

PRELIMINARY  
UNEDITED  
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE PERIOD:  
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
FRIDAY, MAY 8, 1981

The House met at 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. STIRLING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

When I last asked the President of the Treasury Board (Dr. Collins) what action he was prepared to take about the teachers' strike, he reported to this House that since the strike vote was now being taken they had suspended their operations until they could get the results of the strike vote. Well, the results have now been announced. Can the President of the Treasury Board now tell us what action he is prepared to take today?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I checked just a little while ago as to whether there was an announcement in regard to the strike vote and unless the hon. Leader of the Opposition wishes to give me indication of information that he has that is not available to us, the information I have is that there has not been any notification either to the Department of Labour and Manpower or to Treasury Board from the NTA as a result of the strike vote.

Now I am not by any means implying a mandate has not been given, I am not implying that whatever. I am just saying that we have not been notified so I just make that correction.

In regard to whatever action we are prepared to take, I think I have already answered that in the past and that is that the NTA, when we last met with them, or at least when they last met with the conciliation officer, they indicated that when they did get a mandate-

DR. COLLINS: if indeed they did; well, I suppose even if they did not - that they would come back to us and we assumed that they would come back to us quite promptly after the situation was clarified one way or the other, and we said that we would be willing to continue the discussions that had been ongoing last week. So that is where it still stands.

MR. STIRLING: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

X  
MR. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker, I realize that this government is very, very touchy about getting official letters and they sit and hope nothing is going to happen until an official letter comes in. But now, Mr. Speaker, this indicates a bit of a different position than they were taking with NAPE. Do I understand the President of the Treasury Board (Dr. Collins) to say that he is prepared to

MR. STIRLING:

improve his offer to the teachers and that he has told the teachers that, prior to actually going on strike, he is prepared to sit down and negotiate a change in the government position? Is that what the President of Treasury Board is saying?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly can confirm that we said we would discuss and we would negotiate through the conciliation mechanism in place with the representatives of the NTA, What the substance of those negotiations, those discussions will be I cannot foretell. That is what the discussions are all about. Now if the hon. the Leader of the Opposition feels that this is the wrong way to go, that is his opinion and he can hold his opinion and I am not particularly concerned about what opinion he does hold. I know that we have our way of dealing with our responsibilities and we will continue to deal with the responsibilities, our duties, as we see the broad context of things and as we see the flexibilities available to us. And to date I would point out that our success rate in this matter is very high. The numbers of public service workers who now have a new contract enters into the thousands

with a large number of bargaining units and I can say -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

DR. COLLINS: - that except in the heat of negotiations, our relationships with these bargaining units have been very good indeed. During the heat of negotiations obviously there are stands taken, there are statements made, but that is the process, and if people do not understand that they are being terribly naive. But the point is that to date we have been very successful in our discussions with them and we anticipate and hope that we will continue to be successful.

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1375

EL - 2

MR. STIRLING: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. STIRLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think the  
President of Treasury Board has put his finger on the pro-  
blem. One of the main reasons, as he is going to see, that  
there is almost unanimous support of the association is that  
at the annual convention this year--these negotiations have  
been going on since last August. They have worked a whole  
year, the year is just about over, and they were given the  
impression by the negotiating team that something substant-  
ial could be offered, and this was to their annual meeting.  
And then after they got away from the publicity of the annual  
meeting, it was found, well, they did not really have any-  
thing to offer. And now what I am asking the President of the  
Treasury Board is since this is such a vitally important  
thing for all of this Province, are you now truly going  
to be flexible. Are you going to enter into negotiations?  
And what appears to be the new style for this Government  
is that after you go on strike, serious negotiations start.  
Are you now prepared to negotiate in a flexible manner?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I regretfully say that the hon. Leader of the Opposition's remarks only underline the naiveté he has in this area as is apparent in so many other areas.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, there are antagonists -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

DR. COLLINS: - there are antagonists in this situation as there must be. On one side sit the NTA and on the other side sit government. That is the very nature of collective bargaining: There is an employer and there are employees and by the very nature, by the essence of the thing, there has to be an approach of contention there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS: Now this is to be expected and this is the way it works. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are other antagonists -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

DR. COLLINS: There are antagonism between the Opposition and government. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this does not put the Opposition in the same position as the NTA. The NTA can take positions which are quite right for them to take. The Opposition, although they are in opposition to government, they should not be taking the same oppositions. They must show a sense of responsibility, as government shows a sense of responsibility in terms of what government has to do and the flexibilities and the financial situation of government. So for the Opposition to align themselves totally with the NTA, I would say, is irresponsible and naive and that is why I point it out to the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stirling).

DR. COLLINS: We will take a very positive, we will take a very responsible attitude towards our continued negotiations if they do come about with NTA as we have taken in the past.

MR. L. STIRLING: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

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

I think the President of Treasury Board (Dr. Collins) has done what he can do today. I would like to turn now today to the other person responsible for education who has insisted, unlike the President of Treasury Board, that there is going to be no strike and that she has taken all the action to avert a strike. I will ask the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) if she can now tell us, if she can now assure us of the questions that have been asked in this House all this week and that parents are asking all over this Province: what contingency plan does she have to reassure the students that they will be given credit for their work and what action is she going to take to make sure that the Grade XI students, in particular, are not going to suffer because of this government's attitude of just sitting on their hands? Could she fill in the public on what she plans to do?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. minister.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, this government, through the Education Department, through Treasury Board, through the Department of Labour and Manpower, have been applying our best efforts to see that the issues which remain outstanding between the NTA and the parties on the

MS. VERGE: other side, government and the Federation of School Boards, are successfully resolved.

As for safeguarding the interests of students, of course that is a paramount consideration in addition to looking after the interests of the taxpayers and voters of this Province. I have answered these questions before. There were a series of these questions at the Estimates Committee hearing yesterday morning. It is obvious that students will get credit for the work that they have done so far in this school. As to the mechanics, you know, I am not in a position now to get into a detailed discussion. The Federation of School Boards, which is having its annual meeting here in St. John's now, is discussing the situation. But, you know, I can assure people that the interests of students are being considered as paramount.

As for public examinations for Grade XI, I have to repeat again that now public exams are given only for Grade XI, not for lower grades, and they determine half the final mark for



May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1377

NM - 1

MS. VERGE: Grade XI, the other half being based on teachers' evaluation of the school work done through the year. So I am confident that we will be able to find a solution to the dispute but we have to think first of the students and try to prevent any withdrawal of services.

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

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker, the minister has indicated that she is perhaps taking some action and that public examinations are given in the Province, but I would also like to tell her, and I am sure she is aware of this, that part of the evaluation of students is done by teachers somewhere between the last of May and the middle of June.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Question! Question!

MR. SPEAKER: Order!

MR. TULK: Now in the event of a strike then, what action or what contingency plans does the minister have for that?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I would think that teachers and principals and different school boards have different ways of doing their evaluation. Most - a good evaluation - would be done through the year from the Fall through the Spring.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear! Right. Right on.

MS. VERGE: The public examinations, to get back to that, which do determine half the final marks under our system of shared evaluation, are already set, everything is proceeding on schedule. The marking has always been done by teachers in the Summer months, July and August, under arrangements which are completely separate and apart from the collective agreement which is now in dispute. The rate of pay for the markers was recently substantially increased and indications

MS. VERGE: which I have gotten from teachers are that teachers are quite pleased with the new rate of pay for the marking of public exams.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MS. VERGE: So, you know, even looking at the worst possibility there is no reason to think that public exams will not be given as usual and that the Grade XI students will be evaluated, will be allowed to proceed with high school graduation and their lives.

MR. TULK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker, I am not talking to the minister about public examinations. I am talking to the minister about shared evaluation where schools have full evaluations and the schools give out the promotion certificates and the graduation certificates. Now in the case of shared evaluation and full evaluation in schools, then that is going to be done somewhere in the last two weeks in June, Now are we looking at a situation where students this year, if the strike is on, are not going to be receiving their diplomas, are not going to be eligible for university because they do not have them, and what plans does the minister have in case that strike comes off? We hope it does not but in case it does what plans does the minister have? Does she have any?

MR. WARREN: None. None. None.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I do not think I can be much plainer than I have been already.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1377

NM - 3

MS. VERGE: Grade XI students' work is evaluated on the basis, number one, of the work they do during the year. Now that evaluation is done by teachers throughout the school year on the basis of

Ms VERGE:

performance day to day in a classroom, on the basis of tests which are administered from time to time-in the Fall, at Christmastime, in the Winter and in the Spring. Many teachers would be in a position to give a pretty accurate evaluation now and in many cases that is documented. The other half of the mark is based on the public exams which are administered by the Department of Education under the arrangement I have already described, which is quite separate and apart from the collective agreement now in dispute. So we have these two sources on which to draw for evaluation of Grade XI students on which to determine their high school graduation and their entrance to post secondary educational institutions.

MR. TULK: A supplementary.

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

MR. TULK: Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the fifty per cent evaluation that is done in public examinations and I am also well aware of the fifty per cent that is done in schools.

MR. WARREN: You were a teacher, were you not?

MR. TULK: But the fifty per cent I am concerned about is the fifty per cent that is done by teachers in school and it is usually summarized - it is not usually, it is summarized at this time of the year. Now if the minister does not have a plan, will she tell us she does not have a plan? And if she does not have a plan, will she get one and quit being so naive?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

Ms VERGE: Mr. Speaker, just yesterday I was talking to the superintendent of the school board which

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1378

AH-2

MS. VERGE: formally employed the hon. member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) and he assured me that that school board has on record documentation for students' work so far this school year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for LaPoile.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: I thank the hon. gentlemen for the applause. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that we were all concerned recently, prior to the Premier's departure for the Caribbean, we were all concerned about the threat on his life and the security and so forth of the Premier. Would the hon. gentleman tell us or bring us up to date on that situation, tell us if he is now under surveillance by bodyguards and by security and to what extent?

Would the hon. gentleman also indicate whether, when he is travelling within the Province, if he has to take bodyguards with him or security people with him and if he is travelling outside the Province within the Caribbean and in California and so forth, do the bodyguards and the security go along with him?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, it is a very sensitive area in which to respond in a specific way. Suffice it to say now additional security measures have been taken over the last number of weeks and remain in effect

PREMIER PECKFORD: as of this moment and will continue into effect and will be re-evaluated on sort of a daily and a weekly basis. I do not know where the hon. member gets California. I did take a vacation with my family to the Caribbean. I do not know where California entered into it.

MR. NEARY: I did not enter anywhere. I am just using it as an example.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Oh. Well, because the hon. member mentioned California rather than anywhere I had to then respond to wonder why he was talking about California.

So there are security measures in effect right now. The extent to which they will be utilized when I travel has to be finalized. There has been no finalization as to whether in fact there will be special security measures put into effect when I travel. That has not been finally arrived at or decided upon. But there are additional security measures in place right now at this present moment that were not in place a month ago and they will remain in place for some time to come but will be evaluated on a daily and a weekly basis.

