I do not want to pick nits nor do I wish to pick knots with the minister. My friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) raised a very important issue. I realize it probably went over the minister's head, that is the problem. But my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary)-I will sit down in a minute or two and my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) will have another go at it. I hope to be able to participate in

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 696

AH-3

MR. ROBERTS: this debate tomorrow. It will be going on tomorrow and probably on Monday and Tuesday and Thursday and Friday of next week. We have only got seventy-five hours, Mr. Chairman, and we might as well use it up on this and anything else. Because, of course, the government's system is such that we have no other means of debate so we might as well use it up on this Interim Supply. We will have a look at it. We will caucus from time to time. It will depend on the minister's attitude. If the minister is halfway as intelligent and halfway as decent about it he will probably get his Interim Supply resolution through the House fairly quickly. If on the other hand he is not, then we may be in for a fairly long siege. But there are a number of important points I want to raise. I want to talk for awhile on these conflict of interests regulations or declarations which is all we have because the Premier's statement yesterday was good as far as it went but it did not go very far because there were more holes in it than there are in a cod net, a fish net, a trawl or a trap. It is filled with holes. And I will make some suggestions that I will commend to the Premier because I believe the Premier is genuinely trying to bring about what he perceives to be a very significant reform

March 26, 1981

Tape No. 697

RA- 1

MR. E. ROBERTS: and I perceive it as a reform. I am not sure how significant it is because I will say to the Premier that if there are thieves and crooks in the world and if some of them happen to end up in Cabinet or in the public service or in the House, no rules written will prevent them. I mean we have the Criminal Code - What is it? - I suppose eight hundred, I do not know, a thousand pages filled with things that are crimes and actions and so forth, that are crimes and, you know, the fact is it still does not prevent people from doing those things. What we have got to do is to try to get a workable system, a proper system. And I think the rules the Premier speaks of are noticeably lacking. I do not think this is any design on his part. I think it is just-again, his unwillingness to seek advice to take advice, to heed advice may have led him astray once again and I think there are some suggestions which I would make, I believe others of my colleagues wish to make them. We will have a look at that. I want to talk about the fishery as well because it is becoming glaringly obvious I think, Sir, around this Province that while this government may be concerned about the fishery-and I do not doubt they are bona-fides.- they are appallingly off base on what are the problems of the fishery. And there have been some excellent statements made by bodies and groups interested in the fishery and I think we should talk about those, because the real problem is the incomes which can be generated by the fishery, the number of men and women who can share in those incomes and the levels of them. The Minister of Fishery (Mr. Morgan) has consistently missed the point, so consistently that I wonder if he is not perhaps doing it deliberately.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. E. ROBERTS: Because it do not matter how

MR. E. ROBERTS: many fish plants we license, if there is no fish to go through them that does not help anybody, We could have a fish plant on every stage head in the Province but if there is no fish-and that is not a jurisdictional question. I mean whether it is owned here or in Ottawa, there is a finite amount of fish that can be taken out of the ocean. There could be some argument as to whether some should go to Nova Scotia or not. That is a valid argument that should be look at and examined on its merits. A number of us as well, Mr. Chairman, want to talk about education, about the fact that is now emerging publicly and, I suggest, was probably well known to ministers before but now becoming public, that the educational authorities in this Province without exception, if memory does not fail me, without exception are questioning Grade XII, not the idea of Grade XII, no, we are all for it, everybody is for it, but questioning the fact that the government is introducing Grade XII and that that is going to mean a diminution, a neglecting of the already inadequate services. So what we are going to have instead of eleven tolerable grades, is twelve inadequate grades. That is the fear that is being expressed and authorities are now going public. And I do not pretend to be an expert on education. I went through school a number of ways, a number of years, by guess and by golly a number of schools, but the fact remains that a number of authorities, and one must take them seriously, men like the reverend Brother Brennan a man who says ' We just cannot afford Grade XII', Father Foley, I believe it is, from the Burin Peninsula speaking for the school board down there, the Roman Catholic School Board -I do not know what those lovely notes are. Three minutes left. I appreciate the

March 26 , 1981

Tape No. 697

RA - 3

MR. E. ROBERTS: Chair's kindness in having notification sent to me. I do wish it would be - sometimes its five, sometimes its three sometimes its one. It is more fun, really, than shooting fish in barrel to try to anticipate what is in those notes.

