

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
TUESDAY, MARCH 31, 1981

The House met at 3.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

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

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Mr. Speaker, first I probably should say how, on behalf of colleagues on this side of the House, we are pleased to note the thirty-second anniversary of Confederation and pay tribute to those who led the Newfoundland people into a union with Canada, and tribute to those who gave support to that decision. And this government and all its members and indeed, I am sure, all hon. members and the people of Newfoundland are very proud of the role that we have played as Newfoundlanders and as Canadians in that great federal country of Canada which permits us to maintain our own identity and work together with the other provinces and federal government in the many, many areas of important common concern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to inform hon. members with respect to the judgement of the Newfoundland Court of Appeal on a reference made to it by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council of Newfoundland on the proposed federal constitutional initiatives.

MR. NEARY: Take it as read.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: No, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take it as read. I intend to read it.

As all hon. members are perhaps now aware, the court has answered the first three questions affirmatively and has issued a qualified yes with respect to question number four.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The court has concluded, first of all, that the Parliament of Great Britain is precluded

MR. OTTENHEIMER: "from enacting an amendment restricting the powers, rights and privileges granted the provinces by the British North America Act and enlarged by the Statute of Westminster over the objections of the provinces."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Secondly, the court concluded "The Canadian Houses of Parliament have a constitutional authority of their own accord to request the Parliament of Great Britain to amend the British North America Act in matters of federal concern only, but in our opinion it has no such authority to request an amendment that would directly alter provisions of the Act affecting federal/provincial relations or the powers, rights or privileges secured by the constitution of Canada to the provinces without first obtaining the consent of the provinces to such amendment."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: That is the end of that quotation.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: And thirdly, the Court stated that the proposed Charter of Rights and Freedoms does in fact infringe upon the powers of the provinces to legislate in respect of property and civil rights as that is guaranteed by section 92 of the BNA Act.

Fourthly, the Court has concluded that our Terms of Union and our protection with respect to the boundaries could be changed under the proposed Amending Formula without the consent of the Newfoundland Legislature.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: In the very clear and reasoned judgment of the Court, it made a number of comments with respect to the Federal nature of Canada. These comments are well worth bringing to the attention of Members of the House of Assembly and of placing in our official record, Hansard.

With respect to the role of the Parliament of Great Britain, the court pointed out that it is " 'a bare legislative trustee' for both the federal parliament and the provincial legislatures in relation to the matters within their respective legislative competence. Any amendment enacted by the Parliament of Great Britain affecting the legislative competence of either of the parties, without that party's consent, would not only be contrary to the intendment of the Statute of Westminster, but it could defeat the whole scheme of the Canadian federal constitution."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: With respect to the federal nature of Canada and the role of the provinces in seeking amendments to the constitution, the court said, again I quote, "The requirement for provincial consent thus goes much further than mere custom and usage. In our view,

MR. OTTENHEIMER: it would be inconsistent with the federal character of Canada's constitutional system to treat the Canadian Parliament alone as having the power to secure the amendment of any part of that system, disregarding the views of provincial governments and legislatures affected by these amendments. The very nature of the federation requires that the rights and powers of its constituent units be protected.

"By attempting to secure from the Parliament of Great Britain an amendment that would affect the fundamental rights of the provinces without first obtaining the consent of the provinces, the Canadian Houses of Parliament would be arrogating to themselves an authority they do not possess, an authority that would negate the plenary and exclusive power of the Provinces to legislate on matters within their competence and would provide access for Parliament into the provincial domain from which they are constitutionally excluded. They would, in fact, be asserting a jurisdiction that would enable them to obtain indirectly what they cannot legally attain directly."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENEHIMER: The final quote from the judgment that I believe strikes at the heart of the matter is as follows: "The framers of the British North America Act decided in their wisdom that Canada should not be a unitary state, but a federal one. Canada, however, could in effect be converted into a unitary state if that act could be amended simply at the request of the Canadian Parliament without the concurrence of the provinces.

"The requisites of the constitution in a federal state by which the legislative authority of the federating parties are defined, and

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MR. OTTENHEIMER: supremacy circumscribed, must be strictly
enforced if the rights of minorities are to be adequately
protected."

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: The judgement of the Newfoundland Court of Appeal is extremely significant in the current constitutional debate. The weight of judicial authority is now firmly on the side of the position that the provinces have taken. While the Manitoba decision took a contrary approach, two of the five judges dissented from the decision in Manitoba. The decision of our own Court of Appeal was a unanimous one and the result now is that five judges out of the eight that have considered it in Canada have found that the proposed federal initiative is unconstitutional.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I now call upon the Federal government to cease and desist in the pursuance of its unconstitutional and illegal objectives and to return to the bargaining table in order to negotiate an amending formula and changes to the Canadian Constitution in the appropriate forum. These issues are not ones that should be decided by one order of government and passed upon by another parliament. They must be decided within Canada by Canadians in accordance with the federal nature of our constitution.

I wish to close by noting that this is a significant day in the history of our Province for a number of reasons. Thirty-two years ago today Newfoundland entered Confederation. The judgement of our Court of Appeal issued today reaffirms the Federal nature of a country which we joined in 1949. I believe that this judgement is an extremely significant and thoughtful one and it is this government's confident expectation that this judgement will be upheld when the three questions are considered by the Supreme Court of Canada on April 28th.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: I would like finally to express the appreciation of the Government of Newfoundland to Mr. John O'Neill, Q.C., Lead Counsel for the Province, and also to Solicitors in the Department of Justice for the excellent work they have done in presenting the Province's case. In the Department of Justice, a number of Solicitors have been involved in this matter and I wish to make special reference to the work of Mr. Ronald Penney, Deputy Minister, Mr. John Ashley and Mr. James Thistle, who have been deeply and continuously involved in constitutional matters since last June.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly, on behalf of the Liberal Party that brought this Province into Confederation, accept all the kind remarks of the Minister of

MR. PATTERSON: There was no Liberal Party then.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. STIRLING: - Justice (G. Ottenheimer).

MR. FLIGHT: They will deny that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. ROBERTS: Over the dead bodies politically.
of every lawyer in the Province except Les Curtis.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. STIRLING: And I would like to thank the Minister for bringing this to the attention of this Province on this great and historic day. And I would take it that now, Mr. Speaker, there can be some relief in the Province, that it will not be necessary for that government, having received a favourable decision, for the PC Government to have a vote on whether or not we leave Canada, as was

MR. L. STIRLING:

threatened by the Premier the day that the results came down from the Manitoba decision.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING: When he was in Montreal on that Monday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): Order, please!

MR. L. STIRLING: - when he was in Montreal on that Monday and the decision went against him, then he threatened a vote to take us out of Canada. I take it now that we have an affirmative decision, that we are not going to have to face that prospect of a debate on whether or not to be part of Canada. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that our court has made a very decisive judgement, there is no question about it, and so now, Mr. Speaker, maybe the government can respond to the requests of the people all over this Province that we get off the legal process and the constitutional argument and that we get on to the things that are important in this Province, being things that are creating jobs, road construction, the kinds of things that are very important for the everyday individual Newfoundland and Labrador citizen. Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the government feels great joy in this, because if you put it into perspective, Mr. Speaker, the judgement is on the process again, whether or not the federal government has the right to do it or not to do it, it is before the courts and we on this side certainly accept the decision of the courts. And let that be as it may, it will follow the due process. So, Mr. Speaker, the important issue in this Province is whether or not the government is going to govern, whether they

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MR. L. STIRLING: are going to get on to the important issues as set out. It has never been a problem, Mr. Speaker, it has never been a problem between the provincial and federal governments for the federal government politically to fund many of the projects that are in the responsibility of the Province. Education, roads -

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

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the President of the Council on a point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. member is entering into debate. This is a statement by the Minister of Justice on the position taken by the court today. The hon. member has spoken about extraneous matters. We have yet to hear whether he is glad and rejoices with the rest of Newfoundland as to the decision.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): With respect to the point of order, I was about to raise the matter myself. The hon. member should be making comments on the Ministerial Statement as proposed by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer). He has about one minute remaining.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would say that that is indicative. If you actually check Hansard you will see that what on that side they think is extraneous, has to do with the main job of governing this Province. And that is the question of the interruption, Mr. Speaker. They do not want to talk about the main issues -

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. STIRLING: - the main problems -

MR. NEARY: That is right. That is right.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition should be responding to the Ministerial Statement, not entering into debate.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I have to have the direction, obviously, of the Chair because this is dealing with a decision which gets into what is the relationship between the Province and the federal government. And that is what I was talking about, Mr. Speaker, that all the court cases in the world are not going to resolve the questions that have to do with the political will to make Newfoundland and Labrador work.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. STIRLING: And, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to participate - this is the same government which would not give the courts, the same very learned judgement, the right to decide on the question of whether or not to spray or not to spray, an injunction. They took that away. Now, this same court -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. STIRLING: - this same court today -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: I must advise the hon. the Leader of the Opposition that his time has expired.

Further statements?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I have a very important statement I wish to read. I have today received a communication from Mr. R.C. Brett to me, dated today. "Dear Sir:

'I have today tendered my resignation to the Lieutenant-Governor as Minister of Transportation.

'I have taken this step because I believe that it is the proper course under the circumstances.

'Matters have arisen over the past number of days which have cast doubt as to my ability to perform my ministerial functions and which reflect on government.

'The matter of the hiring of the Department of Transportation's float to move my boat from Harbour Breton was a serious error of judgement on my part.

'The documents I tabled in the House were written on March 20th. and record verbal statements on or around the dates given on the documents.

PREMIER PECKFORD: 'Additionally, the cheque for payment was not finalized until March 23rd., 1981. In these two instances I have misled you in my discussions, and the House of Assembly. I deeply regret these actions and realize on reflection they should not have occurred. However, I do wish to make it clear that it was always my intent to pay for actual use of the float and the dates on the documents reflect oral expressions of my intent at that time.

'I enjoyed my tenure as Minister of Transportation and assure you of my continued support of the administration, its aims and objectives. It is in the overall interest of your government that I have tendered my resignation '-which I have accepted, Mr. Speaker. I table that.

At the same time I would like to announce the appointment of the hon. the member for St. George's (Mr. Dawe) as the new Minister of Transportation, who has held a number of portfolios already in this government. Succeeding the member for St. George's as the Minister of Recreation, Culture and Youth and as Minister of the Environment is the member for Burgeo - Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Andrews).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Apart from representing a distinguished rural Newfoundland constituency, the member is a respected and well-known Newfoundlander who has enjoyed a successful career in broadcasting. During this career he demonstrated a sound knowledge of the enormous potential of our Province, especially with regard to our vast renewable resources. His knowledge of the fishery, farming and forestry in particular and his appreciation of their role in a healthy and safe environment will be a tremendous asset to my government. I will table these documents now, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, there is no joy on this side of the House, and I am sure we all regret the receipt of that information. I will say nothing further about that at this time other than to congratulate the new ministers in their appointments.

MR. SPEAKER: Any further statements?

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) in connection with the goings-on at the Workers' Compensation Board. Hon. members will recall that last week I mentioned a party that was held until about nine-thirty or ten o'clock one evening down at the Workers' Compensation building, when the people who were celebrating something or another staggered out across the picket lines. And I raised this matter, Mr. Speaker, but I did not get any answers from the government as to who paid for the bash. Now I am told that another bash was held the other night over at the Holiday Inn and a room was hired at the Holiday Inn for the party by the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board and the room was in the name of ACM Sales,

MR. NEARY:

ACM Sales, and I have the share list for ACM Sales, which shows that ACM Sales is owned by somebody who is very close to one of the members of the Workers' Compensation Board.

Now what I would like to know from the minister is who is paying for these bashes, these parties? Is it the employees, the scabs, the strike breakers who are in working at the Workers' Compensation Board? Or are these being paid for out of the Public Treasury?

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the hon. member means by scabs. Maybe he would prefer that we would not send out cheques to the people who are on Workers' Compensation. But with respect to alleged parties, I will find out the information for the hon. member and get back to him.

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

MR. NEARY: I thank the hon. member, Mr. Speaker, and I want to ask the hon. gentleman when he is looking for that information if he will ask the Holiday Inn who signed for the room. I am told it was the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board signed for the room in the name of ACM Sales, and I would like for the hon. gentleman to find out who owns ACM Sales so that he can provide the House with all the information pertinent to this big bash they had over there the other night at the Holiday Inn. Would the hon. gentleman undertake to get the House that information?

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

MR. DINN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will get that information for the House if it is relevant.

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

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

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). About two weeks ago he indicated that sometime mid week he would have a precise date as when the budget was to be brought down, Is he now in a position to give us that precise date when he will be bringing down the budget?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, a day or so ago I indicated that the budget would be brought down before the - I think I said before, it might have been on or before the middle of April. I will be in a position hopefully tomorrow to cone that down to a precise date.

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

MR. STIRLING: A supplementary question. Can the minister tell us with any degree of certainty if it will be after the 10th. of April? Is it going to be between the 10th. and some time, or is it going to be before the 10th. of April? Can he tell us whether or not it will be before the 10th. of April?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I am not attempting to be devious about this in any way. If it was likely to be before the 10th. I think I would have said before the 10th. I am just not in a position to give a precise date now but I can assure hon. members that it will be brought down on or before the middle of the month.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs Newhook). As the minister is probably aware the amalgamation of Windsor and Grand Falls has been an on-again, off-again subject for years. Studies have been done and I think the recommendation had been made at one point that there would be amalgamation. Now there is some indication in the Central area that meetings have been held, the minister was party to one meeting, where the amalgamation of Windsor and Grand Falls was discussed. Would the minister care to enlighten the House on what the status of the amalgamation of Windsor and Grand Falls is right now?

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MRS NEWHOOK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have not attended any meetings that were specifically called with regard to the amalgamation of the communities or the towns of Windsor and Grand Falls. I am really at a loss to understand which meeting the hon. member is referring to.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, there appears to have been meetings held where the amalgamation of Windsor-Grand Falls was discussed with the minister and of course the minister can take advantage of this opportunity to confirm or deny it. In the press stories that are being circulated she is quoted as saying that she supported amalgamation and that she can see it happening in the near

MR. FLIGHT: future. Would the minister wish to comment on those remarks attributed to her with regards to the amalgamation of Grands Falls and Windsor?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MRS NEWHOOK: Mr. Speaker, I do not remember making these remarks. I think possibly the Mayor of Grand Falls might have just mentioned it in casual conversation. I may have said to him, "Yes, I think it would be a good thing," but I did not make any official statement on it. I have not as yet.