I will just go on to say that stories and information that were released some time ago about certain matters and certain threats- let me just put it to the hon. member this way - have not necessarily subsided and therefore that is the reason why these measures have to continue but will be reviewed on a daily and weekly basis.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am genuinely concerned about this. I just threw in California. It could be Germany, Boston, anywhere. But the question really that

MR. NEARY: I wanted the hon. gentleman to answer is if it is necessary to take bodyguards or security, whatever they call them, when he is travelling outside the Province and inside the Province, and if it has been established that these calls were not crank calls, that these calls were of a serious nature and serious enough to have to provide the Premier with 'round-the-clock security. Is that the situation?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: As it relates to travel, from this day forward, either in the Province or outside the Province, final determination has not been made as to whether special security measures should be taken but it will be made in the next few days. That is number one.

Number two, there is now special 'round-the-clock security in place over and above the normal security that was available all along. So there is special security in place right now.

Thirdly, on the point of crank versus serious, there is evidence more recent that what has been publicly known to suggest that it is of the more serious variety rather than of the crank variety.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: I wonder if the hon. gentleman could elaborate, because the reports that were making the rounds were that these were mainly crank 'phone calls

MR. NEARY: because the government increased the price of beer but now it seems to be a little more serious than that. Does it involve organized crime of any kind? Do the authorities think it is just a local situation? Does it involve anybody outside the Province, organized crime or anything of that nature?

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I cannot go any further than I have gone to the present moment on that matter. I think I have tried to provide as much information as I can to the hon. member to this point in time. Suffice it to say that there are special security measures in place at the present moment on a twenty-four hour basis and they will continue, that there has been additional information over and above the original information which leads us to continue to initiate these special security measures. Whether this will go so far as to put in place people to accompany me when I go outside the Province or inside the Province, that has yet to be determined over the next couple of days. But there is additional information which has led to the continuance of that special security that was started a number of weeks ago.

MR. NEARY: Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

X  
MR. NEARY: Would the hon. Premier indicate to the House whether this special security just involves the Premier as an individual or does it involve any other ministers or any other members of the House? Is there any indication in the new evidence that has been uncovered that somebody may be out to get some other member of the House, a minister? And would the hon. gentleman also indicate, in my last question, if the security is necessary when going from his home to Confederation Building or going from his home



MR. NEARY: to the supermarket or things like that?

Does he have to have security for that sort of thing?

MR. WINDSOR: Why do you want that information?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

MR. WINDSOR: Why that information?

MR. NEARY: The what?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. WINDSOR: Why do you want to know that?

It is very confidential.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: No, no. The Premier does not mind answering that if he has to have security to go from -

MR. WINDSOR: Why do you need to know that?

MR. NEARY: - Confederation Building -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - to his house. I think we should know that.

MR. WINDSOR: I do not know why.

MR. NEARY: Why should we not? We are paying for it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I have given as much information as I am prepared to give at the present time. If I thought it was in the public good, and that is a judgment call I have to make, then I would provide additional information.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) re the teachers' labour problems with the government. In view of the fact that a vote has now been taken, and unless the minister did not get up as early as the President of Treasury Board (Dr. Collins) to hear the news, the vote is taken

MR. LUSH: and it is highly supportive of the strike. So in view of that, in view of the fact that the vote has been taken, in view of the fact that the minister has no contingency plans in the event of a strike, and in view of that fact, of course, that the minister, that one of her jobs must be taking care of the interests and the welfare of teachers, in view of these things, I wonder if the minister can tell the House what steps she will now take to ensure that a strike is averted? Not what steps she has taken, but what steps she will now take.

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

X MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, first of all, I was up very early this morning. I heard the radio news but I have not received any official notification of the result of the teachers vote. Secondly, I have never said that there are no contingency plans. What I have been saying all along is that rather than acting, as members opposite, in expectation or even in hope that there is going to be a withdrawal of services -

MR. LUSH: No siree!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes indeed!

MS. VERGE: -I am trying to concentrate my efforts, as are my colleagues on this side of the House, to being conciliatory, to trying to resume talks to work out a settlement, and I think that is what the parents and the students we are elected to serve want us to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, some weeks ago when the strike was on at the College of Trades and Technology, the Minister of Labour and Manpower (J. Dinn), to demonstrate his support to these workers, signed a petition or signed a card that was circulated by the group. I wonder if the minister, in her position, whose responsibility, as I said, is to look after the interests and the welfare of teachers, I wonder if the Minister has done anything to indicate to the teachers her support for their present financial circumstances and their fight with government to get higher salaries?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, as a member of government I am interested in and concerned about the welfare of all the people we serve and I am working as a member of a team, that is, the government, to work out a satisfactory settlement to the present dispute.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. THOMS: A supplementary, to the Minister of Education. The minister yesterday in the Estimates Committee - it is hard to hear myself speak on my own side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. THOMS: Yesterday before the Estimates Committee, the minister indicated that up to that point in time she had not been involved in the negotiations. It was an involvement between Treasury Board, the school boards and the NTA and now she is giving - is the minister now giving an inference that she has been involved, because yesterday you said you had not been involved up to this point?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, we went through this at great length yesterday morning.

MR. THOMS: And we will go through it again and again!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. VERGE: And what I said, I did not say that I was not involved point blank. What I said is that I had not been involved on a negotiating committee. The negotiating committee for government and the Federation of School Boards comprises government officials, a representative of my department with whom I have daily contact, and a representative of the Treasury Board.

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1381

EL - 3

MR. LUSH:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

for Terra Nova.

A supplementary, the hon. member

MR. LUSH:

Minister of Education (L. Verge) a question -

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the

MR. FLIGHT:

It is so amusing, boy.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

MR. LUSH:

minister a question about the fact that the government unilaterally interfered with the teachers' collective bargaining act last year and the minister

MR. LUSH:

acknowledged that that was indeed a fact. Mr. Speaker, I think it is probably one of the first times in modern day unionism that a particular group of workers had their positions taken away unilaterally and without any consultation with the union or the workers. The minister indicated that there would be some compensation, Can the minister indicate the degree of compensation, whether it will be the total compensation that these principals and vice-principals lost, or whether it is just going to be partial compensation?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, this matter of the co-ordinating principals and vice-principals positions is one of the outstanding issues in the collective bargaining dispute. I did not say what the hon. member attributed to me. What I said is that this matter was raised by the NTA after the event - I do not know when, sometime last Summer, last Fall when talks began on working out the new agreement. Since then the matter was referred to an arbitration board. The arbitration board decision, which I cannot go into in any great detail, basically indicated that legally the action taken was correct but that the people involved, that is, the co-ordinating principals and vice-principals, must be compensated for the period from the end of the last agreement which was the end of August 1980, until when the new agreement is signed, because in the absence of a new agreement the old agreement continues. So for that period there has to be some compensation for the people affected. The amount of the compensation, according to the arbitration board decision, should be attempted to be worked out between the parties as they talk and negotiate. Failing an agreement among the parties, then the matter is to be referred back to the arbitration board who will settle the amount of compensation.

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

MR. TULK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

X  
As I understand that thing, that was perhaps - the public legislation is perhaps one of the outstanding issues still left in the teachers' efforts to get a contract. I would like to ask the minister that in view of the fact that last year the government did do away with a teaching position in this Province, namely supervising or co-ordinating principals, many of those teachers are very upset about somebody coming in and interfering with their security of position while the contract is in place, has she indicated to Treasury Board that she is solidly behind the teachers in seeking that public legislation in their present contract?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, you know I have already said that I am working as part of a team, which is the government, and what I have said, you know, is said within the

MS VERGE:

secrecy and confidentiality of the Cabinet process, and I am quite confident that reasonable actions have been taken to date and that we will continue to strive collectively as a government, Treasury Board, the Education Department, everyone else affected, the Department of Labour and Manpower, to see that a settlement is reached with the other parties in the dispute. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Order 9.

Motion, second reading of a bill,  
"An Act To Amend The Workers' Compensation Act," (Bill No. 47). X

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure this morning to introduce another great Tory reform - X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DINN: - another great step forward.

Mr. Speaker, we have introduced many reforms during the past couple of years. Just to mention a couple, Workers' Compensation for fishermen

MR. THOMS: You would have some cheek to claim that.

MR. DINN: The hon. member is not interested in that although he represents Grand Bank, but I can assure the hon. member that the fishermen in Grand Bank are interested in that.

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

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order has been raised by the hon. the member for LaPoile.



May 8, 1981

Tape 1383

EC - 2

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I know the hon. gentleman did not deliberately make that statement, but he is misleading the House when he says that this was a Tory reform, this Workers' Compensation for fishermen in this Province.

MR. S. NEARY: As a matter of fact, workers' compensation for fishermen was brought in by the Liberal Government prior to 1972. All this crowd did was amend it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): I think I have heard enough. I understand what the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is trying to do but it certainly does not constitute a point of order.

The hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. J. DINN: Mr. Speaker, I think most of the people in the Province will agree that we have all heard enough from the hon. member for LaPoile.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have introduced several great reforms in workers' compensation not the least of which was to cover all fishermen in Newfoundland. Also, Mr. Speaker, in the past couple of years we have increased compensation to the workers in Newfoundland from 14,000 to 16,000 -

MR. THOMS: Get to the bill.

MR. J. DINN: I am making some introductory remarks. I will get to the bill now in a minute if the hon. member will permit me. From \$14,000 per year to \$16,000 per year and also from \$16,000, another increase of \$3,000, to \$19,000 per year, so that, Mr. Speaker, the concern for people on Workers' compensation in this Province by this administration, is unprecedented in the number of years that we have been involved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill this morning originated some years back when there was concern expressed by school boards and various educational institutions. And the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) who got together with the Department of Justice, the Department of Labour and Manpower, the Department of Education, the Workers' Compensation Board

MR. J. DINN: got together and came up with an amendment so that students who are working in this Province as a result of work training programmes put on by the Department of Education and educational institutions in the Province, would be covered by Workers' Compensation for the first time in the history of Newfoundland. As a matter of fact, we almost made it first again. It was almost a first. Another province did introduce this bill before. The Province of Alberta, another great, of course, Tory administration, introduced the bill out in Alberta. They have Workers' Compensation for students in work training programmes. Although we are usually first in application of new initiatives in Workers' Compensation, we are second this time.

We have also, Mr. Speaker, in the works, a review committee on Workers' Compensation headed by the former Chairman of the Worker's Compensation Board, Mr. William May, who is going about the Province getting ideas from the people, getting input from the people from all districts in this Province, so that by the end of this year he will be making recommendations to me as minister and I will, of course, take them to government so that more new initiatives in workers' compensation coverage and in other areas will be brought into this House of Assembly for approval of the members, the representatives of the people.

Mr. Speaker, needless to say with the things that have happened over the past couple of years in workers' compensation alone, one would have to admit - even hon. members opposite would have to admit - that we have made

MR. DINN:

great strides forward. We can call them steps, I prefer to call them strides. What I am talking about here now, Mr. Speaker, is Bill No. 47, the meat of Bill No. 47. What the hon. member wants me to get into I will now get into.