MR. ROBERTS: The point is that educational authorities are becoming very seriously concerned and they are expressing it publicly. And that is not a matter of partisan debate, it is a matter to be taken very seriously when the NTA have made similar statements, as I understand it, Mr. Shortall, their president.

MR. HISCOCK: When this is over they will ask her to resign.

MR. ROBERTS: When the school boards start expressing it publicly, the authorities start saying publicly, 'we cannot afford it, then I think it is time in this House we debated it. And the debate is not simply on the merits of Grade XII, the debate is on whether we can afford Grade XII. We already have, I am told, a very inadequate system now.

I know in my own constituency there is school after school with no gymnasium facilities, no adequate laboratory facilities, no adequate library facilities and now we are having an extra grade lumped in. And we had the other day -

MR. HISCOCK: No showers.

MR. ROBERTS: - the spectacle of the Premier's own constituents coming forward and saying, 'we cannot' - you know, 'We are looking for more money' and the Premier taking refuge, as his predecessors on both sides have, in saying 'Well, the DEC's decide, and so they do, The DEC's carve up only the piece of cake which is given to them by the government, it is the government which decides the size of the piece of cake.

So I would say to the minister there are a number of important issues that we will be - I will only sketch them, only beginning, and we will be talking about them, this is a good place to begin. Whether we have ten



MR. ROBERTS: or twenty minutes, Sir, I assure you we on this side, I think, have the ability to conform with the rules and the ingenuity to ensure that the rules serve the purpose which they are meant to. The oldest rule of the book, Sir, is there is no supply without redress of grievances. Well, we have a few grievances and we are going to seek redress.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, the first speaker on the Opposition side got up and said that he did not want to approve interim supply, the four hundred and forty-eight-odd million dollars in interim supply, because of the record unemployment in the Province, and he obviously is not listening or he is not attending or he is not hearing what is going on in the House. And I think it is a terrible insult to his federal counterparts, the Stats Canada group who put them out every month and try to inform the hon. member. He does not seem to want to listen or if he does listen he does not understand, and if he does understand he is not willing to accept.

So, Mr. Speaker, maybe I can go through some of the employment statistics or the unemployment statistics and inform the hon. member again. I will give it to him this time in maybe kindergarten language, he likes that. He liked the hon. Premier today speaking to him as a Kindergarten teacher. So today I will just go through some of the figures put out by Stats Canada and I will ask the hon. member not to insult his federal counterparts. I will go through them from point A to point C or point F, if he wants to. The population fifteen years of age and

MR. DINN: older is growing at an average growth of about 9,000 per year in this Province. Those are the people who are employed.

Mr. Speaker, the unemployment rate averaged over the year in 1978, was 16.4 per cent, in 1979 it was 15.5 per cent, in 1980 it was 13.7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, in the two months that we have had statistics for this year, it is lower than it has been for the past eight years. Now, Mr. Speaker, these are not my statistics. The hon. member may not like them, but they are Statistics Canada statistics.

Now, Mr. Speaker, outward and inward migration in 1969, which was the record year for Newfoundlanders leaving this Province -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DINN: - we had over 8,600 people move out of this Province because there were no jobs available. Last year, Mr. Speaker, - I will give it to him for the past three years - there were over 8,000 in 1969 moved out, no jobs.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who was in power then?

MR. DINN: Well, I am not going to get into that, that is the kind of politics that the hon. member opposite does not want to hear anyway. But I will give him some statistics for the past three years. There were 2,610 in 1977-1978; 1,872 in 1978-1979, and in 1979-1980, 1,018, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MOORES: What, out (inaudible).

MR. DINN: Outward.

MR. MOORES: Go away.

MR. DINN: Outward versus inward.

He does not like it, Mr. Speaker, I can understand the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Moores) not liking that, Mr. Speaker,

March 26, 1981

Tape 698

PK - 4

MR. DINN: he is going around preaching other things.  
He does not like what Statistics Canada puts out. Mr.  
Speaker, they have statistics now telling the hon. member  
if he wants to know, if he is interested in the facts,  
telling him exactly where they are going. So, Mr.  
Speaker, I am going to give it to him again

MR. DINN:

today. And every time they get up and talk about employment or unemployment I will be up again, they can guarantee that, I will be up again telling them what the statistics are saying.