MR. FLIGHT: A supplementary.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister then, is the minister in her official capacity as Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs Newhook) responsible for municipal government in Newfoundland? Is the minister, indeed, is she prepared to indicate to the House whether she is supportive or does she support the amalgamation of Grand Falls and Windsor and inasfar as any thoughts she might have put to it at this time as a result of any discussions does she envision a timetable where that amalgamation could be accomplished?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MRS NEWHOOK: Mr. Speaker, if the towns of Grand Falls and Windsor show an initiative, if they state that they wish to discuss the amalgamation, I should be very glad to do it at any time.

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

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my information is that the town of Grand Falls have shown initiative, have indeed raised the issue with the minister and a subsequent meeting was held or correspondence changed hands regarding the discussion with the minister. So I am trying to determine whether or not, for the record, whether or not the minister is indeed supportive of amalgamation and whether or not the minister, again in her capacity as the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook), would see any prerequisites. What would be required? The indications are that discussions were held on the matter of amalgamation of Windsor - Grand Falls and so what I am asking the minister now is if, as far as her involvement, her advice to council or to the town of Grand Falls - Windsor, are there any prerequisites that she would recommend in order to bring about amalgamation or get the movement towards amalgamation, which she apparently does support, on the rails?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MRS. NEWHOOK: Mr. Speaker, I would require a letter from both towns indicating that they are interested and certainly I would be most interested in discussing it with them. There was a feasibility study done, I think, some seven or eight years ago and possibly that study would need to be updated. But certainly it would have to be on the initiative of both towns because we do not pressurize towns to amalgamate. And when they show that initiative -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, no! Oh, no!

MRS. NEWHOOK: - I should certainly be very glad to deal with it.

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

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

MR. FLIGHT: Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister has indicated that she would need initiatives from the towns of Grand Falls and Windsor. Now, I want to ask the minister, does she not consider the discussions she has had with at least one mayor of one of those towns as an initiative at least by that particular town? Has Grand Falls not shown an initiative towards the amalgamation of Grand Falls - Windsor?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MRS. NEWHOOK: Mr. Speaker, as far as I can remember, I think the matter was just mentioned casually. There was no serious discussion on the matter at all. It was just in another meeting, or maybe speaking with the mayor after the meeting and it was just brought up in a casual way, so there has been no serious discussion, not with me. Now, I do not know whether or not the council in Grand Falls or the mayor have been discussing it with my deputy minister, but not to me personally.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Social Services and I think this is the right department and if not, when I ask the question, the appropriate - I think it is the Minister of Social Services (T.Hickey). In -
somuch as

MR. LUSH: this is the Year of the Handicapped, I wonder if the minister can indicate to the House whether or not his department, or any other department of government, has any special programme with respect to offering employers incentives for hiring handicapped people, similar to the federal government arrangement?

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

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, there was some mention of a programme in the Speech from the Throne wherein a programme was outlined of subsidizing the wages of disabled people who were hired by industry, wherein because of their disabilities productivity as such would not necessarily pay an employer to hire them. There is a programme, and there will be a programme. To what extent it can go into effect, whether it will be full-fledged this year is something which I cannot answer at this point in time. But the principle of wage subsidy is certainly one which the government has accepted and has adopted; we will be pursuing that during the year.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for his answer. I am delighted to know that there might be some initiative in this respect. Again I know that the federal government offers subsidies for employers to hire handicapped people in this the Year of the Handicapped, I wonder if the minister is aware of anything happening with respect to grants or loans to employers who are handicapped, employers who are handicapped and want to either start a business or already have an existing business and want to extend that

MR. LUSH: particular business?
Is there anything in this nature, either federally or provincially, that the minister is aware of?

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

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, my department has become involved in a small way over the years in providing monies to enable disabled people to get in business - I am trying to think of some examples - business of a small nature such as, maybe, a barber shop, this kind of situation. We do not have a programme which is all-embracing, which will take into account a whole range of endeavours that disabled people might well wish to get into.

MR. HICKEY: It is an area which I have discussed with the federal minister at a previous federal/provincial conference. Now what will come out of those discussions I do not know. Certainly I will not know for a couple of months, I suppose. I favour a system of some kind where assistance is provided, because a great number of people who suffer disability have potential for business and I do believe that there is some merit in this kind of programme.

But it is one in which the assistance of the federal government certainly would be essential if it is to be in any way meaningful. It is not something that the provincial government could finance on its own, you know, to any large extent.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the - well, I guess I will have to direct it to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), now that we have no Minister of Transportation at the moment - at least the new minister would not be familiar. But would the minister tell the House how the registrations now for motor vehicles in the Province are coming along? Today is the deadline, and I understand that there is a substantial number of motor vehicle owners who have not picked up their licences. Would the hon. gentleman indicate exactly what the situation is now concerning the registration of motor vehicles in the Province? Will they be able to issue all of the licences today or will -

PREMIER PECKFORD: We are looking into it.

MR. NEARY: - no, maybe the Premier would like to answer it. Well, somebody answer it.

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: I have that initiated to find out just exactly what the numbers are, and where we are on it, and I will have a report for the hon. member before the House closes at six.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Well if it is physically impossible to get all the licences issued today, would the hon. gentleman consider an extension of time, say, for a week or ten days to give people, especially outside of St. John's, and with the kind of weather that we have had in the last couple of days, give the people an opportunity -

AN HON. MEMBER: And the road conditions.

MR. NEARY: - and the road conditions to give the people an opportunity to get their licences.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: We will review that based upon the information that I get this afternoon as to whether in fact an extension is a viable option at this time. So I have not ruled it out, I have not ruled it in: it will be based upon the information that we get this afternoon. So I am willing to consider it depending upon the information.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile, a supplementary?

MR. NEARY: A new question.

MR. SPEAKER: A new question. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A new question for the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry). About a week ago - no, about two Fridays ago the representatives of the oil companies who operate around Hibernia were all issued an ultimatum to come to St. John's for some reason or other, we have not been told what the reason is - and I understand the minister did not attend the meeting, so while, I want to put the question to the hon. -

MR. BARRY: What meeting?

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman did not know about the meeting, so I am told. Would the hon. gentleman indicate now to the House what these executives who came in on four or five jets into St. John's Airport there two Fridays ago to meet the Premier after the House rose at one o'clock, what this meeting was all about?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, I was pulling the hon. member's leg, and it is obviously easy to do, when I said I was not at the meeting. We had a very interesting meeting with the partners who are involved with the Hibernia development, discussing aspects of that development.

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

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

MR. S. NEARY: I hope we are not going to have another situation here, Mr. Speaker, where ministers - well, I could not accuse him of misleading the House, but of not giving the House the information, the answers to specific questions that are being asked.

MR. ROBERTS: He knows more about the meeting than the hon. minister.

MR. S. NEARY: I do. As matter of fact, I knew about the meeting before it was held.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. S. NEARY: Did the oil companies ask the government to extend the period of time that they have for exploration and drilling? Is that what they talked to the government about? They wanted an extension of time before submitting their production plans, is that what the meeting was about?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, there were a number of things discussed. That has been raised from time to time between government and the companies and that may have been one of the items that was discussed at that time. But that would have been one of a number of items, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am making very slow progress. The hon. gentleman grudgingly admits that that was one of the items raised. Now was another one of the items raised information to the provincial government that the oil companies had already asked the Government of Canada for an extension of time, and the oil companies were told that if they put their request in writing that it would be considered? That was another one of the items - I am asking the minister if that was another one of the items that was raised. And was the matter of the oil companies getting together and taking both governments to the Supreme Court, that they were in the process of preparing their case, to have their case tested in the court to see which regulations the oil companies have to work under, was that matter also raised?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. L. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned a number of times before, both in this House and outside, we have had discussions many, many times with companies operating offshore, including the group operating in the Hibernia discovery, with respect to the jurisdictional matter, the Province's ownership and jurisdiction and the challenge to that by the federal government. The companies have for many years, as everybody knows, expressed concern about problems they have operating in an area of uncertainty or in a time of uncertainty. We have always taken the position

MR. L. BARRY: that as long as they are at the exploratory stage and they hold permits from both levels of government, as they do, that their rights are secured and that there is no reason why there should be any impediment to drilling. When matters develop to the stage of the companies being ready to file a development plan and being ready to start expending large amounts of money on production, then the jurisdictional uncertainty is going to create greater problems. But in light of the constitutional developments, including the court case, the very tremendous court case - a great success, I think, for provincial rights that as we mentioned earlier today - I am optimistic that the federal government will be forced to see common sense and see the justice and equity of the Province's claim to the offshore and that before the companies have to have this matter cleared up, that it will be. But the bottom line is that the Province will protect its rights; that if it amounts to a delay as far as the companies are concerned that would be unfortunate, but there is too much at stake for the Province to permit these rights to go by the board. So, we have had, as I have said, such discussions from time to time including I am sure on that particular day. Just about every time we meet with the companies, we have some discussions on the jurisdictional issue.

MR. NEARY: Why do you not tell us what happened at that meeting?

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, apparently I am giving the House more information about that meeting than the hon. gentleman. He grudgingly, grudgingly admits. Now, will the hon. -

MR. ROBERTS: The hon. member for LaPoile has a better understanding of the situation.

MR. S. NEARY: Would the hon. minister tell the House of what extension of time was granted for drilling and exploration, how much time they were given-And would the gentleman also indicate to the House, now that this myth that the Premier - this bugaboo the Premier had about federal judges ruling in favour of the government of Canada- now that that is out of the way and that myth has been exploded with this decision that has been handed down by the appeals court here in Newfoundland, judges appointed by the government of Canada, a decision in favour of the Province, will the Province now go to the Supreme Court of Canada to get this offshore ownership or jurisdiction or management question settled? Because now there is no doubt that the judges of the Supreme Court of Canada will give a fair and just ruling, and not just rule in favour of the government of Canada as the Premier has been telling us all along. So, that is a double barreled question: Number one, what is the extension of time, how much more time have they been given before submitting their production plans? And now that we have removed this myth that the Premier has been looking under his bed every night to see if Trudeau is there, now that that is removed will they now go to the Supreme Court to get this question settled?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, on the first part of the question there has been no extension of time granted to any company with respect to the drilling obligations that are contained under provincial permits, nor would there be any extension of time without very good cause being shown. In other words, we would have to be shown that there is some reason for granting an extension of time and that has not been done, and if it is done, Mr. Speaker, I can undertake, as long as I am minister, that that information would be conveyed to the House of Assembly once it is done.

But, Mr. Speaker, on the second point, we have many times, many, many times, in this House and outside, said that government views the timing of any court case as being a very crucial decision and we first of all have to be convinced that there is a necessity for a court case. And until this constitutional process has concluded, until we see whether or not the Prime Minister of Canada lives up to his commitment to have -

MR. NEARY: I will let you know next week.

MR. BARRY: - offshore mineral rights negotiated as one of the list of twelve which were set aside for the first ministers to discuss, until we see whether the Prime Minister recognizes the justice, legitimacy, equity of the Province's right to offshore oil and gas, the ownership of offshore oil and gas, it would be terribly irresponsible and premature for this Province to decide that there is any point in any court case.

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry), following along the same lines. At the recent seminar -

MR. BARRY: Symposium.

MR. FLIGHT: - symposium, sponsored by the Petroleum Directorate, the Vice-President of Mobile indicated at the time, and the minister of course made a statement shortly after, that we intended not to flare off any gas and we intended to produce any gas, There would be no reinjection and that kind of thing. Now, Mr. Barrell I think his name was, the minister can correct me if I am wrong, his name was Mr. Barrell, Vice-President of Production -

MR. BARRY: The oil barrell.

MR. FLIGHT: - said then and has said since that in the event that they do go into production of gas that it will delay the actual start-up by a considerable amount of time. In other words, if they are ready to go into oil production that is one thing, but if the concept is that they must produce the gas then it will delay - it will cost x number of millions of dollars, but the time factor I am interested in.

MR. FLIGHT: but it is the time factor that I am interested in. Can the minister inform the House as to what this considerable amount of time delay is in start-up as a result of gas production?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, one of the saddest things for me coming out at that petroleum symposium, that oil and gas symposium, was that despite the fact we had members of the Opposition invited, only two showed up.

MR. NEARY: The best questions ever asked.

MR. BARRY: And unfortunately of the two that showed up -

MR. NEARY: The most intelligent questions asked.

MR. BARRY: - they came away in awe and accepting holus-bolus as Holy Writ the statements of the oil industry that were made at the symposium. And I am sure they must be about the only two Newfoundlanders, and I am sure most of the Province had the opportunity to see them on television, they were the only two who were naïve enough to believe that the industry representatives are not putting up their own case, putting forth their own case. Now, it leaves me with two conclusions. Either hon. members are so simple on the other side of the House, that they accept that whatever comes out of the mouths of the oil company executives has to be the gospel, the Holy Writ; or else they must believe that interests of the Opposition lie in supporting the interests of the oil industry.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, (inaudible)

MR. BARRY: This government is supporting the interests of the people of this Province, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. BARRY: This government will decide what happens to the very valuable resources of oil and gas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): I would like to remind hon. members that if they have points of order to raise, I would ask them to raise them rather than shouting out to the Chair. The Chair will not entertain points of order raised when a member is seated. If he has a point of order to raise, I would ask him to stand and address the Chair and raise that point of order.

The hon. member for Windsor -
Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, the supplementary to the question; would the minister indicate to the House, if he has the information, how long the actual start-up of oil production will be delayed by a decision to go into gas production? Now, the Province has taken the mouthpiece for this government re the petroleum industry or the offshore, Mr. Cabot Martin, who indicated that we are going to go, and maybe that is what we should do, go into the production of gas irregardless of what the oil potential is. Now, a simple question, Mr. Speaker: I asked the minister, since the industry - and not at the symposium - since the industry have indicated that there will be a considerable delay, a time lapse if they are to go into gas production, what time frame are we talking about? And while I am up, Mr. Speaker, would the minister also indicate, because this has been a sore point too, with regards to the pipeline; is the technology in place, Mr. Speaker to produce gas from Hibernia, gas not oil, without a pipeline? Can we produce gas in the absence of a pipeline or do we not have to have a pipeline to shore in order

MR. FLIGHT: to go into gas production?