The meat of Bill No. 47, as I said, the history of it goes back to the concern of the Departments of Education, Labour and Manpower, Justice, various school boards. The hon. member will know various school boards in the Province, educational institutions in the Province, the College of Trades and Technology, the community colleges because of concern expressed - I have twenty minutes, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): You have an hour.

MR. DINN: - I have an hour? - because of the concern expressed that students be covered - there was an insurance programme in place but we did not feel that that was adequate. So we felt that the way to do it, the way to cover the possibility of a student being injured while working in a work training programme, the way to do it would be to cover these students by Workers' Compensation and any monies paid out by Workers' Compensation for students injured in these work experiences, work training programmes, of course, will be paid for by the government of the Province.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill, this amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act will cover students in the College of Trades and Technology, the College of Fisheries and Navigation - as it says in the bill - Marine Engineering and Electronics, the Bay St. George Community College, District Vocational Schools, Mr. Speaker, and it will cover up to the compensation available to workers who would do jobs in industry so that the maximum compensation will be exactly the same as any worker in the Province in that for a total disability, for example, we

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1385

SD - 2

MR. DINN: would have - and please God, Mr. Speaker, we will not have any serious accidents or injuries in these work training programmes. We have a very, very good record up to this point in time. As a matter of fact, I do not believe there have been very many, if any, recorded accidents on these work training programmes. So I am hoping, of course, that will continue. But in the event that it does not that we do have accidents during these work training programmes then, of course, the student, the person, will be covered by Workers' Compensation.

This has been a long time in coming, Mr. Speaker. It is one that should have been done years ago but, Mr. Speaker, I am delighted

MR. DINN:

to be able to say today that we are now in a position to bring this piece of legislation forward and hope that, of course, all hon. members will agree and that we will give speedy passage to this piece of legislation so that workers will be covered in the work training programmes that they will be involved in. So, Mr. Speaker, last year when I introduced the amendment to cover all fishermen in the Province -

MR. NEARY: An amendment? I thought it was an act you brought in not an amendment.

MR. DINN: - to cover all fishermen in the Province for workers' compensation then, Mr. Speaker, we had serious cases reported to us. One case, one very serious case that is being reviewed now is of a fisherman in Labrador who is totally disabled. If the amendment last year had been passed fast enough, then he would be covered by workers' compensation.

And, Mr. Speaker, of course we are reviewing that case and we would hope that there is something that government can do for that individual. The history of fishermen and people being affected by these injuries - this one gentleman who was brought to my attention by the hon. the minister from Labrador, the hon. Mr. Goudie from Labrador, and the member for Labrador, the member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) brought it to my attention as well and, of course, we are reviewing the case and hopefully -

MR. HISCOCK: Reviewing it? (inaudible) two months and five months (inaudible).

MR. DINN: We were reviewing it for a long time, yes, and as a matter of fact, the act as was passed last year, cannot cover that individual situation but we are

MR. DINN: attempting now, not in this particular amendment here today, but we are attempting now to find a way so that the hon. gentleman's constituent can be covered by that amendment that we passed here in the House last year. It is a very serious incident and one that was brought forward to me by- as a matter of fact, several people and several organizations have written letters as well as the member for the district. The first letter, I believe, that I received on the gentleman's behalf was - well, the first letter was from the gentleman and then the next one was from the hon. the Minister from Labrador (Mr. Goudie) and then the member and the Premier as well. So then we are reviewing that and hopefully we can do something about that gentleman's situation.

This here, Mr. Speaker, is another bill and I hope we do not take too many days in passing this very important piece of legislation. I think if we had acted quickly the last time we brought in an amendment with respect to the fishermen, and I realize that people had things to say and wanted to expound on what things should happen in workers' compensation, if we had implemented the legislation the last time, if it had been proclaimed just thirty-six hours, I believe, the hon. member's constituent - I believe it was thirty-six

MR. DINN: hours late that gentleman would have been covered. And hopefully we will pass this very important amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act very, very quickly. One would even think that we might get it through today.

So, Mr. Speaker, this started - the amendment took years in coming in, it took too long, it took much too long getting to this House and hopefully it will not take too much longer before students will be covered. As I say, it originated by concern expressed. The insurance programme that was available to students was deemed to be not acceptable not enough coverage, and the Department of Education in conjunction with school boards, I believe, and concerns expressed by the different colleges, and community colleges and so on, got together with Labour and Manpower, Workers' Compensation and Justice, of course, and we got this amendment brought into the House and, as I say, hopefully this great step forward will be passed as quickly as possible so that we will not have a situation as we had last year with an hon. member's constituent in Labrador, one that we are attempting to work on. I do not believe we can do it within the legislation passed because of the date proclaimed, but I can assure the hon. member that we will work on that case and hopefully we can resolve it. Because it is a very, very serious situation of a fisherman who worked all of his life and just happened to miss workers' compensation by thirty-six hours. It is the kind of thing that hon. members of the House would have nightmares over because it is a very serious total disability case, and it is one that we might have to -

MR. STIRLING: You should make it a special act.



MR. DINN: - the hon. the Leader of the Opposition, we might have to address here in this House. And if that is the only way, then that is what we will have to do. But it is a case that we should be very concerned about. This is another situation luckily, up to this point in time, and there has to be a certain amount of luck, because you cannot be 100 per cent safe. In any work training programme or anything that you do, you cannot be 100 per cent safe.

We have an excellent record to this point in time, but I do not know if we are marking time in a situation like this, if the possibility of one of these accidents actually happens and we have somebody very seriously injured and they have minimal coverage by insurance, which is, as everybody knows now, inadequate, hopefully they will be covered by Workers' Compensation when this amendment - and hopefully this amendment will go through - goes through. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading. X

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1388

NM - 1

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): The hon. member for  
Terra Nova, the Deputy House Leader.

MR. LUSH: For some time now, Mr. Speaker,  
the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) has been  
trying to find -

MR. MOORES: Sit down and listen now.

MR. LUSH: - an issue on which to hang  
his hat, trying to find an issue on which he can get a  
reputation. Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Labour  
and Manpower missed that opportunity this year when he could  
have demonstrated how strong he was, when he could have  
demonstrated how concerned he was about the people of this  
Province when we had the labour problems and still have them.  
And every time the minister speaks he indeed demonstrates,  
Mr. Speaker, how weak and ineffective he is. That is what the  
minister does. But yet he has been trying to get an issue.  
Another issue that he tried to get onto, of course, was the  
labour statistics over the last few months because they looked  
a little bit favourable. The minister was getting up and  
commenting on that, you know, and we know the minister has got  
no more effect, no more influence on what is happening to the  
employment in this Province, all he is merely doing is just  
reading off the statistics like a newsman reads off the  
weather forecast in the morning. And, Mr. Speaker, if they  
happen to be good, of course, the minister jumps up and down, Of  
course, that is the only time he reads them. But as far as his  
having any influence on the creation of jobs in this Province,  
not one little bit of effect, no more effect on that than he  
is having with respect to establishing a good labour relations  
climate in this Province.

MR. LUSH: So, Mr. Speaker, the minister missed his chance, missed his chance to demonstrate to the people his concern, and to demonstrate what a powerful minister he could have been. He missed that with the labour situation when the government forced the support workers at the College of Trades and Technology to go on strike and to remain there for eight months. The minister missed a golden opportunity there, and another opportunity by forcing the teachers of this Province to their knees to get a reasonable increase. So, Mr. Speaker, the minister has not got an issue yet.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to support this. It is simply an amendment, simply an amendment and the minister talks about it as unprecedented legislation. Well, let me tell the minister, let me tell the minister that the unprecedented legislation with respect to the Workers' Compensation was brought into this House long before the minister was a member, long before the minister was a member.

MR. FLIGHT: He was still a Liberal (inaudible).

MR. LUSH: The unprecedented legislation, Mr. Speaker, was brought in by the Liberal Administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: The unprecedented legislation with respect to Workers' Compensation, that is who

MR. LUSH: brought it in and everything since then simply has just been an amendment or an extension to another piece of legislation. There has been nothing historic, there has been nothing unprecedented, just, Mr. Speaker, simple amendments, simple extensions.

MR. MOORES: Right on!

MR. LUSH: But, Mr. Speaker, we agree with this particular amendment, we agree with this particular extension of coverage to students in the various post-secondary institutions. Certainly, we agree with it. But, Mr. Speaker, let us not let this minister get away with that kind of nonsense, that kind of unmitigated twaddle that here we have unprecedented legislation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the unprecedented legislation was brought in long before this minister came on the scene because if it were not, I am afraid the workers of this Province would be in desperate straits right now -

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. LUSH: - if we had to wait for this crowd when we can see their callous attitude and their attitude of insensitivity towards the workers of this Province -

MR. FLIGHT: Uncaring. Uncaring.

MR. LUSH: - when we can see that, Mr. Speaker, bringing all of the workers within the Public Service right to their knees, Mr. Speaker, to get a reasonable increase in these times of terrific inflation.

MR. FLIGHT: Grind them into the ground.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, grinding the people to the ground. And that is what -

MR. FLIGHT: Right.

MR. LUSH: I fully support teachers, Sir.  
I say it publicly, I fully support teachers.

If I were the Minister of Labour,  
if I were the Minister of Education, if I were the

MR. LUSH: President of Treasury Board, the negotiations would have been all over with not today, but six or seven months ago it would have been over and done.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: And it would have been all over. And the teachers would be back in the classrooms today working happily and the parents would be happy. There would be no threat of a strike if the hon. member had any influence at all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. LUSH: If I had a position in government we would not be in this situation. There would be no strike vote taken, it would not have been necessary.

AN HON. MEMBER: You would give it all away.

MR. LUSH: Ah, give it all away! That is something!

MR. MOORES: Wait until you try to legislate them back to work.

MR. LUSH: That is the attitude, Mr. Speaker!

MR. MOORES: Wait until you make that move.

MR. CALLAN: Give it all away! As if he owned it all.

MR. NEARY: They gave it all away to A. B. Walsh.

MR. LUSH: The hon. member, Mr. Speaker, need not try to demonstrate his concern on little matters like this - important, yes, but not unprecedented legislation. And the attitude that they demonstrated to the workers of this Province clearly indicate that if we had to wait for this crowd to bring in unprecedented legislation, we would have been a long time waiting. We would have been a long time waiting, Mr. Speaker, for unprecedented legislation. This is not - this is simply an amendment and let us not forget that. This is simply an amendment and it is not unprecedented legislation. But, Mr. Speaker, inasfar as the amendment goes, giving

MR. LUSH: coverage to the students in certain post-secondary institutions, the College of Trades and Technology and these institutions, certainly we will support it. But, in so doing, we have to point out certain weaknesses, Mr. Speaker, within this particular department that we are now talking about, the Department of Labour and Manpower. Also, Mr. Speaker, I would hope that the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) would look at other areas with respect to the Workers' Compensation. Mr. Speaker, there is still a lot of - what shall I say? - a lot of iniquities within that structure of compensation to workers who receive injuries, workers who have had accidents. I receive complaints all the time, Mr. Speaker, and it seems as though it is a tremendously hard job for people to iron out things with the Workers' Compensation. When a man or a woman receives an injury, it seems as though it is an awfully long drawn-out process to receive any kind of permanent compensation, the kind of red tape that these people have to go through. Mr. Speaker, sometimes you wonder if they are not treated less than human beings. I have witnessed so many cases where people have had to go through all sorts of trouble, all sorts of worry, all sorts of

MR. LUSH: red tape to iron out their financial matters with the Workers' Compensation, be it the loss of a leg or the loss of an arm or the loss of an eye. Mr. Speaker, it is tremendous. It is absolutely ridiculous, it is inhumane the kind of red tape that these people have to go through to prove that their leg is gone, to prove that they will not get sight from an eye that they have lost and all this sort of thing. So, Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of thing that the Minister of Labour and Manpower (J.Dinn) should be looking into to see that the guidelines are more flexible with respect to compensation to workers who have received permanent injuries in particular. And, Mr. Speaker, it is a tremendous job it is a tremendous hassle for a person who has received an injury going back and forth to Workers' Compensation practically all the time and into a constant hassle.