Mr. Chairman, there is no problem with statistics. I am becoming, Mr. Chairman, an expert on statistics. Unemployment rate, employment rate, outward-inward migration, Mr. Chairman, any question hon. members want to get into all they have to do is ask because I can read Stats Canada every month they come out with their statistics. Now whether they are accurate or not I am not prepared to say. I certainly do not want to insult the hon. member's colleagues in Ottawa for what Stats Canada is doing. They are helping, they are assisting, they are trying to show us what kind of an employment or what kind of an unemployment rate we have here in this Province. Well, Mr. Chairman, I just indicated that the unemployment rate is going down year by year. It is going down at a rate of about 1500 per year over and above the growth in the labour force, over and above that, 1500 more every year. The hon. member does not like it. Ninety-five hundred jobs in 1979-1980. The hon. member does not like that. Ninety-five hundred jobs again this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DINN: Mr. Chairman, the hon. members do not like the facts. But the facts are the facts. Every time they stand up in this House and talk about employment or unemployment I am going to get up. In 1980 the employment rate was 46 per cent; not great but it is the greatest since 1966. That is as far back as I went. I went back to 1966, and 46 per cent, the employment rate, is the greatest since the figures that I can collect from Stats Canada indicate, 46 per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): Order, please!

MR. DINN: I will have more time, Mr. Chairman, some other time.

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): Order, please!

The time being five-thirty a motion to rise the Committee is in order.

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. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. BUTT: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered the matters to them referred, has made some progress and ask leave to sit again.

On motion report received and adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

It being five-thirty a motion to adjourn is deemed to be before the House. The first matter for debate raised by the hon. member for LaPoile is ministers conflict of interest.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the strategy that seems to be emerging, as being adopted by this Premier, is that everything starts from the time he makes a Ministerial Statement, that everything that happened before that has to be blotted, wiped off the record.

MR. LUSH: Unless it is the Liberals.

MR. NEARY: Except, of course, they can get back before 1972 to get at the Liberals. They jump over nine years of Tory corruption in this Province to get at the Liberals. And, Mr. Speaker, what amazes me more about it is that the editorial writers in this Province, not outside the Province, the editorial writers inside the Province have not taken the hon. gentleman to task for decisions that were made for things that went on in the Moores administration of which the hon. gentleman was a senior minister.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, you cannot, there is no way that the people of Newfoundland are going to be bluffed by statements that everything starts from the time that the Premier saw the light, from the time that the Premier reformed, from the time he testified and got saved. The hon. gentleman spent six or seven years with Mr. Moores. And I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that it was as a result of these six or seven years in the Moores' Administration that the hon. gentleman made the statement he made yesterday, and there was so much skulduggery, especially in the final days of the Moores Administration, that the hon. gentleman is scared that somebody is going to open up a can of worms. And that is why today, when I asked the gentleman a question about whether or not these things were going to be looked at, that he was so evasive. He completely

MR. NEARY: evaded the question. He was beside himself. We all hear the reports and the rumours about the land speculation, about ministers and the former Premier using their positions for their own advantage. We all know about, or hear the reports about ministers and the former Premier being in a breach of trust. We all know about the land that was bought in Bristol Hope and Harbour Grace and in Bay Roberts by the former Premier, 350 or 400 or 500 acres, bought while he was Premier. We all know about the land transaction down in Outer Cove and if you want to find out more about it, the Minister of Justice (G.Ottenheimer) wants to find out about it, he can go down to the Registry Office the same as I did and see about the transactions that were made between Mr. Moores and one of his ministers, who is a present minister in the Cabinet, land transactions that were not - that took place in 1973, that were not registered in the Registry Office until December of last year.