Now, those are two simple questions, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member is going to hold himself out as the critic of the government on Mines and Energy matters, then I think it is time for the hon. member to pick up the Petroleum And Natural Gas Act and the regulations made thereunder and find out what the process is.

MR. FLIGHT: I read that.

MR. BARRY: How can there be a delay, how can we talk about a delay in production when government has not yet approved the time for start up?

And, Mr. Speaker, if, as any responsible government will have to do, in granting approvals we must consider the maximum benefits that we can get, the best way of using not just oil but also the gas, and if the timing of any project will hinge around a decision as to how oil and gas is to be treated, how can one talk about a delay being caused?

There will be no delay caused because the decision will be made by government as to (a) whether oil and/or gas should be produced; and (b) as to the timing, when the production should commence.

Now, if the hon. member is asking will it take longer in the event that government insists upon gas being produced, that is not yet established. And the member opposite should not accept, as I just said in my first comment, as Holy Writ the moans and groans of the oil industry who are interested in maximizing their profit and not necessarily interested in the interests of the people of the Province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT:

Why did you have

(inaudible) in the first place, it was our oil (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER(Simms):

Order, please! Order, please!

The time for Oral Questions
has expired.

If I could have hon. members' attention: Although practically a week has now passed, I wanted to wait until the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stirling) was in his seat before I gave a ruling on a point of order that was raised last Tuesday by the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) - I did not want to have it lying around, I want to deal with it - and it concerned the words used by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition when he raised a point of order himself. I have since reviewed Hansard and find that the words used - this was in response to a question answered by the Premier at the time - were "He is not attempting to mislead". I found that the connotation in which the words were used fall into the category of unparliamentary language which I have referred to and ruled on before. So I would simply ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition if he would withdraw those remarks and that will allow us to dispense with that point of order.

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

MR. STIRLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I accept the ruling of the Speaker that regardless of the truth of a statement that you must withdraw the remarks, and I there-
for withdraw the remarks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!
I must ask the hon. Leader of the Opposition if he would simply withdraw the remarks and that will dispense the point of order. I am afraid that he may be, in attempting to withdraw, about to raise another point of order and I do not want to see that appear, either.
So if he would simply withdraw, other remarks I do not think are necessary.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw whatever it is that is offensive to the Speaker, and maybe ask the Speaker for some direction. When somebody actually misleads the House, is that a question of privilege of the House, and how do I deal with it when somebody actually misleads the House?

MR. SPEAKER: First of all, the Chair would not be able to give a ruling of that nature in anticipation. If a matter of that nature occurs, then the Chair will give a ruling at that particular time. But generally speaking when the Chair- and, incidentally, you have not said words that are necessarily offensive to the Speaker, they are words that are considered to be unparliamentary in the House, and if a matter of that nature occurs the Chair would have to give a ruling at the time on which it occurs and I am afraid I am not in a

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): position to debate the point of order with the hon. the Leader of the Opposition at this point in time.

I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES:

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

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, according to section 18 of the Newfoundland Public Service Commission I wish to table the annual report.

MR. SPEAKER: Further reports by standing and special committees?

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE HAS BEEN GIVEN:

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to a question asked by the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) today, I have not got all of the answer but there was a question with respect to a private party at the Holiday Inn some time ago and I believe it was signed by, or the room was owned by, or occupied by ACM Sales. It was a private party paid for by those people -

MR. NEARY: By the Executive Director.

MR. DINN: - paid for by those people attending the party, I am informed by fairly reliable sources, and therefore I will not need to go into detail on that. With respect to the other half of the question, I will have that for the hon. member tomorrow.

March 30, 1981

Tape No. 798

NM - 3

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

Further answers to questions?

PRESENTING PETITIONS:

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have
a petition to the hon. the House of Assembly,

The petition of the
undersigned humbly showeth that there are presently two groups
of government workers on strike within the public service,
namely, the Workers' Compensation Board, and the College of
Trades and Technology, for far too long with no apparent
attempt to settle this costly dispute. That the current
dispute between the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
and workers at the College of Trades and Technology and Workers'
Compensation Board was unnecessary and never should have occurred,
that the offer of eight per cent is inadequate to compensate for
the rate of inflation, that something is wrong

MR. L. STIRLING: 'where government refuses to appoint a mediator to help settle the dispute at the College of Trades and Technology and for workers at the Workers' Compensation Board, that government is not making a reasonable effort to bargain with the two groups in good faith. Therefore, we, the undersigned, recommend and request that government make a more determined and concentrated effort to settle this dispute by bargaining in good faith and, more specifically, appoint a mediator to try and settle the dispute.' And accompanying this petition are 221 signatures of residents of Bonavista North district who support this recommendation. 'And your petitioners as in duty bound will ever pray.'

Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few comments dealing with the petition. This is the first of a petition involving 35,000 signatures of people from all over this Province, not only members of NAPE, Mr. Speaker, but people from all over this Province who are concerned that we get away from this stalemate, the position of a government that in November made a final offer, the position of a government that in November made a final offer and has not done anything, Mr. Speaker, since that time to bring negotiations back to the bargaining table.

Mr. Speaker, these are people who are amongst the lowest paid workers and the most dedicated people who are in Newfoundland who are in the employ of the government. Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) what will get to be another situation that deserves investigation, namely, the situation of a private firm throwing a party for people who are strikebreakers, Mr. Speaker that is a very serious matter. We thought it was the Workers' Compensation Board doing it. That was serious enough. But now for the Minister of Labour and Manpower to come into this House

March 31, 1981

Taoe No. 799

DW - 2

MR. L. STIRLING: and admit that a private firm is entertaining people who are strikebreakers, indicates the kind of lack of control that this government now has over what is happening to them.

Mr. Speaker, these people have tried every reasonable manner that they can to get something done with this government. They have gone to the Minister of Labour and Manpower and he is so concerned that he signed a petition of non-confidence. They went to the minister who has since resigned,

MR. STIRLING: who is a member of the Treasury Board, and he was so upset that he also signed that petition. Backbenchers on the other side, Mr. Speaker, have also signed the petition. Thirty-five thousand petitioners, Mr. Speaker, and I just represent a few of them, thirty-five thousand people all over this Province are making a simple request and that is will the government get its head out of the sand and appoint a mediator? Now, Mr. Speaker, there would be no problem appointing a mediator for the people in the Waterford Hospital, no problem appointing a mediator for the Teachers' Association because they are a large number of people who can bring this government to their knees any day and they will make a better offer. But there are only eighty people involved, Mr. Speaker, eighty decent, hardworking people going to work every day serving this government, serving the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. But because they are only a small number, this government, Mr. Speaker, can take the position that 'We will not meet with them!' Mr. Speaker, the President of the Treasury Board has time and time and time again given information to this House which is not in agreement with the information given by the union. Mr. Speaker, they have run out of patience, they have run out of patience and it is time for this House to act. And this is the first of a number of petitions, Mr. Speaker, from all of our districts in which they are saying, "Will you act for these people?" They are not asking for a settlement, they are not asking for a figure that is unreasonable, this petition is asking you to appoint a mediator. And I have heard the Minister of Labour (Mr. Dinn) say that he does not have the specific authority. Well, Mr. Speaker, in this House they had no problem when they needed additional authority to prevent us from having a court injunction, when they needed additional authority for the Minister of Forestry

MR. STIRLING: (Mr. Power), they brought in a piece of legislation and grabbed it, took away the rights of the people. Now if they want a piece of legislation to give the Minister of Labour (Mr. Dinn) the authority to appoint a mediator, we can do it this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. By unanimous consent we will agree to it without any further debate, to do whatever is necessary, Mr. Speaker, to bring this to a conclusion. Now they are asking for a mediator. They are not asking for their demands, they are asking for a mediator. Now what could be more reasonable, Mr. Speaker? I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that somebody will be presenting the petitions from your own district.

MR. STIRLING: All over this Province people are saying, That is a very reasonable request, appoint a mediator and let the mediator help the government save face, because they have already given better offers in other situations, help the government save face, let the people get back to work.

Mr. Speaker, this whole Winter they have been exercising their right. They are good workers, they are good employees of this government. The best value we are getting we are getting out of these people and therefore, Mr. Speaker, I support their petition.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Further petitions?

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I just wish to rise briefly in support of the right of, I think, 220 or 220-plus residents of the district of Bonavista North in presenting a petition on this matter, and I would like to comment just briefly on it.

There were a number of items in the petition which I think deserved comment. The first one was that government should negotiate in collective bargaining in good faith. I would like to assure this House that government does negotiate in good faith, always has negotiated in good faith, and always will negotiate in good faith.

The point of mediation was brought up. Hon, members, I think, already are informed that in the Collective Bargaining Act there is no mechanism called mediation; there is no mechanism as such called mediation. There are mechanisms called and clearly defined so that everyone can understand what they mean in

DR. COLLINS: terms of conciliation.
There is an arbitration mechanism also. These are defined, quite clearly laid out so that one knows what these processes mean. This does not apply to a process called mediation. Mediation has been used in settlement of collective bargaining disputes, but this mechanism is then defined on an ad hoc matter related to that particular matter.

Now, I might say that mediation in respect to some of the disputes presently going on has been mentioned, but it has not been mentioned to a degree whereby one is aware of what is meant by mediation. I might just add a little point about mediation: Mediation as distinct from conciliation applies to some outside body, it does not apply to a body within government. Conciliation is a mechanism whereby some of the services available to the Department of Labour and Manpower are made available to the parties in dispute whereas mediation, if one - this is a very general approach to that subject - wanted to bring that into effect, you would bring in an outside body.

A very important point about it is that mediation is not binding on either party and is therefore of relatively little use - and I think that is the reason why it was not put into the act in the first place - in most instances; it has to be brought forward and used in very clearly defined terms and for a very specific type of situation. By not being binding, it has little application, I suggest, in the present situation, particularly when the NAPE executive have indicated, not to me personally, but have indicated

DR. COLLINS:

to officials in the Department of Labour and Manpower, I understand, that they are not considering that any mediation mechanism to be brought in would be of a binding nature.

There was a point made in regard to the offer made to the striking workers-and I certainly agree wholeheartedly with the Leader of the Opposition that the workers at the Workers' Compensation Board, and indeed at the College of Trades and Technology, are highly valued workers. Their record of employment is exemplar. Government regards them as workers who give good value for money, who are dedicated to the job. There is no dispute in that matter whatever, Mr. Speaker. The dispute is merely over the terms of new contracts.

The terms offered by the government were mentioned, and I think an erroneous impression may have been left that we are offering an 8 per cent increase in the salaries, But that is incorrect, as I have mentioned a number of times. It is much more than 8 per cent.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, on behalf of strikers at the Workers' Compensation Board and at the College of Trades and Technology. And in so doing, Mr. Speaker, I might say that there is a difference in the two disputes, inasmuch as the management, the staff of the College of Trades, as far as I can ascertain, have not resorted to bringing in strike breakers and scabs whereas down at the Workers' Compensation Board the Board is

MR. NEARY: following a disaster course of bringing in strike breakers and scabs who are being paid exorbitant rates of pay while the strike is in progress, rates of pay that would knock your eyeballs out, Mr. Speaker. And then to add insult to injury, we mentioned earlier, the Leader of the Opposition mentioned when he presented the petition, they go out then and celebrate, and this party that they had at the Holiday Inn which was sponsored, well, the room was signed for by the Executive Director.

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

I believe the hon. member will have to agree with me that that is hardly relevant to the petition. I would ask him to direct his comments to the prayer of the petition and the number of signatures attached. It has nothing to do with parties.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The strike at the Workers' Compensation Board especially is developing into a nasty strike. And the reason it is developing into a nasty strike is because of the attitude and because strikers, the picketers, are being provoked by the management and by the scabs and the strikebreakers who are being brought across the picket lines.

DR. COLLINS: It is not true.

MR. NEARY: It is true.

And, Mr. Speaker, some of the stories that I hear about scabs and striker breakers climbing over fences, being picked up down by the Orange Lodge, picked up at the Airport Inn, picked up at the Holiday Inn, brought in in vans that have curtains on the windows so that the picketers cannot see who is inside of the vans, that sort of thing, Mr. Speaker, can only lead to trouble. And unfortunately these things

MR. NEARY: are going on, and when they are having their celebrations like they had at the Holiday Inn the other night, somebody walked in when they were proposing a toast to the best workers they ever had, this was a toast being proposed by the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board saying, 'They are the best workers we ever had' - the scabs and strikebreakers! A party -

AN HON. MEMBER: A private party.

MR. NEARY: As the hon. gentleman says it was a private party. Well why did the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board have to sign for a room in the name of ACM Sales? That is a good question.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

The hon. member, again I have to tell him that that is more in the line of debate rather than it is speaking to the prayer of the petition.

MR. NEARY: Thank you. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that there will be a number of petitions, I think, of this nature that will be brought before the House in due course, by members on both sides of the House supported by postcards from their constituents in support of the petition. I might point out to the House that the minister who just took his seat, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), when he was asked if he would present a petition on behalf of his constituents, here was his answer: 'If you have anything to present, mail it in, no appointments granted.' Now, that is the gentleman who is negotiating in good faith, so he just told us. Dr. Twomey says no way can he spare a minute, call in another week or so. Mr. Windsor, the Minister of whatever he is, put it in the mail, he said, no appointment granted. And Charlie Brett -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Again, the hon. member knows that this has nothing to do with the prayer of the petition.

MR. ROBERTS: It has everything to do with the prayer of the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: I beg to differ, it has nothing to do with the prayer of the petition. I will ask the hon. member to try and confine his remarks to the prayer of the petition and the number of signatures attached thereto.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Your Honour. The final name on that list was Charlie Brett. He says, 'I may be in in a week or so.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, what is included in the prayer of the petition? What are the petitioners asking for? Well, here is what they are asking for. They are asking for a mediator to mediate that dispute and, contrary to what the minister just told us, the workers, the strikers are prepared to make the decision of the arbitrator or the mediator, as I understand it, they are prepared to say that the decision, the recommendations of the arbitrator, of the mediator would be binding, if the government will accept mediation. If the government would say yes, we will agree to mediation and make the recommendations binding. That is what the workers are saying. Can you be any more fair or any more just than that, Mr. Speaker, can you?

Am I running out of time?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): About five seconds.

MR. NEARY: Five seconds. Well, I support the petition, Mr. Speaker, -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: - and I hope that the minister will reconsider the request for mediation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Any further petitions?