As I say, I have them on a yearly basis, people coming to me and seeking my assistance, yes on a daily basis. People I can name, I can name off cases now, Mr. Speaker, three in one community, of good working men who have received injuries and they have to be coming back and forth two and three times a month, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that their money is kept at a certain level. One minute they are being placed on one form of compensation and another minute they are on another. One minute it is temporary, one minute it is fulltime temporary and the kind of examinations and the kinds of questioning they have to go through to maintain that money, it is absolutely ridiculous.

So, Mr. Speaker, we need legislation. We need more legislation, Mr. Speaker, before the Workers' Compensation is put in order. So, Mr. Speaker, just let me say, and I will clue up my remarks on this, that as far as this

MR. LUSH: amendment goes, we on this side of the House certainly, we are going to support t-is amendment, Mr. Speaker, but there are many more improvements to come yet before the minister can talk about unprecedented legislation, Mr. Speaker. And we hope that we will see more improvements. We will support any kind of measure, Mr. Speaker, that is going to benefit the people of the Province, the ordinary workers, we are going to support it.

MR. MOORES: Right on.

MR. LUSH: We are going to support it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: Do not let the minister come in here and talk about unprecedented legislation and Tory reform, Mr. Speaker, Tory reform. These two words, that expression, Mr. Speaker, is as contradictory as Progressive Conservative. It is as contradictory as Progressive Conservative. Tory reform, Mr. Speaker -

MR. FLIGHT: No such thing.

MR. LUSH: - it is as much an unlikely combination, Mr. Spaker, and as incompatible as peaches and gravy, I say.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the unprecedented legislation was brought in long before this member was ever a member of government. But, Mr. Speaker, we welcome this amendment and we are sure that the students who will receive the benefit, they too will welcome it but we would like to see more legislation coming in here to benefit the workers, Mr. Speaker, the thousands of workers throughout the Province who still need legislation to make things a little more compatible, to make things a little more humane for the workers of this Province who suffer accident and injury on the job.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. X

SOME HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.



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

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, first of all I want to congratulate my hon. colleague on such a spirited address to the House this morning. I found it very interesting and it was an excellent presentation, Mr. Speaker, and I was especially intrigued by his -

MR. HANCOCK: He got two good ones, 'Steve'.

MR. NEARY: I beg your pardon?

MR. HANCOCK: He got two good ones.

MR. NEARY: He got two good ones, did he - by his analysis of what the Minister of Manpower (J. Dinn) means by the introduction of a great Tory reform. Now, what is this great Tory reform that we are talking about? It is an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act. Last year, the minister who apparently is obsessed, he has himself convinced that every minor amendment that -

MR. NEARY:

he brings into this House is a great Tory reform. That will just go to show you, Mr. Speaker, how bankrupt this crowd are of ideas. When you bring in a simple amendment to an act that has stood the test of time, an act that was brought in back in 1950 by the Liberal government of that day, the Workers' Compensation Act, that indeed was a reform, that was a major reform.

MR. TULK: All they can do is fiddle around.

MR. NEARY: As a matter of fact, the Liberal government of that day brought in the most progressive Workers' Compensation Act in the whole of Canada.

MR. TULK: And all they can do is fiddle around.

MR. NEARY: The Liberal government of that day, Mr. Speaker, brought in a Workers' Compensation Act that was in operation in the Province of Saskatchewan. And as everybody knows, Saskatchewan at that time had an NDP government. Mr. Tommy Douglas was Premier of Saskatchewan and they brought in in Saskatchewan some of the biggest social reforms in the whole history of Canada, including Medicare. Medicare was born in the Province of Saskatchewan, and members will recall that the doctors, for the first time in the history of Canada, the doctors went on strike in Saskatchewan against that great reform - Medicare. That is where it started, in Saskatchewan.

The Workers' Compensation Act was the finest in the whole of Canada at that time and the Liberal government in its wisdom adopted -

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

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): A point of order, the hon. President of the Council.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is the extension of Workers' Compensation to students which we are discussing. That is the principle of the bill, and I fail to see the relevancy, Mr. Speaker, of what the hon. member is talking about about Medicare in Saskatchewan, about Mr. Douglas when he was the Premier of Saskatchewan. I notice, Mr. Speaker, propensity for the hon. member to dwell in the past. He talks about the previous Liberal administration more and more as he goes on, so perhaps he would be better off to remove himself to the old Colonial Building which happens to be the archives if he wants to get talking about that. But while we are conducting this, Mr. Speaker, we have a matter of relevancy to be considered, relevancy in the principle and the purpose of the bill, the hon. member is not addressing himself to.

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the House Leader (Mr. Marshall) never ceases to amaze me. He told me that he pricked his finger on a thorn this morning and obviously it had an effect on his head.

MR. NEARY: He is rather testy, alright.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) is merely giving some background information on the original Workers' Compensation Act and this is an amendment to that original Workers' Compensation Act. Mr. Speaker, I submit that the member for LaPoile is totally in order, that the House Leader opposite is doing nothing only trying to disrupt the business of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the Chair has been very flexible in allowing broad-ranging discussion on second reading, and I am sure the hon. member was prefacing

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): his remarks and leading up to the amendment which concerns the students and so on so I ask him to continue.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear. hear.

MR. NEARY: That is correct, Mr. Speaker, because as Your Honour will recall, it was the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) who told us it was a great Tory reform and I am merely commenting on that. It was the Minister of Labour and Manpower who told us that this reform now ties in with one that was brought in last year in connection with workers' compensation for fishermen. I did not bring it up, Mr. Speaker, and so what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander and Your Honour is absolutely correct.

And so, Mr. Speaker, what we have before us in this Province today is a Workers' Compensation Act that was brought in by the Liberals back in 1950. It is one of the great reforms and I could go on, if I was permitted in this debate, Mr. Speaker, I could go on and spell out all the major reforms that have been brought in by a Liberal government in this Province. So what we are seeing now, here today, as we saw last year with the Workers' Compensation amendment for fishermen - and I might add, Mr. Speaker, that the minister

MR. S. NEARY: continuously gives incorrect information to the House on workers' compensation for fisherman. It was a Liberal Government prior to 1972 that brought in coverage for fishermen under the Workers' Compensation Act. And all the minister did last year was amend that Act, that is all the minister did.

MR. MORGAN: We had ten (inaudible).

MR. S. NEARY: The coverage was brought in by the Liberal Government and all the minister had to do was to amend the Act. And all he has to do now under this coverage that he is giving the students at the College of Trades, the College of Fisheries, the vocational schools is just a simple amendment to an Act, to a Liberal Act. All they have been doing is amending. We laid the foundation. We laid the foundation back in the early fifties and all they are doing is fiddling around with it.

And, Mr. Speaker, this amendment is a necessary amendment. It is something that any government would do under the circumstances because, as Your Honour knows, students being paid for undergoing training is something new. They have never been covered under the Workers' Compensation Act - another Liberal reform by the way - paying students for going to school to get an education. That is a Liberal reform. We paid students for going to the university to get a university education, we paid students for going to the College of Trades and Technology, to the vocational schools - they get their federal and provincial allowances - and for going to the College of Fisheries. All Liberal reforms, every one of them! And it is so obvious that the next step necessary, is that these students who receive payment - not the ones who receive payment - those who receive payment for further training, while they are undergoing training, then, they should be covered under the Workers'

MR. S. NEARY: Compensation Act. And that is what we are doing here today. We are making a simple amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act.

Now, if the minister, Mr. Speaker, if the minister had brought in an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act making it compulsory for employers to give their employees back their jobs when they have been off on injuries, then I would say that he would be doing something very worthwhile because as members know - and I have had numerous requests, numerous complaints during the last several years about employees who were injured on the job, received workers' compensation for several weeks or several months or several years and when they went back to their employer, the employer in a cold and callous fashion said, 'There is no job for you, no job for you'. Mr. Speaker, is that right? Is it just? Is it fair? What is the minister doing about that situation? Not a thing! Zero! Zilch! Maybe in a short while, Mr. Speaker, the Liberals may get a chance to do something about that, in the next year or two, as soon as we have an election. But, Mr. Speaker, every employee who is injured on the job receives workers' compensation and when he goes back to his employer, the employer should provide him with a job. They should provide him with a job and they are not doing that at the present time.

MR. TULK: It is almost like white slavery.

MR. S. NEARY: It is almost like white slavery, that is correct. How many people -

AN HON. MEMBER: They use you and rob your money.

MR. S. NEARY: Yes, that is right, they are being used. How many people have come to members of the House? How many have complained to the minister that they could not get their job back even though they had a

MR. S. NEARY: clearance from the doctor that they were fit for work, in some instances only fit for light work? But these companies, especially the big companies discriminate against them and say, 'I am sorry no job for you. You were a good man when you were on the job. We used you but now that you have been away on workers' compensation, we have no job for you'. It should be compulsory for an employer to either compensate a man who is injured on the job as long as he is unemployed, or they should provide a job for him. And that is only fair, Mr. Speaker. Now, if the minister had done that I would say he would have done something very worthwhile.

If he had come into the House and extended the coverage under the lung problems that arise in the factories and mining industries of this Province, the same coverage as they have in St. Lawrence or as the St. Lawrence miners have, if the hon. gentleman had come in and brought in a bill to include Labrador City under that coverage and had given the former miners on Bell Island - they had been given the same privilege as the ex-miners in St. Lawrence, I would say the hon. gentleman would have been doing something very worthwhile. The former miners in St. Lawrence get the preferential treatment and rightly so. But that coverage should be extended to include former miners of

MR. NEARY: the Bell Island mines, and the miners in Labrador City and Wabush.

MR. TULK: The Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) got about as much power as the cheque signer over there.

MR. FLIGHT: And Buchans.

MR. NEARY: And Buchans, I forgot about Buchans. Silicosis is a big problem. It is a big problem and I guess I just reminded my hon. friend of it now and he will be making his points about it too.

MR. STAGG: Asbestosis.

MR. NEARY: Asbestosis, all the mining - I said all the mining industry.