Why, Mr. Speaker, why were they not registered? Why were the deeds, the conveyances left there for six and seven years and not registered? And why were all these decisions made in the final days of Mr. Moores, some of them reversed by the present Premier, some of them not reversed? What about all these holding companies that were set up by Mr. Moores when he was Premier, not after he retired or resigned? Torngat Investments is a good example of that, where money is now pouring in from businesses that were doing business with the government at that time. A certain gentleman in this Province who has real estate interests and a helicopter company - and the Premier knows all about this, he has been told about it. The reports have reached his ears and he has not, Mr. Speaker, lifted a finger

MR. NEARY: to do anything about it. Mr. Clean, Mr. Honesty has not done anything about it. He has sat back and let the people of this Province be gouged and ripped off. And now he is trying to portray the impression that he is Mr. Honesty, Mr. Clean himself. The hon. gentleman knows what I am talking about and the hon. gentleman has two ministers sitting in his Cabinet right now who are practicing law, one representing the Bank of Montreal, which is the government's financial advisor. Now, if that is not a conflict of interest, I do not know what is.

And what about the ministers who have been playing the stock market for the last several years when the hon. gentleman was in the Cabinet? The hon. gentleman knows about that too. Made a mint, some of them made a mint off inside information they had while they were ministers in the Cabinet and the hon. gentleman is just going to let all that be swept aside, swept under the rug. He has cavorted with drunkards, he has cavorted with shysters and rogues -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Order, please!

his time has expired.

I have to advise the hon. member

The hon. the Premier.

MR. NEARY:

he has been saved, Mr. Speaker.

And now he tries to portray that

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD:

Mr. Speaker, the debate in this hon. House has reached a high level now, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you right now we are up in the clouds. We are in the valleys now as parliamentarians, as leaders of the Province, we are on the valleys now. We are demonstrating to the few people who are here in the Galleries now, who took the time this afternoon to come and listen to their leaders'



PREMIER PECKFORD: debate . We have heard now a very elevated speech from the member for LaPoile (S.Neary). We should all now be proud and the people in the Galleries. no doubt, have a greater respect for their leadership and their parliamentarians, after hearing the hon.member for LaPoile, than they had before.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: That is the way we are going to elevate politics in this Province -

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - is to throw slurs at other people who are not now present in the House, throw along innuendo to them, who are not here. If the hon. member for LaPoile has any accusations to make then let him make them outside this House-

MR. NEARY: I just did.

PREMIER PECKFORD: - Let him make them, let him name names, let him produce the evidence. There is a court system for the hon. member for LaPoile and he can use it.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: Let him go ahead. Let him not hide behind this House. Let him elevate his

PREMIER PECKFORD: language, let him lead, let him be a leader among men, let him represent the people of Lapoile, let him do his job for the people of Channel - Port aux Basques and for Isle aux Morts. Let him do all of that, Mr. Speaker. Let us not hear of this innuendo and trying to hint at people's names without actually naming them, who has not got the audacity and the intestinal fortitude to come forward and put out front what he says behind.

MR. NEARY: I named him (inaudible).

I named him.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Why disguise it in words?

Why disguise it in phrases?

MR. NEARY: Moores -

PREMIER PECKFORD: Ah, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: - Moores, M-o-o-r-e-s!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - ah, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: The hon. member for Lapoile (Mr. Neary) has lost his traditional support in Newfoundland, and he frets and he frets every day that goes by that, for some strange reason, the people of Newfoundland woke up and said, 'Boy, this member for Lapoile now, he is a former member for Bell Island who had to scare away from Bell Island and go to another district because he could not get elected where he was before'. This gentleman, who had all the so-called popular support around the Province, has lost his traditional support and he frets and he cries -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: - and he goes from the front bench to the back bench and he continues to fret and cry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: The poor, poor member for Lapoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: No matter what the member for Lapoile (Mr. Neary) may say on that score, Mr. Speaker, I shall not bow and stoop to the level of debate that the hon. member for Lapoile does. We are proud over here, Mr. Speaker, of the reforms that we have made and continue to make, and no matter what the member for Lapoile tries to do with his verbal venom it will not stop us from continuing the reforms. We will bring in a new Election Expenses Act and a new Election Act. We have introduced a split in the Department of Finance for a Comptroller General as well as a Deputy Minister of Finance. We have, at the time that the Auditor General's report was released, also released our own report giving our comments so that everybody would have the benefit, not only of the Auditor General's report, but of the Department of Finance and admissions, outward admissions that we must do better as a government in the running of this Province and in being efficient in spending the taxpayers' money. We will do these things and have done these things, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do it. And yesterday's announcement on additional regulations and guidelines, which will be tabled in this hon. House in the next couple of weeks, will show again additional reform measures that we make. No matter what the verbal venom from the member for Lapoile means, he has lost his support and he can fret and cry all he likes. We are still going to run this Province on the peaks and not in the valleys.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! Order, please!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The second matter for debate raised by the hon. member for Grand Bank is the St. Lawrence bait holding depot. The hon. member for Grand Bank.