The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, I too have been asked and am very proud to present a petition which is supported by 204 men and women who are residents of my district of the Strait of Belle Isle. The prayer of the petition is precisely the same as that of the petition presented by my friend from Bonavista North, the Leader of the Opposition (L. Stirling) because, of course, it deals with precisely the same situation.

MR. ROBERTS: I support the petition and I would like to say a few words, if I might, in support of it and I shall try to be in order but, if I should stray from the straight and narrow, I have no doubt Your Honour will rapidly and properly rein me in and bring me to order.

What we have here, if I understand it, is a situation where two relatively small groups of employees within the Public Service have gone on strike. I have heard no suggestion that -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible)

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, we are only allowed five minutes. If hon. gentlemen opposite do not wish to learn, could they at least be quiet so that we could participate in the House's debate according to the rules?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member has asked for the right to be heard in silence and he has that right.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Your Honour. I simply ask hon. gentlemen, as Your Honour has ruled, to observe the rules. If they do not want to show any courtesy or any decency, let them at least observe the rules.

Mr. Speaker, the strike, as I understand it is a lawful one. These men and these women have struck in exercise of a right afforded them by the laws of this Province.

I must say

MR. E. ROBERTS: I for one admire the tenacity and the determination of which these men and women are maintaining their cause. I do not know how many days it is they have been on strike, it must be getting up into months now in both cases; through the heft of the Winter they have maintained their picket lines. There may have been one or two of the types of instances which sometimes crop up on picket lines when passions run high, but they were relatively minor. I do not even think there were any charges laid or any instances that would warrant them. I think these men and these women who are on strike ought to be complimented. And I for one would like to compliment them and I would say to them that they ought to carry on until they achieve a just settlement.

The prayer of this petition is to ask government to appoint a mediator, and I find it astonishing that the government will not appoint a mediator. I understand they tried to take refuge in the alleged fact that the statutory law does not provide a mechanism. But, of course, that cannot be correct because statutory mechanisms can be brought in if they are needed. And in this case they are not even needed - the government can appoint a mediator. The only reason there is no mediator appointed is that the government do not want to appoint one. They do not want, obviously, to bargain with these people. And that leads me to believe that the prayer of the petition is dead on when it says that the government are not making a reasonable effort to bargain with these men and these women in good faith.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E. ROBERTS: And why is that so? I think my friend the hon. Leader of the Opposition has put his finger on it. These two groups of people are relatively small groups. What do they total - 120, 130 people? But, of course, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), hard-hearted as he is, has forgotten the biblical admonition that, you know, the one who was lost

MR. E. ROBERTS: and saved there is as much joy as the ninety-nine who were saved. This government ought to give as much heed to the cause of 100 or 200 or 300 people as it does to 1,000 or 2,000 or 3,000 or 300,000. I do not know any valid reason why this government will not appoint a mediator. I do not know of any acceptable reasons.

I think the prayer of this petition ought to be heard and it ought to be granted. And I find it significant, Sir, that 200 men and women in the Strait of Belle Isle district, none of whom is directly involved in this strike - they may have relations or friends who are involved in the strike, but they are not directly involved - the 200 men and women have taken the trouble to sign this petition to indicate their support.

I was North on the weekend again and it showed - I was surprised - it showed to me how deep was the concern with a government, Sir, that act unjustly, unfairly, inequitably and without concern with the human rights and the basic decencies which ought to be the finest and the basic concern of every government in this Province and elsewhere. And I say to the Finance Minister (Dr. Collins) that I can appreciate his tender regard for the treasury - I think that under his stewardship the treasury deserves all the tender regard it can get - but I would say to him, Sir, that in his tender regard for the treasury and in his attempt to discharge as best he can the duties which he has undertaken, and I believe he does try as best he can - I do not hold that against him, he is doing the very best he can - but in doing that he ought to be very conscious of the need to and act with a little decency, a little regard for human dignity, a little regard for what is right and what is proper. And I say to him that the refusal to appoint a mediator, the refusal to bargain in good faith with these people shows that he has not met the

MR. E. ROBERTS: mark, he has fallen below the mark. And I will add just one sentence in closing: This strike, and I believe I cite the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn), who once in a while is right, and he is right when he says that 'this strike is going to end sooner or later, the only question is the terms on which it will end.' So for the sake of the administration of this Province and for the sake of the decency and the human rights of the people of this Province I support this petition, I commend it to the government, and I hope the response will be the appointment by the government of a mediator to do what is right and necessary.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the right of approximately 200 people from the district of the Strait of Belle Isle in presenting this petition. I am not sure of the size of the electoral list in the Strait of Belle Isle. I imagine it is around 7,000 - 8,000 -

MR. ROBERTS: Five thousand, 80 per cent of the Liberals.

DR. J. COLLINS:

Well, let us compromise and say 5,500. So out of 5,500 electors,

DR. COLLINS: the 200 people from that district - I just do not know what percentage that is - who present this petition, I think they are to be commended.

Not only are the electors, or the residents of the Strait of Belle Isle within their rights, of course, in presenting this petition, but also the strikers at the two institutions are exercising their democratic right to strike. This is part and parcel of the collective bargaining process, and they have every right to take an action that they feel is in their own interest and that they are justified in doing. And, of course, I am sure they accord government the same right in our taking a position that we feel is justifiable from our point of view in an attempt to discharge the affairs of this Province to the best advantage of all.

I would also like to join the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) in complimenting the workers in the two institutions for their behaviour during this very difficult situation, difficult for them and difficult for us. There have been a few incidences, in actual fact, that I am sure everyone regrets; we regret them, I suspect the vast majority of strikers regret them. There have been a few incidences, but by and large they have been minor and they have not reached to a stage where anyone has been endangered or anything of that order, and I certainly trust that that will not ever arrive.

Now, in speaking to the petition the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle put some emphasis on where one's sympathies should lie. I think I am a reasonably sympathetic person; however, I do take -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS: - my primary responsibility is to be one of equity, I have to be equitable. It would be most unconscionable if government was not equitable in dealing with its workers. The workers at the Compensation Board and at the College of Trades and Technology are performing duties which in all significant respects are similar to the duties performed by a large, large group within the public service who have accepted the terms offered to them and it would be, in government's view, unconscionably inequitable to do a different thing for these bargaining units.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER(Simms): To the same petition?

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to second all the petitions or get up and speak on all the petitions, but I have to take the minister to task for his statement he just made in supporting this present petition when the hon. gentleman said that he was sympathetic. Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman knows the consequences for misleading this House. Because, Mr. Speaker, the reason I say that is that the strikers are not asking the minister, as he tried to leave the impression in his remarks, are not asking the government to up the ante, they are not asking the government to change the rules, they are not asking the government to change Treasury Board, or the government to change the fringe benefits, what they are asking the government to do is to appoint a mediator and that they are prepared to accept the recommendations of a mediator. Now, what is wrong with, Mr. Speaker? Why does the minister not agree to appoint a mediator? The minister is speaking for the government, the other party. There are two parties

MR. NEARY: involved, one represented by the government, the Premier and his colleagues, and the other two sides are the strikers at the College of Trades and the Workers' Compensation Board, and they are prepared to accept mediation. And the minister has not told us yet - he dragged in a red herring there a few moments ago saying we cannot afford it, I am sympathetic but we cannot afford it, my first job is to protect, look after the public treasury. That is not what the strikers are asking for, they are asking for mediation and I think that is a reasonable request and the government should reconsider this matter.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Further petitions?

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister for Windsor - Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise too to present a petition. I am very proud to present this petition, it is a petition along the same lines, making the same request as the petitions that have been previously presented.

The prayer of the petition, of course, is that: "Therefore, we the undersigned recommend and request that government make a more determined and concentrated effort to settle this dispute by bargaining in good fait, and more specifically appoint a mediator to try and settle the dispute".

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I do not understand about this particular strike and the way it has been allowed to go on, is the callous, irresponsible attitude demonstrated by government with regard to dealing with the people involved in the strike. This House of Assembly - I left St. John's, Mr. Speaker - I made this point today - on December 17; I recall the House closed and I left to go back to my district - and

MR. FLIGHT: the strikers , the people on strike were over there with their picket lines, four or five people walking back and forth ; I recall noticing as I drove by the Parkway going home. I arrived back here on the 25th of February, Mr. Speaker, and those same people were still walking the picket line. There appeared to be no concern in any quarter. And then, Mr. Speaker, the House of Assembly opened, because I talked to some of my colleagues about it. I said, "Has everybody given up on them?" You know, there was nothing happening. Because I was reading the paper all the time where they were making a very simple request for a mediator or asking the government to get back to bargaining in good faith. So, Mr. Speaker, the House opened and day, after day, after day, in this House of Assembly questions have been asked of the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) and the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the only demand by this opposition have been that the government would yield to the requests of the people on strike and sit down, re-open negotiations and bargain in good faith and/or appoint a mediator.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I recall the minister one day getting up and saying that it was not under the act, he could not appoint a mediator. And, Mr. Speaker, I know the minister was not trying to mislead the House but he knows what he was saying was wrong. This bargaining unit is an individually recognized bargaining unit. It is a bargaining unit with the same rights as any bargaining unit in Newfoundland under the act. A union of private industry, the paperworkers in Grand Falls, the steelworkers in Baie Verte, the steelworkers in Buchans, if they request a mediator they are in separate bargaining units and the minister has got the authority to

MR. FLIGHT: appoint a mediator. And the minister in this case has got the authority to appoint a mediator. He simply has refused to appoint a mediator, Mr. Speaker, that is the long and the short of it, and he has not up to this point in time justified not appointing that mediator.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I recall when I heard that the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) and the member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) and the member for St. John's West (Mr. Barrett) and some other members signed petitions. For a minute I wondered about the wisdom of somebody sitting on the government side of two ministers signing petitions. And then suddenly, today - I know now why they signed the petitions, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say to them they did the right thing, they did the right and honourable and proper thing because the member from Exploits (Dr. Twomey) knows that two or three hundred of his constituents have said to the minister and said to the member, and two or three hundred of the members from St. John's West have said to them, two thousand of the member for Kilbride (Mr. Aylward), two thousand constituents have said, "We want you to indicate to the government -"

AN HON. MEMBER: One minute.

MR. FLIGHT: - time flies - we want you to tell the government of Newfoundland, the government that you support that they are not dealing fairly and properly with these people. They are not giving them the rights they are intitled to as citizens of this Province as members of a collective bargaining unit. That is why the member for St. Johns West (Mr. Barrett) signed the petition, that why the member for Exploits (Dr. Twomey) signed the petition, that is why the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) signed the petition and that is why the member for Trinity North (Mr. Brett) signed the petition, Mr. Speaker,

MR. FLIGHT: because he got the message loud and clear from his constituents that the government in this case was acting arrogantly, was denying basic rights of a bargaining unit and of the thirty or forty people who are part of that bargaining unit by refusing, Mr. Speaker, to sign the petition.

MR. BARRETT: Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! A point of order has been raised by the hon. member for St. John's West.

MR. BARRETT: I believe the member for Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) mentioned that the member for St. John's West signed this petition. That is incorrect, Mr. Speaker.

MR. FLIGHT: (Inaudible) I withdraw that if it offends the hon. member.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member withdraws the inference. In any event I must advise the hon. member now that his five minutes have expired.

The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is a great honour and a privilege for me to be able to present a petition similar, more or less, to ones already presented to the hon. House but endorsed by two hundred and ninety-seven wards, two hundred and ninety-seven signatures of residents of LaPoile electoral district. Two hundred and ninety-seven people-

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. member is presenting a new petition, is he?

MR. NEARY: A new petition, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Sorry. Okay.

MR. NEARY: Now like the other gentleman who presented these petitions, Mr. Speaker, I have to draw hon. members' attention to the fact that what the petition is asking for is not an increase in pay, is not fringe benefits, is not free transportation back and forth to work, is not free booze

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MR. NEARY: when they go back to work, is not
a party at the Holiday Inn: They are not asking for that,
Mr. Speaker, what they are asking for is a mediator to

MR. NEARY: mediate this dispute that has gone on much too long. But this is the crowd that are asking the government of Canada to turn over the fishery jurisdiction to the Province when they cannot even deal with a group, with two groups of less than 200 employees, they cannot even deal with them. So what they are asking for is mediation, Mr. Speaker, to try to end these two disputes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what will happen if mediation is not granted? Well, I would submit to the House that in a short time, with the disaster course the government are on, with their strike breaking tactics, with their bringing in scab labour and their strike breakers, and then boasting about it, having toasts at private parties to the best staff they ever had, like they had at the Holiday Inn the other night when the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board signed for a room in the name of ACM Sales and it is just as well for me to say it; ACM Sales is a company that is owned by the wife of the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board, Mrs. Maynard. It is just as well to say it now and get it out into the open because it is going to be out in the open anyway.

Why was this company's name used for that party, Mr. Speaker? Is this company getting any benefits from the Workers' Compensation Board? Why would they have to try to hide the fact that they were having a booze party at the Holiday Inn and had the Executive Director sign for it in the name of ACM Sales? Why? It is a good question and we did not get the answer today. The minister came in and merely said it was a private party.

MR. DINN: That is right.

MR. NEARY: It was a private party, signed for by the Executive Director of the Workers' Compensation Board in the name of ACM Sales where all the scabs and strike breakers gathered to have a toast to themselves, proposed by the Chairman

MR. NEARY: of the Workers' Compensation Board. Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, with these kinds of goings on, that we see the odd little spontaneous trouble developing on the picket lines, when you have goons like Shannahan Security have employed, the goon squad bringing strike breakers across the picket line, provoking trouble. How long is the government going to allow this to go on, Mr. Speaker, how long? Maybe they do not want to bring it to an end. Maybe they are hoping that the strikers who have been so patient, and so civilized, and so decent so far, maybe they are trying to provoke them into trouble so they can send down - what is the name of that squad the police have now?

AN HON. MEMBER: SWAT.

MR. NEARY: Send down SWAT and have them all arrested. Is that what they are waiting for? Well, it will not happen, Mr. Speaker, although every night instead of going out and trying to catch the bandits with the sawed off shotguns, the police are down in droves, patrol cars driving up every ten minutes to check the picket lines. Now, Mr. Speaker, the government is being penny-wise and pound-foolish. The money they are paying Shannahan's, his goons, to bring the strikers across the picket line, free transportation, free lunches, free booze, exorbitant rates of pay, costing the taxpayers a fortune. The government is being penny-wise -

DR. COLLINS: You are going too far.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon.