But, Mr. Speaker, they have to be almost on their deathbeds before the Workers' Compensation Board will give them any recognition. It is safe to say, Mr. Speaker, that over on Bell Island today, my former countrymen, that there are a large number of middle-aged and elderly men walking around with silicosis. I do not think there is any question about it. No question about it. They are walking around with silicosis. The doctor diagnosed it back in the early days as angina, or asthma, or bronchitis, anything to get the company off the hook, anything to get the company off the hook but really what it is is silicosis. You have the same thing in Buchans. You have asbestosis in Baie Verte, you have silicosis in Labrador City and Wabush, and Mr. Speaker, no coverage. No coverage!

It is not good enough. If I had to have the time I would have gone down to Mr. May's Royal Commission while they were sitting in St. John's, but it so



MR. NEARY:                   happened - I really intended to go, myself and the member for Buchans (Mr. Flight) were going to go down, but I happened to be in my district at the time of the hearings and I could not attend.

AN HON. MEMBER:               You could submit a brief.

MR. NEARY:                   You can submit a brief in writing? Well, I just might do that. But I really think that it should be opened up, Mr. Speaker, and that all of these industries that I have mentioned, the employees should be covered against silicosis.

I know it is a very difficult thing to prove. I remember over on Bell Island we had our own x-ray machine over there, one of the doctors had an x-ray machine in his basement, and they used to always say that the reason you could not detect silicosis in a miner's lung was because of the water supply on Bell Island, the water supply affected the development of the x-ray. That is what we were told, which was sheer nonsense. Dr. Peters did a study on it after, took all the x-rays from Bell Island and did a study, and I do not think there was any doubt in his mind that what the miners had was not angina, or bronchitis, or asthma, it was silicosis. I mean, what could you expect when the doctor was on the payroll of the company? What else could you expect?

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the kind of amendments that we would have liked to have seen brought in by the minister. And perhaps when the minister is ending up second debate on this bill he can also tell us about some of the things that went on down in the Workers' Compensation during the strike. How many sets of tires did Workers' Compensation have to pay for that were slashed or ruined with nails? How many? Did they replace any and how many? And how much did it cost? And how many parties did they throw? In what hotels and who paid for them?

AN HON. MEMBER:               I thought I answered that.

MR. NEARY: No, the hon. gentleman did not answer it because apart from the one I have raised about the one that was held down in the Workers' Compensation office and the one at the Holiday Inn, there were a couple of other parties that were thrown in other hotels.

AN HON. MEMBER: Private also?

MR. NEARY: No, they were not private and that one was not meant to be private either. That one was not meant to be private.

AN HON. MEMBER: - one.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman may be soft enough, and naive enough to think that that was supposed to be a private party, there were other parties paid for in other hotels by the Workers' Compensation Board.

And how much was paid out in wages to the scabs during this strike? I hear, Mr. Speaker, staggering figures, staggering! I hear that the scabs now will be able to buy trailers,

MR. NEARY: they can buy new cars and pay cash for them, they can take vacations in California and Florida and in the Carribean as a result of the strike at the Workers' Compensation Board, as a direct result of the strike. They will be able to go down by the side of a pond now this Summer with their fishing poles and big trailers that are paid for out of blood money because they scabbed their fellow employees who were on strike down at the Workers' Compensation Board. Let us have some figures, give us the information.

AN HON. MEMBER: Ask the question.

MR. NEARY: I have asked the question, I keep asking it, but the minister keeps evading it. Well, I am asking the hon. gentleman now to provide the House with all the details, all the expenses. Give us an itemized - if I can get the hon. gentleman's attention, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: If I can get the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: If I can get the hon. gentleman's attention I am asking the hon. gentleman now, when he winds up second reading, to give us an itemized list of the amount paid out in wages, broken down on an individual basis -

AN HON. MEMBER: What has that got to do with this?

MR. NEARY: It has all to do with it, we are talking about an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act and we have a right, while we are doing this, to ask questions about the Workers' Compensation

MR. NEARY: Board. The Speaker already told the hon. gentleman that. Give us an itemized list of expenses including salaries and wages paid out to, first of all, members of the board, then to the scabs, and then the other expenses paid out for damage to motor vehicles etc. and the amount paid out for refreshments and for parties that were thrown to try to bolster the moral of the scabs.

AN HON. MEMBER: What damage are you talking about?

MR. NEARY: I am talking about damage to tires on cars.

AN HON. MEMBER: Who did it?

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

AN HON. MEMBER: Who did it?

MR. NEARY: I do not know who did it.

But all I want to know is how much it cost. So, Mr. Speaker, I support this simple amendment. I will support, I think, any government worth its salt. Any government that was in power today would have to do the same thing. The Liberals, probably, would have done it a long time ago. It took this crowd ten years to realize that the students at the College of Trades and at the other vocational schools who receive payment for training should be covered under the Workers' Compensation Act.

Mr. Speaker, let me say this for this gentleman who gets up and refers to this as another great Tory reform: The Liberal Government of Canada has already recognized students. They allow them to receive unemployment insurance while they are attending these schools. How is that for you? How is that for a reform? Students attending the College of Trades and the Fisheries College, the Vocational Schools, in certain categories, can collect unemployment insurance

MR. NEARY: while they are going to these institutions of higher learning to further their training and education. How is that for a reform?

MR. TULK: That is a Liberal reform.

MR. NEARY: And that is the Liberal Government of Canada that did that. So if I were the hon. gentleman I would not get up and crow too much about these simple amendments. If that is all the government can boast about, Mr. Speaker, I would say that we are in serious trouble in this Province.

Certainly, he comes by that honestly, he gets that from the Premier. Because the Premier told us before the House opened that this was going to be the greatest session of the House in Newfoundland's history. Well, we have not seen any evidence of it yet and there is nothing on the Order Paper to indicate that this is going to be the greatest session in Newfoundland's history as far as legislation is concerned. Most of the stuff we have seen so far is essential, most of the stuff we have seen is housekeeping, things that in the normal course of events would have to be done anyway. Just the same as this amendment that we have here before us now, it would have to be done anyway. Silly Willy would have done the same thing, and I am not referring to the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall). But anybody, a kindergarten student in this House would have done the same thing. They have lost the pioneering spirit, Mr. Speaker. And I only wish, Mr. Speaker - I believe I told the House I was down in Burnt Islands there a few weeks ago with Mr. Smallwood when he cut the ribbon for the opening of that fish plant and my remark at that time was, to the people who turned out in droves to see Mr. Smallwood cut that ribbon, I said, 'It is just like old times again. Just like old times'. I said, 'In

MR. NEARY: recent years in this province we have not

MR. NEARY: seen to many ribbons cut, we have not seen to many sods turned'. As a matter of fact, we have not seen any. And we have not seen any original legislation, Mr. Speaker, but the public debt tripled up to \$3.2 billion with nothing to show for it. The scissors must be awfully rusty by now, and that old shovel, that golden spade must be awfully tarnished. If they ever get it out they will have to get - what is that stuff you clean gold with? - they will have to get their Brasso out to polish her up. There will not be enough Brasso in Newfoundland to polish up the old tarnished spade and the scissors because it is so long, it is so long since anything happened in this Province; that a sod was turned or a ribbon was cut or an original idea with a piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, most times, by the way -

MR. TULK: We will buy the Brasso.

MR. NEARY: Well, we will start a Brasso factory. Mr. Speaker, most times political opinions -

MR. TULK: Be quiet now, Superport.

MR. NEARY: Well, we will get a coffin factory like the administration started out in Stephenville, making coffins. What happened to the coffin factory?

MR. YOUNG: We are still using them.

MR. NEARY: You are still using them are you not? But you are importing them. You would not buy them from Mr. Meeker who was going to make mattresses and coffins out in Stephenville.

MR. FLIGHT: He was on TV last night.

Mr. NEARY: He was on television again last night was he? Every time I see him on television, I do not know if I should laugh or cry with the money he ripped off from the Newfoundland Development Loan Corporation, Mr. Meeker, and then waltzed out of the Province, went into

MR. NEARY: receivership or bankruptcy and took of for British Columbia and said, good by poor old suckers down in Newfoundland. And what about the Newfoundland cushion craft? There is a dandy. Mr. Goode, Mr. Crosbie's man was going to make hydro - what do you call these boats?

MR. TULK: Hydrofoils.

MR. NEARY: Hydrofoils and hovercraft.

What happened to that loan now?

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): Order, please! Are we on Bill 47 now?

MR. NEARY: Well, I was baited. I apologize, Mr. Speaker. I got carried away with the questions that were coming from the other side. But he is now Chairman of the Public Utilities Board. What about the money he ripped off from the Newfoundland and Labrador Development Corporation? Are they going to garnishee his wages to recover that or does he go into bankruptcy and into receivership and say 'poor old suckers of Newfoundland, I am down here now holding public hearings and I must not offend the government because they might come after me,' the Mr. Goode. Just imagine, Newfoundland cushion hover -

MR. MARSHALL: Try to find 100,000 people now so you can take their character away.

MR. NEARY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will take the character of anybody who gouges the public treasury.

MR. MARSHALL: Do it outside the House.

MR. NEARY: I will do it outside, inside. You know, Mr. Speaker, it is alright for the hon. gentleman to get up and to smear a Liberal in this Province, but once we zero in on a Tory hack then we touch a very sensitive nerve.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is the master, the smear artist, the master of it in this House and I can back it up. Truth is the best defence. Go and check the

MR. NEARY: records of Newfoundland Development  
Loan Corporation.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): A point of order. The hon. President  
of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, the principle of this  
bill is the Workers' Compensation Bill. The hon.  
gentleman uses the House from time to time to vent his  
spleen. I mean, his feelings towards me I can guarantee  
this hon. House are reciprocated with double doses, but  
I do not think the House is really interested in how the  
hon. gentleman feels about me or how he feels about any  
other person in the House, Mr. Speaker. As I said, there  
are 500,000 other Newfoundlanders in Newfoundland and we  
are going to be here a long time if the hon. gentleman  
is going to be able to abuse the rules of the House on a  
bill by maligning and taking away the reputation of all  
the rest of the Newfoundlanders individually.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order. It is  
a valid point of order and I would ask the hon. member for  
LaPoile (Mr. Neary) to restrict his remarks to the bill  
at hand.

Mr. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, we just saw  
another example of how the hon. President of the Council  
tries to abuse the rules of this House, hoping that they  
will pick him up upstairs and give him another little quote.  
But the people are wising up to the hon. gentleman. The hon.  
gentleman has been the master of putting up smoke screens  
in this House to try to distract from the real issues and  
the hon. gentleman knows what the real issues are. We will  
hear more about that in due course. I have to abide by Your  
Honour's ruling and stick to this bill here now. But I am  
going to support the amendment, Mr. Speaker. I am going to  
support it. It is something that comes naturally. It is



May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1395

AH-4

MR. NEARY: something that would have had to be done anyway. We do not need any Royal Commissions or any experts to tell us when we have to amend various acts in this Province.

MR. TULK: It is funny they never got one though.