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

I want to correct an impression left by the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) this afternoon in answering the question. He gave the impression that this was a matter, that it was not right or proper to bring before this House of Assembly. It is something on which I should have cornered the minister behind the curtain or telephoned him at his office. Now, Mr. Speaker,

MR. THOMS: let us look at some of the facts. I started talking to the minister and his department on March 4th. of 1980 in connection with this matter. Mr. Speaker, I had literally dozens upon dozens upon dozens of telephone calls to the minister's officials and to the minister in connection with this matter, dozens of them, none of which, Mr. Speaker, have been returned. Now, that is a statement of fact; none of them have been returned. Mr. Speaker, apart from all these telephone calls and speaking to the minister behind the curtain of this House or in the lobby or in the elevator or wherever I have been able to get his attention, apart from that, on February 10th. of this year I wrote the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) a fairly lengthy letter of two or three pages -

AN HON. MEMBER: The best Minister of Fisheries we ever had.

MR. THOMS: - pointing out to the Minister of Fisheries that he had made a commitment to me. If that is the best God help the worst that is over there.

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. THOMS: God help the worst.

Mr. Speaker, this minister made a commitment to me that he would visit the fishermen in the District of Grand Bank and particularly I wanted him to meet with the fishermen's committees from the area from Lamaline to St. Lawrence. I said to the Minister of Fisheries that I would take the responsibility of gathering these fishermen's committees into a central location so that he could meet them all at the one time and therefore only have to spend a few hours in the District of Grand Bank.

MR. HANCOCK: He would not do it or what?

MR. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, he accused me of bringing this matter up in the House when it should not have been brought up in the House, that I could accomplish more -

MR. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I am at the end of my tether as far as this particular matter is concerned. I wrote him on February 10th, I wrote him. He accuses me of not bringing the matter up or talking about it but on February 10th. I wrote him in connection with the meeting with the fishermen of the district and with the problem existing there in connection with the provincially owned bait depot.

Mr. Speaker, I have not had to this moment the courtesy of a reply from the Minister of Fisheries. I have not had a reply. And then the minister has the audacity to get up in this House and say that this is not the proper place to bring it. Mr. Speaker, this is the last resort as far as I am concerned. I have nowhere else to go on the matter.

MR. WARREN: Write the Premier. Write the Premier.

MR. THOMS: Now, Mr. Speaker, apart from that, the Minister of Fisheries, at the Fisheries Conference in Salt Pond, Burin, last Fall, made a commitment to the fishermen's committee of St. Lawrence that monies would be allocated, that monies would be granted to insulate the fish depot there. And what has happened? I have been in touch with the minister's office, they know nothing about it. They know absolutely nothing about it. Now, Mr. Speaker, somebody is lying if there has been no commitment. It is either the fishermen's committee at St. Lawrence or somebody else.

MR. WARREN: It may be the minister.

MR. THOMS: But there has been—and I happen to believe the fishermen's committee that the commitment was made and I think the commitment should be honoured. There is a commitment made to meet those fishermen, to talk to those fishermen's committees. And all I am asking, all I am simply asking is that these commitments be kept.

MR. FLIGHT: Write to Richard Cashin.

MR. THOMS: I have tried everything else. And if I can publicly shame the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) into meeting with these people, then I will darn well do it.

AN HON. MEMBER: You will never get it now.

MR. THOMS: I will never get it now. You know it is unparliamentary to make a threat in the House of Assembly.

MR. WARREN: They are the government.

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): Order, please!

I would like to advise the hon. member his time has expired.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, you know, it is rather a shameful thing, really, that since the beginning of this session of this Assembly.

MR. MORGAN: we have had only three questions asked of the most important industry we have in the Province, the fisheries.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN: We have had only three questions asked by the Opposition members. They do not care for the fisheries.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hang your head.