DR. COLLINS: You are going too far.

MR. NEARY: I am not going too far.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman cannot challenge one statement I made because every word I uttered is true.

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

MR. NEARY: So I support the prayer of the petition and ask that it be placed on the table of the House, Mr. Speaker, and referred - I do not know which department it relates but I would say all government departments.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the right of the 297 - what is the number of people living in LaPoile? Something of the same order. About 6,000 roughly.

MR. NEARY: They are all good Liberals.

DR. COLLINS: No, I would suggest that they are not all good Liberals. I would suggest they are not all good Liberals. Anyway, in rising to support the right of these good Newfoundlanders to submit such a petition I also rise to support the right of the roughly 200, I believe the number was, citizens from the Windsor-Buchans district who also put in a petition to this hon. House.

DR. COLLINS: The hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) in presenting his petition, he really ruins it on occasion; he goes to such lengths in his advocacy that you really have to smile, and you just cannot take it seriously. And I do not think that he is taking it seriously himself. You know, he paints such a picture, I mean the picture would be way out of whack in Poland just now or whatever.

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible).

DR. COLLINS: The hon. member referred to scabs. Now a scab, as far as I am aware, is someone who goes into to break a strike.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

DR. COLLINS: Now the government has a number of responsibilities during labour disputes. Its first responsibility is to make sure that there is no injuries involved during the dispute, and we do that in terms of the security guards and so on and so forth. We sometimes ask the police to assist us where the normal emotions get a little bit out whack, we do that.

AN HON. MEMBER: Strikebreaking.

DR. COLLINS: That is not strike breaking, that is taking a responsibility that is government's, and indeed that responsibility is shared by the union.

MR. NEARY: What about (inaudible)?

DR. COLLINS: Government also has a responsibility for the properties that are owned by government and by agencies of government. We would be totally irresponsible on our part if we allowed properties to deteriorate, become damaged, or to otherwise suffer loss or that type of thing just because of a labour dispute. So we do have to have some workers go into these institutions who normally would not work there to take care of things like the heating plant and so on and so forth.

DR. COLLINS: Government also has a third responsibility that essential services be carried on, that government services to people who would otherwise be at a loss or indeed sometimes be in some element of danger if that service was not supplied, and government takes that responsibility very, very seriously, and this certainly applies to the Workers' Compensation Board. Government, no matter whether there is a dispute on or not, will not allow people who depend daily sometimes, and certainly to a large extent on the cheques they receive, injured people this often applies to, rely on cheques given out by the Workers' Compensation Board, government will not allow the citizens of this Province to suffer just because there was a labour dispute on.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

DR. COLLINS: We will not strike break in that regard but we will not neglect our responsibilities to make sure that essential services are supplied from government, particularly to people whose health is impaired.

Now the other point that was brought out was whether government is acting in good faith, and I dealt with that in response to another petition. I would just like to make this single point and that is that as members opposite know, members in NAPE know, government knows, I am sure the workers know that certain patterns are set in labour disputes, certain patterns that apply to certain classes of workers, and those patterns are accepted. It is not unusual for those patterns to apply across bargaining units. This is an accepted, ordinary understanding on everyone's part, and this is the only way that collective bargaining can go forward.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I rise -

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

MR. STIRLING: - to support the petition so ably presented by my colleague, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary). Mr. Speaker, I do not know if dense is unparliamentary, but I will take a chance on saying that the minister every time he stands up proves that he is dense. Mr. Speaker, some people have said that there is no difference between a Liberal and a Tory. Well, I would like to give as the prime example, there may only be one living example left, but the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is the outstanding example of a Tory. There is no question.

DR. COLLINS: Of what?

MR. STIRLING: A Tory.

DR. COLLINS: A Tory?

MR. STIRLING: Yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: A blue blood.

MR. STIRLING: There may only be one left, Mr. Speaker, but if there is an example of what somebody would like to see as the opposite of being Liberal it is the Minister of Finance. There is no better example, And I can understand why the Premier will not let the TV cameras in here to record

MR. STIRLING: what the people who can come here from Workers' Compensation and the people who are here -

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

I believe the hon. member is straying somewhat from the prayer of the petition. So I will ask him to confine his remarks to that.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Dealing with the petition presented on behalf of the workers of the Workers' Compensation Board and the people working at the College of Trades, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) has clearly decided in the manner becoming, very becoming of that government, to ignore the facts. Now, Mr. Speaker, he may not be aware that the employees have changed the position to say in this petition will you appoint a mediator? We have taken one position, the government is taking another position. Now, the prayer of this petition which he is avoiding is to appoint a mediator. Mr. Speaker, I have already said if he wants any additional authority to do it, to bring in the legislation and we will give it support this afternoon. So let us get off this.

MR. NEARY: You do not need legislation. All you need is agreement from the parties.

MR. STIRLING: Let us get off this.

No, Mr. Speaker, what is needed more than anything else is a will on behalf of the government to treat their employees in a decent manner. That is what is needed, Mr. Speaker. The intention to show that they are going to treat people in a decent manner. Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the arguments made by the Minister of Finance is that he has to maintain a pattern.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when he starts to deal with the nurses, they are not going to be affected by what happens to these seventy or eighty or a hundred people, because

MR. STIRLING: the nurses have the clout to force the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) to act. He will not have to use this as a pattern with the teachers because they also have the clout.

Mr. Speaker, when the minister next gets up, I would like to ask him under what authority they appointed a mediator to resolve the situation with the Waterford Hospital, because Mr. Speaker, they have the clout. But in this case, these people have to be dependant on the government showing some generosity, some concern and as the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas), who has signed the petition, he is a person who will resolve matters. We have a situation in which you have the government taking one position, you have the employees taking another position and he says, as the Minister of Labour (J. Dinn) and the former Minister of Transport said, 'let us get back to the bargaining table.' A very reasonable request. Now, the employees have gone one step further and said appoint a mediator.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the only justification for not appointing a mediator is absolute stubbornness and I see my time has run out again but we will probably get another chance. Now, I hope somebody with some reason on the other side will speak to the Minister of Finance and hammer it into his head.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Any further petitions?

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to present a petition on behalf of some 464 residents of the district of Grand Bank. The petition is substantially in the same form as the previous petitions presented in this House this afternoon.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I am particularly proud to be able to stand on my feet this afternoon and to present and to support a petition, a petition which is the first and only petition that I have presented to this House of Assembly since my election in June of 1979. That gives me particular pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to be able to support this particular petition at this time.

Mr. Speaker, it also give me great pleasure to support a petition for a cause that I believe to be right and just. Mr. Speaker, in this day and age - and as I understand it, the workers involved in those two groups, have a take home pay of something like \$140 - \$145 a week - Mr. Speaker, we have to be realistic. And if we are realistic, we come to the conclusion that they deserve more than that. I have been told, Mr. Speaker, that one of the

MR. L. THOMS:

reasons why we do not have a settlement in this particular strike is because if the government of the day settles this strike for ten, twelve, thirteen per cent, then this will set the pace for the nurses, for the hospital workers and so on. But, Mr. Speaker, I cannot accept the fact that these particular workers are being penalized because this particular minister and this particular administration must, down the road, deal with the teachers and deal with the nurses and deal with the hospital workers and deal with other groups. I cannot accept that this particular group who are now then on strike, rightfully, justfully so -

MR. S. NEARY: For twenty weeks.

MR. L. THOMS: -for some-what? one hundred and forty-four or one hundred and forty-five days. I guess this must be an anniversary for these people, Mr. Speaker, since they are making \$145.00 per week and they have been on strike some one hundred and forty-five days. But they are simply asking for -

MR. S. NEARY: A dollar a day.

MR. L. THOMS: -they are simply asking for the appointment of a mediator. My friend, the Leader of the Opposition is absolutely right, all we need on the other side of the House is a bit of reasonableness and the simple will. We heard Benedict Arnold talk about political will, well, this is another example of political will. All we have to do is to appoint a mediator, that is all they are asking for. Now, you can be sympathetic, you can talk about democratic rights, but it is not easy for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) to get up in this House and talk about democratic rights and being sympathetic to a man or

MR. L. THOMS: a woman who is trying to exist on \$145. a week in our society. It is not easy. And, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see, apart from the minister getting up and saying with a grin on his face like a Cheshire cat, that he is sympathetic to the workers, he is sympathetic to the two hundred and ninety-seven in LaPoile or Windsor-Buchans or Bonavista North or Grand Bank, I would like to see him have the intestinal fortitude - I would like to say guts so we could all understand it-but the intestinal fortitude -

MR. SPEAKER(Butt): Order, please!

MR. THOMS: - Mr. Speaker, to get up and to support the workers in their simple, not a greedy but just a very simple request, to have a mediator appointed and let us see if we cannot get this thing settled once and for all. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the right of - How many residents of the district Grand Bank? I have just forgotten.

MR. L. THOMS: Four hundred and sixty-four, the best.

DR. COLLINS: Four hundred and sixty-four of the best -

MR. THOMS: Four hundred and sixty-four of the best.

DR. COLLINS: Four hundred and sixty-four of the best from Grand Bank.

MR. STIRLING: It will add up to 35,000 by the time we are through.

DR. COLLINS: I would think that that probably amounts to about six per cent of the voters in that district.

MR. FLIGHT: (inaudible)

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, there was a few points that I would like to just comment on if the hon. Leader of the Opposition will just do what the other members of this House do, that is they remain in courteous silence whilst people are presenting petitions and responding to petitions. The hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. L. Thoms) paid considerable attention to the mechanism of mediation. Now, there may be some misunderstanding here. The hon. the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) and myself at no time said we did not have the authority - or the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower, in actual fact - had the authority to appoint a mediator. That was said at no time. What was said was that that mechanism is not in the Act and the point is -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I do have to ask you -

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

DR. COLLINS: - to remind the hon. Leader of the Opposition of the courtesies of this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: The point being made there was not that there was no authority to appoint a mediator, because mediators have been appointed on relatively rare occasions and for various specific purposes and under very closely defined terms, that has been done, but the point that was being made by saying it is not in the act, that this is not considered by

DR. COLLINS: those who are knowledgeable in collective bargaining, it is not considered by them that mediation is a generally useful tool. It is not generally a useful tool, it does not really do very much -

MR. FLIGHT: You are a (inaudible).

MR. SPEAKER(Butt): Order, please!

DR. COLLINS: - it does not do what the negotiation does, it does not do what conciliation does, it does not do what arbitration does, it is a rather weak tool that can nevertheless be brought into play sometimes in very specific situations and under very closely defined terms which are mutually agreed to by both sides. Now, that stage has not by any means been reached in the present dispute.

Now, the other point: I will just go through this quickly because my time will run out. There is an impression being given that there is an impasse between the government and the public service over the labour disputes ongoing now. That is not a true reflection of the situation. The true reflection of the situation is that government has reached agreement, a compromise agreement acceptable by both sides, by a very large percentage of workers doing the type of activity that is carried out by the workers presently on strike. There has been agreement reached by, I would say, 95 per cent of the workers involved in this activity. There is a dispute between the remaining 5 per cent and government. But 95 per cent have in actual fact -

MR. STIRLING: A point or order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

DR. COLLINS: - reached agreement with government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

A point of order, raised by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I think we have been ruled a number of times today to deal with this petition and the prayer of the petition. He has now strayed from talking about an entirely different bargaining unit, when he talks about 95 per cent. He should talk about 95 per cent of the people in this bargaining unit dealing with this petition. So if it is in order for us to be brought to order and deal strictly with the prayer of the petition, then he should not be wandering into another union and another petition.

MR. SPEAKER(Butt): To the point of order -

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, may I speak?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes. To the point of order, the Hon. the Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, just to that point of order: The hon. members opposite have a number of times made the point that government is not offering an equitable package, and I am merely pointing out that government has offered a package that is equitable, i.e. it has been accepted by a very large number of workers in the public service.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

To the point of order: I was about to remind the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) that he was straying just a little from the prayer of the petition. I think it is fair to say that he addressed 99 per cent of his remarks to mediation which is really a part of it and he was just beginning to stray. Now I have to remind the hon. minister that his time has expired.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the petition presented by the hon. the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms)?

MR. NEARY: Yes, Sir.

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

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I want to support the prayer of the petition presented by my hon. colleague who raised some very interesting points when he was referring to the prayer of the petition. He mentioned the fact that we may be in for a long, hot Summer of labour trouble and strife in this Province unless and until the government is prepared to sit down in a reasonable manner and negotiate with the various groups in the public service in good faith. That is the other point that was mentioned in the petition, Mr. Speaker, they want the government to sit down and negotiate in good faith, something the government has not done to date.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman who just took his seat, who spoke allegedly - I am not sure if he supported the petition. If he supported this petition, well, the hon. gentleman, whether he knows it or not, is denouncing government policy, is denouncing policy that he himself was a part of making. The hon. gentleman is denouncing government policy. Whether he likes it or not, that is what he is doing.

But he did make a statement, Mr. Speaker, that at no time did the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) make a statement that the government did not have the authority to set up mediation if they so desired. Well, they did make the statement, Mr. Speaker, they did make - the minister did make that statement and the minister made that statement incorrectly.

MR. NEARY:

I cannot accuse the minister of misleading the House, because that would not be parliamentary, but he incorrectly made that statement. In the first place, the government does not need a statute, the government does not need a law to bring in mediation or arbitration, all they need is the agreement of the two parties in the dispute. That is all they need. They need agreement from the Workers' Compensation Board employees and they need agreement from the College of Trades and Technology employees, and they need the agreement of the Newfoundland Government. Now that is all they need.

Now, in this particular case the strikers down at the Workers' Compensation Board and the strikers at the College of Trades and Technology have agreed to mediation. But it takes two to tango, Mr. Speaker. What they need now is the agreement of the Newfoundland Government. And the minister can get up and expound all the pious words that he wants, he can say he is sympathetic, he can say he is the guardian of the public treasury, but it is not going to wash with the strikers, Mr. Speaker, they are not going to accept it.

What they want is mediation, and that is what the prayer of the petition is all about. They are asking the government to do one of two things, either sit down and bargain and negotiate in good faith or appoint a mediator. And you do not need a statute or a law to do that.

My hon. friend for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) is absolutely correct. The government has the authority to do it, any employer has the authority to do it as long as

MR. NEARY: all the parties agree, Where you have mutual agreement a mediator can be appointed, and that is what has happened in this case.