MR. NEARY: But as I said earlier, I would like to see the minister bring in at as early a date as possible, an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act to make it compulsory

MR. NEARY: for employers to re-hire men and women who are injured on the job, who have gone off on Workers' Compensation for a while, came back and were told, 'There is no job.' Can the member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) realize? Just imagine, if the hon. gentleman is working for the school board in Port au Port and he gets injured on the job and he has to go off on Workers' Compensation on partial disability or what have you, and he comes back six months from now, that the school board could very easily say to the hon. gentleman, 'We are sorry, we are finished with you. There is no job for you.' Does the hon. gentleman realize that? I think that is shocking, but that is the way the situation is today, Mr. Speaker, and it has to be changed. And it will be changed in due course.

The other point I wanted to make before I sit down again is just to reinforce what I said there a few minutes ago about including the miners in Labrador City - Wabush, Baie Verte, Buchans, former miners on Bell Island and any other community in Newfoundland - Gullbridge - any other part of Newfoundland, where there is the slightest possibility, Mr. Speaker, that these men do not have angina, they do not have heart conditions, they do not have bronchitis or asthma, but what they have is silicosis, they have a respiratory condition brought about by the dust when they were working in a mine or on the surface of that mine. That is the problem. Do we have any social conscience at all in this hon. House? We recognized the problem in the case of St. Lawrence miners and rightly so, but only recognized after a large number of men had died through negligence, through a cover up, and eventually the problem was detected by the National Health and Welfare Department of the Government of Canada. I say thank God for that! But how many men are dying on Bell Island today as a result of the twenty-five or thirty,

MR. NEARY: or thirty-five or forty years they spent in the mine, and it has been chalked up to a heart condition, bronchitis, asthma and that sort of thing? It is not good enough, Mr. Speaker. It is unjust and I hope that the minister will take seriously what I have said about this matter this morning, and in future amendments in this House he will have no problem to get support from me or, I imagine, anybody on this side of the House if the hon. gentleman wants to -

MR. HISCOCK: ask him does it look after students in summer employment programmes?

MR. NEARY: Well, I do not know about students in summer employment programmes; that is a good question to ask the hon. gentleman, if this bill covers students in summer employment programmes.

MR. DINN: Yes.

MR. NEARY: It does?

MR. DINN: I have taken down a couple of questions that hon. members have and I will do it in my summary.

MR. NEARY: Well, okay, I do not wish to delay the House on this bill, Mr. Speaker. I am going to support the amendment, but I would like to see at as early a date as possible, amendments brought in to give coverage for the type of situation that I mentioned there a few moments ago. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear,hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Baird): The hon. the Minister of Education.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

X  
MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak relatively briefly in support of this bill. I am glad that the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) finally worked his way around to giving his support. I was somewhat disappointed that both he and the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) were so stingy with their agreement to and support for this bill

MS VERGE: which is so obviously a good and progressive measure to compliment a good programme which is in effect in our schools and colleges.

Part of the subject of the bill, of course, is education, and while members opposite profess to have a concern about education and students, I found it odd that they did not talk about education. We heard about ribbons, we heard about Brasso; there was an extensive discussion on the use of Brasso in cleaning gold shovels by the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), we heard about hovercraft, manufacturing coffins, but we really did not hear very much about education.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about education.

The principle of this bill is to extend Workers' Compensation coverage to students who participate in work activity, work experience programmes, on-the-job training, which is part of their school programmes whereby they leave the classroom, go out to the work place

MS VERGE: and get experience on the job without remuneration. Now, the arrangements which have been made to date by school boards or colleges or vocational schools, have been done with the protection, simply, of accident insurance which has been arranged by the board or education authority. And, of course, that did not give the students full protection and that is not good enough.

It is encouraging to note that so far there has been no reported accident on the part of a student taking part in one of these programmes. We are thankful for that and we trust that that situation will continue. That, I think, is a good reflection on the excellent quality of these programmes. These are programmes which benefit students who, perhaps, are not academically inclined, who do not have the interest or maybe the ability to pursue academic studies and that is normal, natural, to be expected. Not everyone is cut out for, nor should they be, to go to university or to pursue academic studies. Many people are interested in and have the ability to pursue other activities to prepare for other kinds of work and occupations. And I think it is extremely important that our schools make provision for all students and I think we are doing a better and better job of this.

The reorganized high school programme, with the flexibility that that is providing with the extra options, extra subjects, more diversified offerings for students, is going to cater much better to the full range of students. No longer will there be undue emphasis on that minority of students who are university bound, we will be much better catering to all the young people so that everyone can get a chance to get prepared for whatever kind of paid job or occupation

MS. VERGE: or life style he or she is suited for, interested in, has the opportunity to take advantage of. And I think the work-experience programmes which this bill compliments are good. We have them now in a number of our high schools for special education students.

Our work activity programmes have been very successful at Pine Grove School for the mentally retarded here in St. John's. These programmes have also been taking place in the vocational schools and colleges and I think they are good. This measure just adds the necessary degree of protection for the young people taking part in the programmes.

I should point out for the benefit of the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), though he is no longer in his seat, that this is an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act, it is no longer the Workmen's Compensation Act. Because the Progressive Conservative administration, unlike the Liberal administration, recognizes that many of the workers, many of our students, indeed about half of our students are females. As a matter of fact, about a third of the people who are benefiting from Workers' Compensation are women.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Baird): Order, please!

MS VERGE: I think it is only right to know that what we are talking about is an amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act -

AN HON. MEMBER: Right on!

MR. MORGAN: Workers' not Workmen's, that is right. Hear, hear!

MS VERGE: - which is going to benefit female as well as male students.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS VERGE: Now, Mr. Speaker, in summary I would just like to urge that this bill be given speedy passage. As I said before, I think its benefits are obvious, that I am just disappointed that the members opposite could not work their way around to clearly stating support for this measure. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker.

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

X MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I want to have a few words on the bill. It will be difficult to raise any new points, the member for LaPoile (Mr. Neary) did a very good job of touching the areas of concern that we feel for the workers of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. FLIGHT: But, Mr. Speaker, this bill - I have heard the saying in this House, 'a lawyer's dream - could be a lawyer's dream. Any worker in the work force today covered by Workers' Compensation is covered for eight hours regardless of what he is doing during that eight hours. If he is stopping back having a coffee break, having a smoke, if he is on the job, if he is at his place of employment, he is covered.

I have had a student in the College of Trades and Technology who is not manning a band saw, or is not doing something that is relevant to the course he is doing,

MR. G. FLIGHT: but he is on the campus of the institution. Will he be covered under this legislation, Mr. Speaker? Why is the university left out? If a twenty-three year old, why? Mr. Speaker, if a student decides to go - and I am told more students are deciding to go to the College of Trades as a means of education, they want trades instead of university degrees, it is easy to get a job now if you have a skill than if you have a degree. So, Mr. Speaker, why is the university left out? The funding, the minister has indicated to me privately that the students covered here will not be required to pay the workers' compensation assessments. Will he assure us that this will always be the case?

MR. DINN: No, I cannot.

MR. FLIGHT: No, of course he cannot tell us, Mr. Speaker. And all the students - I mean, in the past ten years we have seen the assessment of workers' compensation triple and I am not talking about the assessment of the employer, I am talking about the assessment of the worker. So, Mr. Speaker, it would make one suspicious and wonder how long - we are watching tuition at vocational schools and at the university doubling. Every means that this government gets to increase the revenue from a student, they use it. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is not in keeping with this government to allow students to get free coverage under Workers' Compensation and we will get the minister in the record telling us that it is indeed free and we will see how long his position stands, Mr. Speaker, before the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), who wants all the dollars he can get, cuts the legs out from under him and assesses the students who are covered under this bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the minister something else, while we are on the principle of the bill: Since the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr.



MR. FLIGHT: Rideout), Mr. Speaker, chose to join ranks with the hon. gentlemen on the other side- he was a one issue man on this side, Mr. Speaker, he built his political career on the asbestos programme -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. FLIGHT: - on the asbestos problems in Baie Verte. We have not heard a word about the asbestos problem in Baie Verte since the hon. member left. Would the minister tell us what are the results of the studies done in Baie Verte? What are the results of Dr. Silikoff's work with the miners in Baie Verte? What is being done, number one, to eliminate the problem of the asbestos threats to the workers in Baie Verte? What special compensation has been set aside for the people already affected? Maybe the minister now when he stands up will tell us what is happening by way of compensation for the miners in Baie Verte, for the proven cases or for the ones who have been exposed to radiation, to the ones exposed to asbestos for these past twenty years. The spokesman for these people now sits muzzled behind the minister. And I have not seen any desire by the minister to stand up in this House and report to this House and to the people of Baie Verte and the people of Newfoundland the results of the studies that were undertaken, because he pressured the minister into undertaking the studies. We still would not have known about the asbestos problems in Baie Verte and the threat to the health of the people in Baie Verte but for the member for Baie Verte (Mr. Rideout). It was a sad day for the miners of Baie Verte, Mr. Speaker, when he decided to cross and allow himself to be muzzled on an issue like that.

MR. MOORES: Hear, hear.

MR. FLIGHT: So, Mr. Speaker, it is incumbent on the minister now when he stands up to give us -

MR. FLIGHT: he will never find a better bill to tell us exactly what the situation is in Baie Verte. And then, Mr. Speaker, we will undertake to compare his version of what the status in Baie Verte is with the version of the miners who are still there, or the officials who are still there. And the minister can take advantage of this particular bill to tell us about the studies in Labrador City that we have not heard very much about this past six or seven months. What are Mr. Mulrooney and the minister saying, are they talking about it? The minister is a member of the committee, Mr. Mulrooney is a member of the committee -

MR. R. MOORES: Do not lie.

AN HON. MEMBER: Chairman.

MR. FLIGHT: - Chairman of the committee, maybe he will tell us when the last meeting was held. Just how serious is the dust problem in Baie Verte? And how many miners in Labrador City - Wabush, how

MR. FLIGHT:

many miners have been proven to be affected? What steps have been taken to clean up the dust problem in Labrador City-- Wabush?

Now, if the minister decides to get up and close this debate, Mr. Speaker, and decides not to address himself and give us the details on this, we will recognize the minister for what he is, in claiming a great Tory reform. Let me ask the minister - the member for Baie Verte (T. Rideout) talked about the former miners. Well, I want to talk about the present miners, the miners who are working underground now, with silicosis, miners who have been moved out from underground in the past seven or eight months with silicosis.

MR. DINN: (Inaudible)

MR. FLIGHT: Miners certificate, that will tell you how naïve the minister is. If he can find a miner in Buchans with a miner's certificate, Mr. Speaker, I will never question him again on anything. Miner's certificates, what nonsense! A miner who worked in Buchans in the forties, Mr. Speaker, and drilled dry for twenty years, and ate more dust than the minister ever walked over, had no miner's certificate but he got silicosis and the minister knows he has silicosis and the doctors that treat him know he has silicosis but what do they say? Angina. You have to have a - what is the word? - a biopsy, you have to have a - is it biopsy? Yes, you have to have a biopsy in order to prove or disprove that you have silicosis. Well, too many miners, Mr. Speaker, and I am talking about Buchans, too many miners accepted the biopsy theory. They had the biopsy and six months after there was a funeral.