MR. MORGAN: Out of all the problems we have today in the fishing industry -

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible)

MR. MORGAN: There is a problem, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, could I have order?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, there are problems of an inshore quota for the first time in the history of our Province, an inshore quota on inshore ground fixed gear. There is a reduction of subsidies by the federal government on fishing vessels in the Province.

MR. THOMS: While you are standing there talk about the veracity of the Opposition.

MR. MORGAN: There are possible effects that the offshore oil and gas developments may have on the fishing industry, which could very well affect the Burin Peninsula. There is the fact that 4,000 fishermen had to make appeals regarding the licencing system in the Province. And on I can go with the problems in the fishing industry, but not one question was asked about these major



MR. MORGAN: problems in the fishing industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN: Why?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Shame! Shame!

MR. MORGAN: Why? Is it because the  
Opposition members do not care for the fishing districts?

AN HON. MEMBER: They do not know.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Is it because they do not care  
for the fishermen out there?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!  
The hon. Minister.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, surely these  
members who represent, most of them over there represent  
fishermen and fishing districts, surely they must have some  
concern for the fishing industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN: Now, I am more than pleased -  
Mr. Speaker, please-

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Now, I am more than pleased  
to respond to an individual problem, about an individual  
community, and a very individual project. I am more than  
pleased to. But surely they could have asked more questions  
which could have sparked more debate on the fishing industry  
than one little problem down in St. Lawrence.

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible).

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, please call this  
man to order.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms):

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN:

Please.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I understand the hon.

minister would like to be heard in silence. I would ask members to adhere to that.

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I sat here

and listened to the hon. gentleman, now he wants the information let me give it to him.

First of all, Mr. Speaker,

the hon. gentleman should realize that bait depots are not the responsibility of this government at all. Bait depots are the responsibility of the federal level of government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

I must ask the hon.

member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) to please restrain himself. Please restrain yourself.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, bait depots

are the responsibility of the federal level of government. And the fact is that the problems that exist in St. Lawrence today are the problems that the council of the area and the fishermen's committee are fully aware of. They brought the problems to my attention. I am fully aware of them. And the problems will be dealt with in that manner, by dealing with the respective organizations in St. Lawrence not by a politician playing politics with such a petty, small matter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS:

You are misleading the House.

MR. MORGAN: And playing politics with their needs.

MR. THOMS: You are misleading the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): Order, please!

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, playing politics with the needs of fishermen.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!  
I did hear the comment by the hon. member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms). I must ask him to withdraw the comments that the minister was misleading the House.

MR. THOMS: I will withdraw that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member withdraws.  
The hon. Minister of Fisheries.

MR. MORGAN: Mr. Speaker, the fact is where a fisherman or a fishing community or a company -

AN HON. MEMBER: Keep going! Keep going!

MR. MORGAN: - has the needs regarding a fishing problem then we are more than pleased to deal with it, but do not play politics with that need.

MR. BARRY: Give it to him, boy.

MR. MORGAN: Now, Mr. Speaker, for example -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN: -let us look at St. Lawrence.  
Last year, Mr. Speaker -

MR. BARRY: Give it to him.

MR. MORGAN: - this Province spent \$80,000 on a new community stage in St. Lawrence -

MR. BARRY: Nail him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MORGAN: - \$80,000 provincial government money.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms):

Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN:

We also spent \$100,000

as a grant, an outright grant to prepare a new site for a new fish plant put forward last year, provincial dollars.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN:

They also aided with a further

grant of \$34,000 for a fresh water supply for that plant.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MORGAN:

And, Mr. Speaker, on she

goes.

Now, do not ever the hon.

gentleman again stand up and say we do not care for the problems of the fisheries of St. Lawrence, because we do.

MR. THOMS:

(Inaudible).

MR. BARRY:

Shame! Shame!

MR. THOMS:

(Inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. MORGAN:

Any problems that now exist

Mr. Speaker, will be adequately dealt with between myself-

MR. BARRY:

Keep her going. Nail him.

MR. MORGAN:

- the minister responsible,

Mr. Dick Edwards, Mr. Leo-Slaney, and others -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY:

Good men.

MR. MORGAN:

- from St. Lawrence and

the fishermen, in the next two or three weeks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I move the

adjournment of the House.

March 26, 1981

Tape 703

PK - 6

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms):

Order, please!

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