The employees in the public service who are on strike have agreed to mediation. The government are digging in their heels, they are refusing to grant this just and reasonable request. And I would say to that, Mr. Speaker, shame on the minister and the government of this Province.

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

The hon. member for Burin-Placentia West.

MR. HOLLETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I also present a petition similar to the earlier ones, and I would also like to table with this signatures, on cards, of some 612 residents of the district of Burin-Placentia West. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) is not here and I will not cause him any mental anguish to have to work out the percentages, but it is approximately 10 per cent of the eligible voters. I cannot say, like my colleague for Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Andrews) and elsewhere, that they are all Liberals because I have taken the time to go through the cards and I find quite a few there who worked for other parties during the last provincial campaign, and the majority of the others, I would say, would be supporters of the party opposite at that time. Whether that is indicative of how the people feel or not I am not sure.

But I think what it is very indicative of, Mr. Speaker, is that by and large in this Province there is a lot of concern being expressed by individuals and workers in relation to their fellow man. And if the group presently on strike, or the two groups here in St. John's

MR. HOLLETT: on strike, if they feel that their efforts are being unnoticed elsewhere in the Province, then I can assure them it is furthest from the truth. I think those cards themselves are indicative. But I will say in all honesty, Mr. Speaker, since Christmas that at least 250 or 300 other people who are not here have brought this subject up. And whether the government be judged on its willingness to mediate and negotiate in good faith or otherwise, time is going to tell.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned over the fact that such a small number of people who are on average earning very low wages are being treated in a manner which they are. I might say in my riding that even the workers at the school boards, in like positions, are much better paid. And certainly the type of wages that are being paid to those workers here are way, way below what would be an average weekly wage for an average worker in my riding. Probably this is why the sympathy is there and the understanding and I am sure the support.

And before I sit down, Mr. Speaker, I would like to recommend to the government, it is not for me even to suggest or tell, but I would certainly suggest that they do look quite seriously at this problem because if not the decay could well set in where very few workers and organized labour and many individuals in this Province will have any faith in them in the relation to getting on with the job.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to support this petition and present it and ask that it be laid on the table of the House and presented to the various government departments that it applies to.

Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER (Mr. Simms): The hon. member for St. John's Centre.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to support this petition presented by the member for Burin - Placentia West (D. Hollett) and also

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: - the other petitions that were presented today. I know there has been a certain amount of comment made about me signing a petition. Let me say right now, any petition I sign at any time, I will stand right behind it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear! Come on over!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: There was one item in that petition, a comment, and I just cannot recall the exact words, about it being offensive, a comment about the government in that regard. I did not go along with that and I just want to say, for the record, that I did strike that particular item out.

But I am completely with the workers in that I do not think that any working man today can manage with an eight per cent increase in his wages. I cannot do it. I do not think anybody can. Now, again let me be quite clear; I do not think that this eight per cent is really eight per cent. If you look at the figures that have been presented by the government, the figures actually are twenty-one to twenty three per cent. So, let us not play around with figures that are not true.

Now, I would like to make a comment about the nurses that were mentioned earlier and that they may be going on strike and maybe they are. I have a daughter myself who is doing nursing - is training for nursing - and it was she who pointed it out and she said, 'Dad, the starting salary here for a nurse here in Newfoundland is \$13,000 dollars and in B.C. they are paid \$22,000 dollars.' My comment to her was, a few nights ago when I saw this programme in the paper, even in B.C. where it is \$22,000 they are importing nurses from Aus-

DR. MCNICHOLAS: tralia. So actually paying the nurses \$22,000 is no guarantee at all that we are going to keep them here. I do not know what solution is. I suppose the obvious solution is that we will have to train more nurses but can we get them to go in for nursing? I think we are going to have a major problem on our hands but I do not know what the solution is and I do not know if anybody - we are just short of nurses and as long as, going back twenty-five years, I remember, we were always short of nurses, particularly in the Summertime when the young married women take time off.

There is one other difficulty I see and I just want to mention it before sitting down and it is this dilemma. The government is in this very awkward position, that a large number of the public servants in this Province have settled for a certain wage and those who are out in the Trades College within the same category are looking for more. How are you going to resolve that problem? Those who went right back and agreed to a certain wage that they were happy about, are all of them going to be penalized because they accepted this? I do not think that is fair either. I have the greatest sympathy with the workers. I do not believe that eight per cent is enough for anybody today. I think what we should be doing is looking for ways and means of getting more revenue into this Province and there are ways if the Opposition will only go along with what we have been battling at here every day, the hydro, oil and gas, the fisheries. This is where we are going to get the real wealth for this Province and until we get these organized, I am afraid we are going to be a have not Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition so ably presented by my hon. colleague, the member for -

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

MR. FLIGHT: Supporting, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Burin - Placentia West. And I want also, Mr. Speaker, to commend the courage of the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas) in supporting the petition and in addressing himself to some of the other issues that are built into this petition, Mr. Speaker, and some of the things that flow from it, whether or not we are paying 23 per cent as the government purports, as the government pretends in their propaganda sheets. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, if the government would look at the money they are paying to the various media across this

MR. FLIGHT:

Province in trying to get their message across, if they would be prepared to apply that to the cost of setting up an arbitration board or a mediator, it would serve more purpose. Now, Mr. Speaker, the issue in the petition is simply asking the government to appoint a mediator.

Mr. Speaker, if this side of the House was standing up and demanding an increase over and above the eight per cent that would be one thing. All the prayer of the petition is asking, Mr. Speaker, and what the government is stonewalling and refusing to do, is to recognize the rights of a bargaining unit to have a mediator to get the two sides back to the bargaining table. Now, what can be so wrong, Mr. Speaker, with that? If the President of Treasury Board would agree with appointing a mediator, and a mediator was appointed and the two sides got back together and then the minister was forced to come in this House two weeks later or three weeks later and say "Even with the services of a mediator we cannot get an agreement," that would be a different quintal of fish, Mr. Speaker, we could then deal with that. But this is a simple request that will cost the Province nothing and that will recognize the dignity of the people on strike. And there are no grounds in this world, Mr. Speaker, there is no justification. The only justification, Mr. Speaker, for the position of the government is a callous, irresponsible attitude by the government. And, Mr. Speaker, there may be something else here too.

The President of Treasury Board, Mr. Speaker, referred three or four days ago to the possibility of labour unrest in this Province in a speech he gave here. Now, Mr. Speaker, maybe the President of

MR. FLIGHT: Treasury of Board and the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) in Cabinet realize they are going to have labour trouble in this Province, realize they are going to have to deal with the nurses, the teachers and other segments of the public service and maybe they are using these two bargaining units as an example of the power, as an example of what the teachers can expect if they were to decide to strike, what the nurses can expect. 'Look what we have done. Look how powerful we are. Look what we have done to less than one hundred people. Look how we drove them into the ground and kept them on the picket line in excess of four months and refused to appoint a mediator, refused to get back to the bargaining table.' Mr. Speaker, it just does not make sense. We talked a few minutes ago about provoking trouble in strikes, Mr. Speaker. Well I am well aware -I come from a background, Mr. Speaker, that is well aware of what happens when men are provoked. I have seen a few strikes where they have been provoked. It took six months but I will tell you, when the provocation got bad enough somebody got back to the bargaining table. The Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) moved when certain things happened in certain areas, I will guarantee you. And maybe were it not for the action taken by that union, if this government's attitude is any example, they would still be on strike two years later. But because of the inaction and the irresponsibility and the lack of concern shown by this government, and of the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) using his power to reconcile a difference and to get two bodies back together -I am aware of a bargaining unit that decided to take things into their own hands, and I will guarantee you, shortly after there was no trouble to see the

MR. FLIGHT: Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) in that particular town and he would still be there if it was not settled. And, Mr. Speaker, the way that this ministry is acting with the two bargaining units that are on strike, they are asking for that kind of action, they are provoking - there is no question, Mr. Speaker, about being provoked here. We hear talk of twenty or thirty dollars now being paid for scabs, we hear talk of parties being thrown to reward people who will go down and do the jobs.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I realize I only have a minute left. I will support another petition, another thought, Mr. Speaker, another injustice, another injustice that is being perpetrated on the people of this Province because of this government's attitude in this strike just occurred to me and, Mr. Speaker, I will reserve the right to support another petition.

MR. SPEAKER: Further petitions?

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: I was going to respond but if the hon. member is responding? No. Mr. Speaker, I rise -

MR. THOMS: A point of order.

MR. FLIGHT: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: I can only recognize one point of order.

The hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: I presume my hon. friend is going to make the same point of order. I believe we have already had one speaker from the other side, Mr. Speaker, and I believe under Standing Orders you are only allowed to have one. The member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas), I

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MR. THOMS:

believe, spoke in support of the
petition.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

The Chair, of course, is having
great difficulty keeping track of who is speaking to what
petition and who is presenting what petition and so on.
I will just check with the Clerk, if the House will give me
a moment.

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): There is a legitimate point of order, of course, and there has already been the allotted number of speakers speak to the petition presented by whomever it was, the last one I believe from the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Hollett). So there are further petitions?

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order, the hon. member for Grand Bank.

MR. THOMS: I just want to establish the rights and so on but if the hon. member wishes to respond we are prepared to give him leave to so respond.

MR. NEARY: By leave. By leave.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, the Standing Orders are clear. Is there leave? Agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank hon. members on both sides for giving me leave. I rise in response to the last petition. I support the right of the residents in that area to petition this House. I have only two brief points to make. One, the remarks just made bring out the difficulty when you talk of mediation, very clearly bring out the difficulty when you talk of mediation. One hon. member said that he was aware that the union said they would be bound by the results of a mediation. Now, that is not information that is available to me but anyway that is what a member said. Now if that is true, we are not talking mediation. Mediation which is binding is essentially arbitration. That is arbitration.

MR. NEARY: A rose by any other name.

DR. COLLINS: So that is one difficulty. Now, the other point about it is with the hon. member who just sat down, he said, 'We will understand if a mediator—and he is clearly thinking of a mediator in the same sense as his

DR. COLLINS: colleague who spoke, that is a mediator who binds - he said that if a mediator came into the House and said we could not reach an agreement, well, we would understand. Well, a mediator who would reach a binding decision cannot come into the House or we cannot come into the House and say, we cannot accept that. If it is binding it is binding. So this is the difficulty when you get into mediation.

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

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): Order, please!

 A point of order has been raised by the hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

 The hon. member for Windsor-Buchans.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I obviously cannot stand here and have the minister put whatever interpretation he wants to put on anything I said. I simply said that if a mediator is appointed and as a result of a mediator getting the two groups together there is still no resolution, then we will deal with that then. The minister should know that a mediator has got nothing in the world to do with reaching a settlement if we want to mediate to get the two groups back together.

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

MR. FLIGHT: And, Mr. Speaker, the minister is -

MR. SPEAKER: I think it is clear -

MR. FLIGHT: There is no point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: - it is not a point of order. The hon. member admits it himself. So I will rule simply that there is a difference of opinion.

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

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

MR. NEARY: We gave the hon. gentleman leave. We thought he was going to support the petition but he is so silly and foolish in what he is saying now, Mr. Speaker, that we withdraw the leave. Keep him quite.

MR. SPEAKER (SIMMS): The leave has been withdrawn. Any further petitions? The hon. member for Carbonear.

MR. MOORES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I certainly rise with great pleasure to support -

MR. FLIGHT: To present.

MR. MOORES: To support and present a petition on behalf of 230 good people from the district of Carbonear. And I need not repeat, Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition, it is similiar and, I think, the same as a number of previous petitions that have been submitted today. However, to take the comments of my colleague from Windsor-Buchans (Mr. Flight) a step or two further, I believe that essentially this petition deals as best it can with a very serious problem confronting just about any organized group, interest group, pressure group in this Province, and that is the desire of this government to big-stick, to browbeat, to bully any group that pursues its interest on the part of its membership or on the part of individuals in it. And until there can be some resolve brought about in this Province to the concept of government, of administration, that we are now experiencing, these two groups are not the only ones who will suffer very serious consequences, social unrest, economic unrest and disruption and just simply no faith in government as an independent agency. We have seen it on a number of occasions in the years 1949 to 1971, and we called it dictatorship. Now we see the repetition of it. This administration came to power with a firm belief by the people who supported it that we were going to get fair, honest and open negotiation and dealings with people. What we have seen ever since its coming to power

MR. MOORES:

is just one example after another of outright confrontation, negligence and irresponsibility, not only with labour unions but with interprovincial relations, Ottawa, with the federal government, with developers, with -

MR. FLIGHT: Private industry.

MR. MOORES: - private industry, with industrial concerns, offshore oil, you name it.

MR. FLIGHT: King Brian.

MR. MOORES: And it goes right to the core, Mr. Speaker, of government not undertaking its responsibilities to the people that it is supposed to serve.

MR. FLIGHT: Emperor Brian.

MR. MOORES: What, in the name of reason, Mr. Speaker, are these few workers asking for? Just two years ago all of us in this House granted ourselves a 40 per cent increase in salary -

MR. FLIGHT: Hear, hear!

MR. MOORES: - and now we have a couple of hundred workers asking for a lousy 8 per cent, and they are only making \$150.00 a week. The government, rather than confronting these people, rather than forcing these people to put up picket lines, should hang their heads in shame and be afraid to let the rest of Canada know that there are human beings in this Province down here living on welfare, welfare wages. A complete travesty, a complete opposite of priorities, Mr. Speaker, and one is at great struggles with oneself to determine the logic of this government in dealing with the people it is supposed to serve.

MR. FLIGHT: There is no logic.

MR. MOORES: I mean, the whole concept of unionism in itself is one of the most integral, one of the most significant and important balances in a democracy, and

MR. MOORES: the government have no right - that is a misconception by the public and the media in this Province - the government have no right to try to squash a union by not negotiating with it. Once it does that, once it treads however heavily in the desire to squash a union, it defeats itself because a union is a very significant part in maintaining an economic balance in a capitalist system.

MR. FLIGHT: The labour movement.