MR. MOORES: That is right.

MR. FLIGHT: And the miners in Buchans today, a good many of them, people who are fifty-five, sixty years old with silicosis, are refusing to have biopsies. Now, what about those people, Mr. Speaker? Does the minister support the Workers' Compensation Board and the doctors and say you have angina? You cannot breathe but it has nothing to do with the fact you worked for thirty-five years underground, nothing to do with it. Nothing to do with how you drilled dry for ten or twelve years before they had water underground.

MR. MOORES: Nothing at all.

MR. FLIGHT: Nothing to do with the forty years you spent in an environment where you could not see your work-mates. That has nothing to do with it. Your lung problem has nothing to do with that, it is an angina problem, it is some respiratory problem that you would have had had you been a member of the House of Assembly for twenty-five years. That is what the doctors are saying.

The man, Mr. Speaker, the miner -  
I have a little compassion for people who have done that.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) problem.

MR. FLIGHT: The hon. member should keep his mouth shut, or he should come in and look at the conditions of the people I am talking about. He could not care less, Mr. Speaker. If there was an accident on a trawler working out of the hon. member's district or if there was a drowning, he would be up here, Mr. Speaker, telling us how all Newfoundland should be concerned about the conditions on boats.

Well, I am as concerned about the conditions in mines and I am concerned about the people who are going around with no lungs. So, Mr. Speaker, the member should keep quiet.

MR. PATTERSON: Tell us about the phosphorus.

MR. FLIGHT: Tell us about the phosphorus.

Tell us about your concern for what might be happening at

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1399

EL - 3

MR. FLIGHT: the phosphorus plants from an environmental point of view?

MR. BARRY: Do not be so sanctimonious.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. FLIGHT: Let me tell the Minister of Mines and Energy (L. Barry). Now, Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT: The minister is just back from Houston.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously there is not as much sun -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

I would like to remind hon. members that they should make their remarks to the Chair and I believe the hon. member was getting into another debate -

MR. FLIGHT: No, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: - with the hon. the Minister of Mines and Energy.

MR. FLIGHT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, obviously as I said the minister is just back from Houston and there is obviously not as much sun in Houston as there is in the Carribean and he is jealous of the Premier's tan. Mr. Speaker, he appears to be very touchy. As Minister of Mines and Energy, he should be more concerned about what I am talking about because he knows it is true. If he were doing his job he would come to Buchans and he would talk to the miners who are going around in there who cannot breathe and cannot get any workers' compensation. Mr. Speaker, that is what the Minister should do.

MR. BARRY: (Inaudible) more about that before you were ever concerned.

MR. FLIGHT: And Mr. Speaker, here is what a miner anywhere in Newfoundland has to go through: If his employer takes him out of underground, he cannot do his job anymore, he cannot breathe well enough to do his job anymore, chest pains, he cannot breathe, do you know what they say to him? They bring him in, x-ray him, go through the motions and say, 'Oh, yes, well, you have got a problem, you have a respiratory problem. We cannot let you go back to the mines, we are going to give you light work. We will put you on compensation for three or four months and then light work'.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you tell me how a miner in Buchans or a miner anywhere else can get light work in this Province when we have

MR. G. FLIGHT:

15 to 16 per cent unemployment rate in this Province, where you have robust young men, fifteen or twenty robust young men looking for every one job that becomes available, light or heavy? How does a man, how does a miner who has lost a leg or lost an arm, or any workman in any walk of life, get a light job? What is the minister's version of a light job in Newfoundland? The only light jobs available, Mr. Speaker, in this Province, the ministry are using their political influence to put people into those light jobs, the soft jobs. I have not heard tell of any ministers appointing miners, but I have heard of a lot of ministers appointing a lot of people to light work that some injured workman could have taken.

But now, Mr. Speaker, let me stay on the silicosis concept re the workers' Compensation Board. There are hundreds of miners, Mr. Speaker, in this Province who need better treatment from the Workers' Compensation Board than they are getting. The minister knows it. Now, he wants to talk about reforms, he wants to talk about reforms. Mr. Speaker, this government have been running this Province for ten years and he talks about a reform, he brings in an amendment to a piece of legislation. This problem was brought before the ministry ten years ago, Mr. Speaker. The first speech, the first word I ever said in this House, the first time I made a representation to a minister privately, it was on behalf of the miners specificable in this case, specific individuals. That was five years ago. How is that for reform, Mr. Speaker? There was not a word, we have not heard a word from the ministry. We have seen no indication from the workers' Compensation Board that they are prepared to address themselves to the problem. They know they have hundreds of miners going around this Province whose lungs are gone,

MR. G. FLIGHT: loaded with dust as a result of twenty-five years underground. And the onus is on that miner, Mr. Speaker, the onus is on that man who probably has an education level of Grade three or four, who worked for thirty or forty years in the mines, the onus is on that man to prove that he has not got silicosis. The onus is on him to prove he does not have it. The onus is not on the Worker's Compensation Board to prove that he has not, the onus is on him to prove it. And how does he prove it? He submits to a biopsy that may or may not be conclusive, Mr. Speaker. And that is a crime! It is a crime, Mr. Speaker, that there are fifty and sixty year old men in this Province today who cannot breathe, who are in misery all the time. It is a crime! It is a crime, Mr. Speaker!

MR. F. STAGG:

Do not call it a crime!



MR. FLIGHT: It is a crime. It is a crime perpetrated - it has been a crime up to this day. If the minister does not change it, it will continue to be a crime.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me talk about - I want to talk about something else here, Mr. Speaker.

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. MOORES: Behave now 'Fred'.

MR. FLIGHT: Let me talk about something else here relative to injuries in the work place.

MR. STAGG: Do not point your finger.

MR. FLIGHT: One of the problems, Mr. Speaker -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. MOORES: No, that is not true. That is not true.

MR. FLIGHT: One of the problems, Mr. Speaker, is that -

MR. MOORES: He is merely emphasizing what he is saying.

MR. FLIGHT: - is that there is an injury in the work place -

MR. MOORES: Billy Graham does it all the time.

MR. FLIGHT: - and a man sees his local doctor, and the local doctor refers him to a specialist in St. John's, and Mr. Speaker, the specialist in St. John's sees him and sends him back home and says, "Look, you do have a serious problem. You have a back injury. We may have to operate. We may have to do anything. So we will wait to get you a bed." I know of cases, Mr. Speaker, where one and a half years, eighteen months Workers' Compensation was paid

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1401

NM - 2

MR. FLIGHT: while that worker was waiting to get a bed in St. John's.

MR. MOORES: Absolutely true.

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, a year ago the Minister of Health (Mr. House) indicated to this House that there were going to be eight beds set aside for the sole use of Workmen's Compensation recipients.

MR. MOORES: Workers'.

MR. FLIGHT: Workers' Compensation recipients. Eight beds set aside so that if there was an injured worker anywhere in the Province -

MR. MOORES: That is right.

MR. FLIGHT: - waiting to get hospitalization, that those beds would be there. That has not been done, Mr. Speaker. It is not done. There are 300 beds in the Health Science Complex that are available, of course, if a doctor, Mr. Speaker - and it is interesting to note that the Workers' Compensation Board doctors are the most highly sought after doctors in this city. The specialists, Mr. Speaker, not only are they on call to the Workers' Compensation Board, which is a good thing, because to me that means that the workmen are getting the best medical advice possible. But it is a bad thing in this sense, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder who the doctor's loyalty is to.

MR. MOORES: No, not the orthopedic surgeon.

MR. FLIGHT: The orthopedic surgeons, Mr. Speaker, the orthopedic surgeons retained by the Workers' Compensation Board are the most qualified, the best in Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker. And because they are the best, they have got their own practice, Mr. Speaker, not Workers' Compensation Board clients, they have got their own patients.

MR. MOORES: That is right.

MR. FLIGHT: And there has been lots of evidence,  
Mr. Speaker, there has been lots of evidence -

MR. DINN: - one full time.

MR. MOORES: No, not an orthopedic surgeon.

MR. FLIGHT: There has been lots of evidence,  
Mr. Speaker, that Workers' Compensation Board cases have been given  
second place and that the injured workers have waited and waited  
and waited. Obviously it is the kind of an injury that is  
not terminal, you know, it is a back injury, it is an arm  
injury, it is a neck injury that the man can live with for  
six months. But, Mr. Speaker, there are - and when you go to  
that surgeon, and I have gone representing injured workers,  
you go to that surgeon and you finally get him, you finally  
get him on the phone after a week or two, after you get  
around his answering service, the tendency is always to blame  
it on the hospital, to say there was not a bed available.  
"I cannot bring him in unless I can get a bed." So you go to  
the admissions officer in the Health Science Complex and they  
say, "Oh, no problem with beds. It is up to the doctor when  
he decides to bring Mr. Jones in." Well, Mr. Speaker, it is  
encumbent upon the minister to get that act together, to  
straighten this out because it is a real problem. And,  
Mr. Speaker, there are right now, this day, workers  
all over this Province waiting to get in a hospital bed in this  
city and have been waiting for over a year, all over this -  
And, of course, Mr. Speaker, of course we get it both ways in  
this case, because while the man is waiting he is on full  
compensation which may well be \$1,000 a month. The treatment  
that he would have gotten when he came into the hospital may have  
meant that we saved \$1,000 a month.

When the minister talks about how  
efficient his Workers' Compensation Board is and how fair they  
are -

May 8, 1981

Tape No. J40]

NM-4

DR. COLLINS: Is the Liberal member (inaudible).

MR. FLIGHT: Now, Mr. Speaker, there is another little thing I want to ask the minister -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (BUTT): Order, please!

MR. FLIGHT: Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister is in earshot of this because I want to ask him if his Workers' Compensation Board is so efficient, Mr. Speaker -

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible) efficiency of the Board.

MR. FLIGHT: Or proof that we paid a lot of money to a lot of scabs. If this Province wants living proof, Mr. Speaker, that the scabs in the Worker's Compensation Board strike cost us a lot of money, then all we have to do is take a letter written by the

MR. FLIGHT:

chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board to a very responsible person in this Province a couple of months ago, pointing out, Mr. Speaker, that there were more claims processed by the Workers' Compensation Board in January and February of this year than were ever processed in the same two months of any other year since they have existed. Now, Mr. Speaker, this point should sink in. The chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board was in a position to tell -

AN HON. MEMBER: All that has been changed. It is changed every year.

MR. FLIGHT: That is not changed. But let us talk about the scabs. There were 118 people off work so somebody had to be doing the work while they were off and since the Minister of Education spoke up, Mr. Speaker, I must tell her, she should know that she will not find it so easy to replace the teachers with scabs as the minister found it to replace the employees of the Workers' Compensation Board with scabs. It will be a lot harder to get scabs to replace the teachers in the event of a strike than it was to get them to replace the 73 workers at the Workers' Compensation Board.