MR. MOORES: And we have here now a group of workers, a union that is struggling with a government. I mean, the balance in itself is unfair. No union, unless it is an international union of a tremendous scope, can tackle a government. I mean, what does this government want to prove by forcing a few people to live on welfare wages? What will it prove in the end if it wins? What can it go in the next election and say? - that as a government we expended the public funds of this Province wisely while we gave ourselves 40 per cent of an increase and we gave union workers on welfare wages - would not agree to give them 8 per cent? I will tell you, it is a sad, sad, sad state of priorities that we have, and unless the Premier of this Province wises up and accepts with some degree of maturity his responsibilities in a democratic system, I am afraid, Gentlemen, we will have chaos. And I say let us go now. If we are going to have chaos, take it to the people. Take it to these union members. Let them have the chance to determine -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. MOORES: - the future of this government.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Lapoile.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I support the petition presented by the member for Carbonear (Mr. Moores) and I do not blame the hon. gentleman for showing great emotion and firm conviction on this matter, Mr. Speaker, because all members on this side of the House who have presented petitions and have spoken in support of petitions today, have shown a great deal of sympathy towards the strikers. The employees on the Workers' Compensation Board and at the College of Trades have been on strike now for over twenty weeks, over twenty weeks. I believe it is more at the College of Trades, twenty weeks at the Workers' Compensation Board. And during that time, Mr. Speaker, these strikers have followed and obeyed the law. They have restrained themselves even though they have been provoked, not so much at the College of Trades but at the Workers' Compensation Board, provoked by management, provoked by management bringing in strikebreakers,

MR. NEARY:

provoked by management having parties and thumbing their noses at the strikers, staggering out across the picket line, provoked by Workers' Compensation Board hiring goons camouflaged as security, private security companies, provoked by strikebreakers getting over the back fence down behind the Orange Lodge to sneak in to the Workers' Compensation Building.

Now, I am glad the Premier is back in the House, Mr. Speaker, to hear me make some of these statements. They are true, and they can be verified. Strikebreakers and scabs picked up down by the Airport Inn and picked up over by the Holiday Inn and picked up here and there all over the place, they keep moving them around so the strikers will not be able to find out where they are being picked up. That is the policy of this government. That is the course of action that the Workers' Compensation Board is following. That is what you would call a government of integrity and honesty and decency.

MR. FLIGHT: Supporting these kinds of tactics.

MR. NEARY: Supporting these kinds of tactics, strikebreaking tactics. When the Premier knows and the ministers know, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) has been up -

AN HON. MEMBER: Shame!

MR. NEARY: - the most times I have ever seen the Minister of Finance get on his feet in this hon. House was today, only one more hon. gentleman on the opposite side rose to speak on a petition and then did not support it. It would have been far better if the hon. gentleman had left unsaid what he said, allegedly in support of that petition.

MR. NEARY: The government does not need a law or a statute to appoint a mediator, all they need is agreement of the parties. That is all. One party has agreed. Labour has agreed to mediation and all it needs is the support of the -

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

I am afraid I must interrupt the hon. member to inform him that a matter has been brought to my attention from the table, that the prayer of the petition that has been presented by the hon. member for Carbonear (Mr. Moores) does not have the required three signatures on the petition containing the prayer of the petition which is the rule. So I am afraid the petition, as it was presented, cannot be accepted.

Further petitions?

MR. NEARY: Well, can we have it back, Mr. Speaker, and we will get the signatures for tomorrow?

MR. SPEAKER: Ask the Clerk to return the petition to the hon. member.

Further petitions?

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the petition.

MR. SPEAKER: The petition is not in order.

MR. FLIGHT: Oh, I see. More petitions?

MR. SPEAKER: Further petitions?

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Order 2, Committee of Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Order 2, Committee of Supply.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Butt): Order, please!
I would just like to remind hon. members that five hours and fifty minutes have elapsed on the -

MR. NEARY: We have seventy more hours to go.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Sixty-nine hours and ten minutes.

MR. NEARY: Okay, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall the resolution carry?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, yesterday we spent considerable time talking about the offshore and I believe justifiably so. There was one aspect of the offshore yesterday that I wanted to deal with, but I did not get an opportunity because there were a number of other speakers who intervened and this important matter that I wanted to raise I will now raise it today in connection with the offshore developments.

But before I do, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if Your Honour could tell the House if it is in order to have an object on your desk? Because I recall on one previous occasion I brought the Union Jack into this House, I brought a flag in that showed the Union Jack, and the red, pink, and green and I was ordered to remove it from the House. And I would like to know what the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) has on his desk, I have no objection to it being there, Mr. Chairman, - but I would like to know what it is? Is it some kind of a boobie

MR. NEARY: trap? What is it that the hon. minister has there? Now, I am not relinquishing my right to speak, Mr. Chairman, I am merely drawing this to your attention -

MR. STIRLING: On a point of order.

MR. NEARY: - on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Mr. Butt): Yes.

MR. BARRY: To that point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. BARRY: When the hon. member was ruled out of order (inaudible) recall correctly, being here in the House, he had draped the flag over the outside of his desk and into the Chamber.

MR. NEARY: No.

MR. BARRY: What an hon. member has on his deak, it is my understanding is the member's business.

MR. NEARY: No, it is not.

MR. BARRY: - as long as it does not intrude into the business of the House. This is a prying, dispicable type of activity, to question what I have on my desk. And I ask the protection of the House that I be able to keep - if I have government correspondence here, Mr. Chairman, am I going to have to reveal this to the hon. member because it is piled up on my desk? Well, since he has asked, Mr. Chairman, what it is, it is a German flag that was just brought down off a vessel in St. John's Harbour where I had the privilege of raising a Canadian flag. As a direct -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY: - as a direct consequence of our offshore oil and gas regulations we now have -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY: - we now have a supply vessel flying a Canadian flag and soon there will be five more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): To the point of order, the hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, yes, in speaking to the point of order it is well when people raise points of order that they refer to authorities.

AN HON. MEMBER: Change (inaudible) now, change -

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: Page 117 of Beauchesne, Exhibits, "Speakers have consistently ruled that it is improper to produce exhibits of any sort in the Chamber. Thus during the flag debate of 1964, the display of competing designs was prohibited. At other times boxes of cereal, detergent and milk powder have been ruled out of order."

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member was ruled out of order he was ruled out of order during a period of the flag debate which the Opposition was

MR. MARSHALL: diametrically against but which now they are coveting and passing around to all sorts of constituents and municipal authorities. But, Mr. Speaker, he had the exhibit, the hon. gentleman had the exhibit in relation to the debate and the question that was before the House at the particular time. As the hon. gentleman says, whatever the hon. gentleman has on his desk or, for that matter in his pockets, is his own concern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): To the point of order, I will reserve ruling just for a very brief period because I do not recall at the time if the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) had to remove the object because it was draped or because it was sitting on his desk. But because of that technicality -

AN HON. MEMBER: He threw it on the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In any event the hon. minister now has the object or the flag removed from his desk. So the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) has about nine minutes.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. -

AN HON. MEMBER: To the point of order.

MR. NEARY: Hold on now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have ruled on the point of order. The hon. member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, I am glad that the hon. Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry) raised that matter today, as a matter of fact, because it is precisely along the lines that the hon. gentleman just mentioned that I want to speak, when I am talking about the offshore. Now all the hon. gentleman has to do is get Canadian officers and Canadian crews on these boats. That is all the hon. gentleman has to do now. And also - come back in - also,

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, also to insist that Newfoundland workers, that union members unload the boats and do all the work on the waterfront in connection with the offshore development. As members know the longshoremen are fighting for survival on the waterfront.

MR. CARTER: Who is going to unload you?

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. CARTER: Who is going to unload you?

MR. NEARY: Mr. -

MR. THOMS: See what concern he has, a St. John's member?

MR. NEARY: Yes. There is sympathy and concern for you, Mr. Chairman. But the Longshoremen's Protective Union are fighting, struggling for survival on that waterfront and they are getting shafted every day. They are getting shafted from so-called experts from Western Canada, from non-Newfoundlanders, non-Canadians. They are getting the gears put to them by these anti-union goons that are coming in here from outside of this Province.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is the National Harbours Board.

MR. NEARY: No, not the National Harbours Board because -

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes they are.

MR. NEARY: Well maybe they are getting shafted by the National Harbours Board but what I am talking about now is the shafting they are getting by these union haters that are being brought over from Europe and brought from other parts and from Western Canada, the union haters who will do anything, who will go out of their way, who will do anything in their power to hire non-union men on the waterfront. And I forecast, Mr. Chairman, there is going to be trouble on the waterfront because the Longshoremen's Protective Union are running out of patience. They have been tolerant and patient and have restrained themselves now long enough and very shortly they are going to take a stand and the stand is going to be against these strike-breakers - not strikebreakers, these anti-labour people,

MR. S. NEARY:

that Crosbies and Harveys and Mobil Oil are bringing in here. Now, Mr. Chairman, talking about the waterfront; a year or so ago, a little over a year ago we saw a demonstration in Freshwater Bay. We saw a demonstration on television put on by the oil companies and by the Canadian Coast Guard to show how well equipped Newfoundland is to cope with an offshore oil spill. Now, Mr. Chairman, that is the last we heard tell of it. Once they got their little bit of propaganda out, once they showed it on television, that was the end of it. Well, now Mr. Chairman, that is the matter I want to raise today, the important matter of what protection we have in case of a major oil spill off shore. And I submit to this House, Mr. Chairman, that if we have a major oil spill, whether it be from a tanker passing our Coast or whether it be from the offshore oil drilling, we are going to have a catastrophe in this Province. The fishery is in danger of being ruined and wiped out for an oil spill. And why do I say that, Mr. Chairman? I say it because I happen to know that at least twelve of the participants in that demonstration we saw in Freshwater Bay were longshoremen. They were being given training, this was the climax to training they had been given to fight an offshore oil spill, a major spill off shore. But these twelve men, longshoremen who were trained, ever since have been ignored. There has been no follow up training. They have been completely ignored and the agreement, Mr. Chairman, the agreement between the International Longshoremen's Union and Harvey Offshore Services Limited, the agreement to establish the East Coast Spill Response Association has run out and the union has been unable to renegotiate an agreement. The twelve men were used in the demonstration

MR. S. NEARY: for propaganda purposes and then forgotten and then dropped. And that is terrible, Mr. Chairman. So, really, in actual fact what I am saying is that today in this Province we may have the latest equipment that is available in the world for fighting offshore oil spills, but it is all stored down at Pleasantville, all stored by the Coast Guard and I cannot for the life of me see how the Coast Guard got involved in looking after equipment, millions of dollars worth of equipment that is owned by a private company or a conglomerate of companies, owned by the oil companies; how the Coast Guard ever got involved in using taxpayer money to maintain and store this equipment and start it up once in awhile to see that it is operational. Mr. Chairman, that is the extent, that is the extent of the oil spill fighting machinery apparatus that we have in this Province. That is the extent of it and that to me is frightening, it is frightening. What should have happened was that this agreement between the International Longshoremen's Association and between Harvey Offshore Services Limited or the East Coast Spill Response Association, should have been renewed immediately. The moment it expired it should have been renewed. And, Mr. Chairman, the twelve longshoremen, or however many they wish to have train for offshore oil spills, should have undergone additional training. So, what do we have now in the way of machinery to fight an offshore oil spill? What do we have? I do not know if the hon. minister knows what we have. We have equipment stored down at Pleasantville, looked after by the Coast Guard, paid for by taxpayers of Canada, equipment that is owned by a conglomerate of oil companies.

MR. NEARY: We have twelve longshoremen who were trained over a year ago who have been ignored ever since - no up-to-date training. If there were an oil spill today and these twelve men were called into service, they probably would not know how to operate the sophisticated equipment that has been purchased in the last year. So, in actual fact, we have no means to fight a major oil spill off this coast. We have, as I say, down there we have Framo, we have the Skimmer, we have the tanks and we have the pumps, the suction pumps, but we have nobody trained, or very little training, to operate this sophisticated equipment. So, Mr. Chairman, I think this is a very urgent matter. I think it is something that the minister should address himself to while we are doing the Interim Supply Bill. It is an urgent matter. I contend, and I say now and I make a categorical statement and I have the witnesses to back it up - some of them are listening to me at this moment - that we do not have the means, we do not have the machinery, the mechanization, the expertise to fight a major offshore oil spill in this Province -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - and that is very sad and very frightening indeed, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. MOORES: Not again. Not today, again.

MR. BARRY: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would be glad to have other members speak -

MR. NEARY: Carry on, carry on.

MR. BARRY: - but there are questions put to me. We make it a policy here of responding fully and completely and very quickly to all questions put by the

MR. BARRY: Opposition and we are only sorry that we do not get more questions, more penetrating questions to keep us on our toes. As I have said before that is why we have had to bring in a Freedom of Information Act, because the Opposition is falling totally down on the job in terms of the questions they are putting to the government. They are just disintegrating on the other side of the House.

Now, Mr. Chairman, with respect to oil spill contingencies, the hon. member, I am sure, is aware of the fact that there is a contingency plan that involves not just members of the federal government, agencies of the federal government such as the Canadian Coast Guard, where I might say, incidentally, we have had tremendous co-operation in our involvement with the offshore oil and gas industry, but our provincial departments are also alerted and have their special parts to play, and there is an industry association, the East Coast Petroleum Operators Association, which also has a responsibility and has a contingency plan. And, Mr. Chairman, I was happy to see a number of our longshoremen trained with respect to what might be involved locally, from a personnel point of view, in dealing with any oil spill but, Mr. Chairman, let us not lull ourselves into the belief that there exists the capability either here in Newfoundland or anywhere in the world to deal with a serious oil spill on the Grand Banks or other parts of our coastline under certain adverse weather conditions. It will be impossible, Mr. Chairman, as I have said many times, it will be impossible to prevent a large-scale oil spill spreading under certain weather conditions. The technology is not in place to contain it. So, let no member of this House say, if God forbid it

MR. BARRY: should ever happen, that we are not aware of the seriousness of which we speak right now. The way that we have to deal with this is to make sure that there is not just one safety feature in place but there are double and triple safety features in place and inspection procedures and so on with respect to the way drilling is carried out so that we can do everything that is humanly possible to make sure that the mistakes are not made that will result in an oil spill. Now, there is no such thing as perfection in the realm of human affairs as members, I am sure, will admit. I cannot guarantee that there will not be that one thing against which you cannot plan, i.e., human error. And human error, inevitably you will find

MR. BARRY: in the major catastrophies relating to man's activity, it is usually not a breakdown in the equipment that is being used that causes or is the final cause of the accident, it is usually human error, something that is just plain out and out stunned or stupid that is done. Now, all you can do is provide back-ups and -

MR. FLIGHT: What? What?

MR. BARRY: The hon. member better do a little reading in the area, better do a little bit of reading in the area.

You can have the best, you can have -

MR. FLIGHT: Stunned? Stunned people should not be out there.

MR. BARRY: Pardon?

MR. FLIGHT: The hon. member is talking about (inaudible).

MR. BARRY: I am talking about the stunned element that is in all of us including the member for Windsor - Buchans (Mr. Flight), unless the hon. member has recently been canonized or Vaticanized - what is it that we do to our popes in the church to which I belong? You know, there is a pope who is infallible. Now, is the hon. member holding himself out as infallible? Well, I am prepared to say that I am not infallible, I am a human being, although it is the rare time, although it is -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

MR. BARRY: - although it is rare, once in a while, Mr. Chairman, once in a while even I make a mistake. Once in a while even I make a mistake and that is what I am talking about, that human element which is there in all of us that, for whatever the reason, because

MR. BARRY: we are a little tired or feeling the effects of the night before on a Monday morning -

MR. FLIGHT: Speak for yourself.

MR. BARRY: - yes, speaking just for myself now. I have gone through these periods of human weakness. I know members opposite have not. I know the supermen opposite have never had these moments of human weakness but, Mr. Chairman, that is why we have such a good government on this side of the House, because we are human and we can appreciate, we can appreciate that there are other humans involved in activities such as exploring for offshore oil and gas, and that is why I want to stress - I do not want anybody on the other side of the House to say to me that, oh, the member got up and assured us that there would never be, there could never be an oil spill. It is the last thing that I want to see happen. It is the last thing our government wants to see happen but, Mr. Chairman, there is no 100 per cent guarantee against it because of that human element. And, yes, we have to do the very best we can to avoid it happening, to avoid it happening and, Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what we are doing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY: And we are doing it, Mr. Chairman, by proper regulations, by proper management, part of which, by the way, incidentally, part of which is making sure that we have local people involved, local people and local companies -

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): Order, please!

MR. BARRY: - and local ships.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! I would just like to point out to the hon. the minister -

MR. BARRY: I do not want to show any discourtesy to the flag, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Butt): - that he is not allowed to -

MR. BARRY: I am not allowed to wave anything if I -

MR. CHAIRMAN: - display exhibits in the House and I would ask him to have it removed.

MR. NEARY: That is typical, waved the German flag.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BARRY: Treat it carefully, Mr. Chairman. Lay it in my coat pocket.

Mr. Chairman, it was a matter of some symbolism today, a symbolism of some magnitude for me to have the pleasure of bringing down the German flag and raising the Canadian flag. All too often, Mr. Chairman, we have seen resources in this Province developed by companies from away, by individuals from away, all too often because of the attitude such as we see from time to time from members opposite, that our own people do not have the confidence to do it. I believe that our people have the confidence to manage properly the offshore. We have people employed in the Petroleum Directorate who are doing just that, and if I could answer a few of the questions that the hon. member asked yesterday - what is the total number of people on staff at the Petroleum Directorate? Thirty-one. What is the total number of people of people on contract at the Petroleum Directorate? Fifteen of that. What is the length of contract for contractual staff? Eleven are one-year contracts, two are two-year contracts and one is a three-year contract, one is a one-and-a-half year contract. What is the block salary vote for 1980-81? \$700,000 was budgeted for the period 1980 to 1981. I do not know if all of that was taken up or not,

MR. BARRY: but if you divide thirty into -

MR. THOMS: More Tory hacks getting paid.

MR. BARRY: - if you divide thirty into 700,000
you would get less than \$20,000 a year average.

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible).

MR. BARRY: Now, listen, the hon. member for
Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms) -

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

MR. BARRY: - has been in the House for a year,
and I suppose it is because he does not have the basic
courtesy when he is outside of the House, but it is about
time he learned a little bit about the manners of somebody
who is a member of the Legislature, and one of them is not to
be taking cowardly attacks at members of the Public Service
who are trying to do a good job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BARRY: Now the hon. member has been in
the House long enough.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BARRY: His other colleagues do not do it.
And it is about time the member for Grand Bank grew up and stopped
being the maw mouth that he has been ever since he has been
in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. BARRY: And stopped going on in such a
childish fashion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible) salaries.

MR. BARRY: Now, let us grow, and let us grow
up. I understand the hon. member. His only previous experience
was as a mock parliamentarian, he is now a member of the

MR. BARRY: Legislature of this Province, and he should show a little class in the House, if not outside. Okay?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

The hon. minister has about thirty seconds remaining.

MR. BARRY: In the thirty seconds remaining I would like to urge strongly on the Opposition to pass this interim supply. Are the Opposition going to be the ones to see that the salaries of the civil servants remain unpaid? Are they going to hang up the business of the Province by these asinine remarks such as we see coming from the member for Grand Bank (Mr. Thoms)?

AN HON. MEMBER: Carry on.

MR. THOMS: Now, Mr. Chairman, the time has come to get on with the business of the Province, to get on with the business of the House and to pass this interim supply.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. THOMS: Wait until I get a crack at you. That is for sure.

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

MR. THOMS: (Inaudible) just get a crack at you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Order!
Order, please!

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has the floor.

MR. STIRLING: Very interesting -

MR. FLIGHT: You blew your cool, Leo.

MR. STIRLING: Very interesting seeing the debate between two former colleagues.

MR. FLIGHT: Leo blew his cool.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) law partners.

MR. ROBERTS: You stay out of it.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Chairman, I would like to get a few questions answered of real importance to the people in the district of Bellevue. And I presume, Mr. Chairman, that although the members on the other side find that very amusing, that on this side of the House we are concerned about the legitimate concerns of the people in the district of Bellevue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: It is more than we can say for the government.

MR. STIRLING: Now, Mr. Chairman, under a number of these headings we now -

MR. AYLWARD: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Now, Aylward, you were passed over (inaudible).

MR. STIRLING: - do not have a situation in

which we know when the Budget is coming down. And we have a block which, I believe, the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) estimated as a three month supply, I am not sure of that, but I think it is a three month supply. So that means we are going to be into the construction season.

Mr. Chairman, people in the area of Southwest Arm have been petitioning for roads in that area for a number of years. There was a suggestion made that this would be included in an application for DREE and the Province said no, this is our responsibility. It is the provincial responsibility to look after the secondary roads

MR. STIRLING: and they have never included it in an application for DREE, the roads in the Southwest Arm area. I understand that they have also taken the same approach and have never asked Ottawa for money for the roads in the Markland area.

Now, Mr. Chairman, roads are a very serious problem throughout most of rural Newfoundland. The government with its priorities on offshore oil and everything that relates to offshore oil, does not understand the problems and frustrations. And I would hope, Mr. Chairman, next week, that they will come out into the district of Bellevue because not a single minister has shown his nose in the district of Bellevue to this point. I would like for the ministers who are used to driving on paved roads to come to the district of Bellevue and to see what people have to put up with in the Markland area and in the Northwest Brook area and the Southwest Arm area, see what they are having to put up with for roads.

And I hope, Mr. Chairman, that now when the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) gets up to answer, or the new Minister of Transportation, he can tell us how much is in the Interim Supply Bill for roads in the Bellevue area, specifically the Southwest Arm, and the Markland-Northwest Brook area and in the whole area that has

MR. STIRLING:

to do with dirt roads. There are over fifty miles of dirt roads that have been neglected, Mr. Chairman, and now is the time for this government to show that they are prepared to spend their money, to take the responsibility that they should have accepted ten years ago, Mr. Chairman, and that deals primarily with roads. And I hope that you can take this out of the political context this afternoon by simply getting up and telling us how much money is in the Interim Supply Bill for the roads in the area of the whole Bellevue district.

The Minister of Health (Mr. House) unfortunately is not here, but he is in disagreement with the people in Bellevue who came in and had a meeting with him. And he may want to change the answer that he gave me recently, he may want to change it to assure the people in Bellevue, yes, that what he told them is what he also said in the House and that is he was recommending the close of the hospital in Come By Chance.

I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that when the Premier goes out there next week he will be able to announce what we have already announced on this side, and that is that we have examined the needs and there is no question that there is a need for the Come By Chance Hospital and the Clarendville Hospital. And the Minister of Health may want to correct the information that he gave the House the last time that we discussed that question.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that the people in Bellevue would like to know, instead of all this foolishness about the constitution, is how much money is in the Interim Supply Bill for the creation of jobs, how much is going to be put in there so that people can get the kinds of seasonal jobs that they have always gotten on road work and on construction work in the district of Bellevue. I would ask, Mr. Chairman, that when we get into this discussion of how much money is in the Interim Supply Bill, that we find out from

MR. STIRLING: the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook) how much money she is going to put back in the budget for all those municipalities in Bellevue that have had their grants cut back and their grants taken, their grants actually confiscated without any discussion to go against old debt amounts. And, Mr. Speaker, the people in the municipalities throughout Bellevue who are trying to cope with the decision made by this government contrary to the Whelan Royal Commission, they made the decision to bring in the Municipalities Act that the royal commission recommended to be phased in. You have a situation in Bellevue with many of the small municipalities, like the small municipalities all over this Province, Mr. Chairman, where they have actually cut them back from the 1979 - not the 1980 - 1979 grants. They have taken away their right to have a vehicle tax and a fuel tax, and they have left them without the means of balancing their budgets and they have taken back the grants. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that when the Minister of Municipal Affairs gets up to answer my questions now in the remaining few minutes, that she can answer the question of how much money is in the Interim Supply Bill to look after those grants and reinstate them to the 1979 level.

Mr. Chairman, in the question of education, I hope that they will show how much money, since they are now proceeding, and presumably they have got to get things underway, how much money is going to be put in now so that they can get on with handling the problem of inadequate schools, the number of additional teachers that are going to be provided in this Interim Supply Bill so that they can make plans. Out in the district of Bellevue, Mr. Chairman, they are not going to be able to cope with all of the additional courses with Grade XII and these are some of the questions that people have been asking me about as I visit them in the district of Bellevue.

MR. STIRLING: In summary, Mr. Chairman, -
and how much time do I have?

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): The hon. member has about three
minutes remaining. I was just about to give him his notice.

MR. STIRLING: Mr. Chairman -

MR. FLIGHT: By leave!

MR. STIRLING: No, Mr. Chairman, I really do not
need to use the time. I would like to get some answers.
I would like to get some answers, Mr. Chairman. Those are
answers that are pressing. And since we are not going to
have the budget until after the by-election, maybe the Minister
of Finance (Dr. Collins) can answer these questions now.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, you know the practice is is you go from right to left.

MR. E. ROBERTS: He was not even looking over at us. He was hoping somebody would get up over there.

MR. MARSHALL: I do not know. The hopes and aspirations of the Chairman of the committee - I really could not answer that.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Well, they were dashed today, the member for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir(Mr.Andrews) made it over the Chairman.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, to hear the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. L. Stirling) you would not know but this Interim Supply Bill was being passed for the district of Bellevue. And if that is so, and that is his impression, I am sure he will be delighted when he goes back to the hustings tomorrow to try to save the hide of his leadership in that by-election, that he will be delighted to tell the people of Bellevue that \$448 million, in accordance with his impression, is going to be spent in Bellevue. And all that, Mr. Chairman, in the next three months. What is going to happen in the following nine months, God only knows. So, Mr. Chairman, the questions that the hon. Leader of the Opposition is asking, he is asking obviously for political reasons. They obviously were involved in a political campaign in the district of Bellevue and he is obviously asking these questions for political reasons.

The other questions that he asked, Mr. Chairman - you know, this is interim supply, this is the three month's supply. The general details, which is the custom, of interim supply are given and they are in the schedule to the Bill and the real, specific details in accordance with the

MR. MARSHALL: usual customary process, will be brought forth and will come forth in the main supply bill when the Budget is brought in. And the hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins) has indicated in his usual timely fashion he will have the (inaudible) and the Budget in long before the average time elapses, which elapses at the end of the year.

So, Mr. Speaker, all of these questions, I would submit, it is quite improper, really, for the government at this particular stage to answer because you would not be given -

MR. E. ROBERTS: Oh, improper!

MR. MARSHALL: No, improper, unusual shall we say.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible) three months.

MR. MARSHALL: No, no. Well, we have given the details.

MR. ROBERTS: Retrospect.

MR. MARSHALL: No, it is not improper for the government. What the government is doing is giving details of what it is being used for.

MR. STIRLING: That is what we are asking you.

MR. MARSHALL: And I am suggesting that the minute, specific details of these, Mr. Chairman, will be given when the Committees on the Estimates meet, when the Committee on Resources meet and the Government Services meet and the other one and before this House, and we will be glad to, as we always are. And certainly, Mr. Chairman, we have given a lot of details since this has come in. I mean, this government emotes information day after day after day in the Question Period, in the discussion on Interim Supply, in the Committee on Supply, all of which exist now, Mr. Chairman, by grace of this administration

MR. MARSHALL: and this government and this party. I mean it is one -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Next to the flag, it is another flag, Mr. Chairman, in our crown.

So, Mr. Chairman, it looks like there are other questions to be asked in relation to interim supply. I hope that hon. members between now and Thursday will consider to ask questions in a concise manner and I know they will get concise answers. And I would hope, Mr. Chairman, that at that time when Thursday comes -

MR. STIRLING: (Inaudible) the answers.

MR. MARSHALL: I beg your pardon?

MR. ROBERTS: How about answering some now?

MR. MARSHALL: We will give the answers, Mr. Chairman.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) answers on the Order Paper.

MR. MARSHALL: Oh, we give answers, Mr. Chairman. We ask questions every day. I mean the Question -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN (BUTT): Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: The Question Period, Mr. Chairman, has replaced the Order Paper. There was a time when the hon. gentlemen were on the other side and it was, 'Sit down, Max', 'Sit down Steve', 'Sit down this one'. You could not ask a question. 'Put it on the Order Paper' we had. And then every day, Mr. Chairman, every day we would have an Order Paper of a half an hour long, with answers, Mr. Chairman, with questions.

MR. ROBERTS: No, no! We had never a lot of questions (inaudible).

MR. MARSHALL: I do not know that one answer has been refused. I do know that at one time when the Opposition was invited under the rules of this House to indicate if they were dissatisfied with any questions asked for the previous week there was nothing, there was no notice so they were obviously satisfied then.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!
On motion, that the Committee rise, report progress, and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker returned to the Chair.

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

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

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

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

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

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