Mr. Speaker, an interesting situation arose here a month or two ago. A judge in Newfoundland ruled that as a result of a criminal offence on the oil rigs that the jurisdiction lay with the federal government. Does the minister know where the jurisdiction lies in the event of an injury on an oil rig? Does the minister know that? Is there no question? Does the jurisdiction lie with the Workers' Compensation Board of Newfoundland? Will the Workers' Compensation Board of Newfoundland be responsible for an injury on one of the drill rigs 200 miles off our coast? Or will there be a judgement like we had - it was a precedent - a judgement like we had a few days ago re

MR. FLIGHT: a minor criminal offence?

Are the workers on the drill rigs, Mr. Speaker, subject to the Workers' Compensation Act of Newfoundland?

Mr. Speaker, having said those few words, I think there are certain things about the bill the minister is going to have to clarify. He is going to have to explain in detail to me why it is the students at Memorial University cannot be covered under this act.

We want his assurance of the cost factor, Mr. Speaker, I can support the bill. I will support anything that improves the way of life of, and improves the protection that we give our workers, Mr. Speaker, whether they are students or whether they are workers in the work place, miners, drillers, on an oil rig. So we will support the bill. But, Mr. Speaker, I make no apologies for using the principle of this bill to talk about one of the greatest injustices allowed in this Province, an injustice that the Workers' Compensation Board is allowing to be perpetrated.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. ~~X~~

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

DR. COLLINS: I thought you spoke already.

MR. THOMS: You know, Mr. Speaker, every time I get on my feet there is somebody on the other side who says, 'I thought you spoke already.' That happened yesterday. Again, I can assure the hon. the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) that I have not spoken in this debate. But if there is anything that sets the devil in me and makes me want to speak, it is the Minister of Finance and the President of The Council (Mr. Marshall), two of the most miserable people that this Province has ever seen.

AN HON. MEMBER: Aw, come on!

May 8, 1981

Tape 1402

EC - 3

MR. THOMS: Oh, there is no question. Ask the workers at the Workers' Compensation Board who are the Scrooges in this Province. Ask those who had to go on a starvation diet of water only. Ask them! Go and ask them! Go and ask them who the Scrooges are in this Province.

MR. NEARY: If we could only get Marshall on television more often we would win the next election hands down.

MR. THOMS: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the minister with the calm smile got up, I am glad the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), the minister with the calm smile rose and spoke in this debate -

MR. NEARY: The minister responsible for abortions.

MR. THOMS: - because I might have made the mistake, Mr. Speaker, the unpardonable, unforgivable mistake of referring to this act as the WORKMEN'S Compensation Act. I might have made that mistake. For that I might have been called a male chauvinist pig. I just might have been called that, Mr. Speaker. There are those who would say that and there are those who would call the member for Stephenville (Mr. Staggs) a male chauvinist pig.

MR. STAGGS: No, no. I am the greatest supporter of women's rights across the land.

MR. THOMS: Who is getting the anonymous letters from the Status of Women Council, Mr. Speaker?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. THOMS: Who is getting the anonymous letters?

MR. STAGGS: Love letters.

MR. THOMS: I am glad the hon. member is sitting close to the man who is in charge of security around here now.

MR. NEARY: He might grab you by the back of the neck and haul you out through the door.

MR. THOMS: Because if a member of the Status of Women Council comes through that door, then the hon. member is in trouble. I tell you that after what he said in Corner Brook, I must say I did not -

MR. STAGGS: The most (inaudible) resource in the whole -

MR. THOMS: - I must admit, Mr. Speaker, I did not do too much to deter the hon. member when he was cross-examining the Corner Brook Status of Women group who appeared before the Resources Management Committee. But, Mr. Speaker, I am glad that minister with the calm smile made -



MR. THOMS: us all realize - this was her contribution to this debate - her contribution to the debate was to tell us that it is no longer the Workmen's Compensation Act, it is now the Workers' Compensation Act.

MR. MOORES: Wonderban.

MR. THOMS: And for some reason or other, Mr. Speaker, I do not know why, but that makes the act that much greater, that much more important to the workers of this Province, that it is now called the Workers' Compensation Act. That is enough to make me support it, Mr. Speaker, in itself. I do not need any other reason. Mr. Speaker, this could be a blank piece of paper, I would now have to support it after hearing the minister with the calm smile.

Mr. Speaker, I am also very happy that the spokesman on labour for this side of the House is in the House this morning -

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. THOMS: - because if he had not been here I would not have known how this caucus was going to vote. Yesterday afternoon we finished up debating the amendment to the Administration Act.

MR. STAGG: Financial.

MR. THOMS: We had them on the ropes, we had that crowd over there on the ropes, we had every minister, every -

MR. NEARY: (Inaudible)

MR. THOMS: No, the hon. member is clean.

MR. FLIGHT: (inaudible) the Minister of Mines and Energy (Mr. Barry)?

MR. THOMS: No, the hon. member is clean. And the hon. Minister of Forestry (Mr. Power) he is clean. All the rest that were in the Cabinet, the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook is clean.

MR. FLIGHT: An expert with dynamite.

MR. THOMS: The hon. Minister of Development

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1403

SD - 3

MR. THOMS:

(Mr. Windsor) is not though.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. THOMS:

He is tarred with the reprehensible

brush -

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1404

DW - 1

MR. L. THOMS: that the Public Accounts  
Committee referred to.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. L. THOMS: But, Mr. Speaker, yesterday  
we debated the Financial Administration Act.

AN HON. MEMBER: Does this have to do with (inaudible)

MR. L. THOMS: I am talking about the intro-  
duction of the honourable petition signers bill. Now, Mr.  
Speaker, I understood today that we were going to be in  
here, we will continue to debate the Financial Administra-  
tion Act. But that is not to be. No, the Financial Admini-  
stration Act was too embarrassing, too embarrassing for the  
government, too embarrassing for the President of the Privy  
Council (Mr. Marshall) -

MR. NEARY: Not the Privy Council, the President of the Council.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

MR. THOMS: - the Executive Council or whatever  
he is. We come in this morning and we are now debating an  
amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act. Mr. Speaker,  
it is obviously a deliberate attempt to take the pressure  
off, to get the pressure off over the weekend and to bring  
in a piece of legislation that this side of the House can  
support.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister  
of Education (Ms. Verge) gets up and says, 'I am sorry to see  
that the spokesman on labour, the member for Terra Nova (Mr.  
Lush), and my friend for LaPoile (Mr. Neary), cannot support  
the legislation without qualification'. They have both stated  
they favoured the legislation and I am in favour of this  
legislation, there is no question about that. But, Mr.  
Speaker, does that mean that we on this side of the House  
cannot get up and ask the minister questions, ask him to  
explain why so and so may not be included? But this is what

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1404

DW - 2

MR. L. THOMS: is indicated by the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge). She does not want debate, she does not want debate! And we get the same thing from the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall). He does not want debate on legislation that comes before this House. Mr. Speaker, I ask you, what am I doing here? If legislation is not introduced, if legislation is not to be debated, then why a House of Assembly? We would be as useless as the Minister of Education appears to be in her department, a glorified cheque signer. And then I find she cannot even sign cheques.

So, Mr. Speaker, for members opposite to get up and to indicate that we are not to debate legislation seems to me to be a useless, fruitless argument to be used in favour of a bill. But that is the Minister of Education, that is her argument. Her first one was to get up to remind everybody present, and I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that she would have to remind some hon. gentlemen on the other side of the House, that it is no longer the Workmen's Compensation Act. And her second point was that we should just take every piece of legislation that comes before the House and support it by -

MR. THOMS: non-participation.

MR. NEARY: Just to please her.

MR. THOMS: What we should have is the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) getting up and saying, "Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce the Workers' Compensation Act." It is going to take me a long time to get used to saying that but I promise the minister with the calm smile I will try to do it.

So the Minister of Labour and Manpower will get up in this House and say -

MR. NEARY: The NTA are on to Verge.

MR. THOMS: - Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce An Act To Amend The Workers' Compensation Act. Maybe we will get the courtesy - maybe she would give us the courtesy and the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) would give us the courtesy of allowing our spokesman to stand on his feet and say, "I concur with the hon. minister", and then sit down and we take a vote and that is it. That would make the House rather useless.

But there have been some good questions asked, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that the minister should try to answer them. I am interested in the question on university students.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken with the minister and he advises that anybody on a work term from the university in engineering would get the - they would get the compensation anyway because they are already remunerated by an employer and they would be entitled to Workers' Compensation by virtue of that fact. However, if the university is left out of this - you see an educational institution does not include the university. We have the College of Trades and Technology, the College of Fisheries, Navigation, Marine Engineering and Electronics, we have got

MR. THOMS: the Bay St. George Community College, district vocational schools and the secretarial school.

Mr. Speaker, I am wondering about those at the university who are on work training programmes. I was at the university, I started out in the faculty of Education at Memorial University, and during my first year there we were required to spend so many weeks, as the hon. Minister of Health (Mr. House) knows, required to spend so many weeks in a school, either primary, elementary or high school in St. John's on a work term, on a training programme where we went in and observed the teachers teaching in the schools and we actually participated in the teaching ourselves.

Now, with that type of a programme it would appear to me, and that is why I say to the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) I would like to get up and ask the odd question about it, it would appear to me because the university is left out, then an accident such as that would not come under this amendment. And I am sure there must be dozens, there must be dozens, Mr. Speaker, of work training programmes carried on at Memorial University, both in St. John's and in Corner Brook. And I am not referring here to the Waterloo system that was adopted by Memorial University in engineering, I am talking about the many other training programmes that go on through the university and I feel that these students as well should be entitled - maybe they are, - maybe the minister can tell me, I do not know, that is why I am asking the question. If I had known that this legislation, Mr. Speaker, was going to be debated this morning, then I would have had an opportunity to research and maybe I would not have had to ask the questions. But since the legislation was sprung upon us, so that the heat could be taken off the ten or twelve ministers who served in the Moores' Administration in 1978, since

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1405

NM - 3

MR. THOMS: that was done, then I have no choice but to ask the minister these questions.

As far as the principle of this bill is concerned, I have no problems in supporting the bill. It extends to students enrolled in educational institutions, compensation for injuries suffered while participating in work training programmes for which they are not remunerated by an employer. Well, as I mentioned, the

MR. THOMS: one problem that I have with it is why the university has been excluded, and I would like to hear the minister on that when he clues up the bill.

As far as the Minister of Education (L.Verge) is concerned, I assure her that I have been elected to this House and I will not give swift passage to any piece of legislation -

MR. NEARY: To satisfy her.

MR. THOMS: -just to satisfy the minister.

Just for that reason -

MR. NEARY: She is a bit frustrated.

MR. THOMS: -just for that reason, I will debate any legislation that comes before this House that I feel should be debated and I am not going to rubber stamp any legislation that the Minister of Labour (J. Dinn) brings in or the Minister of Education. Whether I vote for or against a piece of legislation, I will be satisfied in my own mind that I am doing the right thing.

History, Mr. Speaker, may prove otherwise. Who knows what history is going to prove? But, Mr. Speaker, believe you me: the Minister of Education does not swing the bat that the President of the Council (W. Marshall) does when it comes to trying to muzzle this side of the House. We really do not care whether she believes we should debate legislation or not. She is wasting her time, wasting it, Mr. Speaker. She could use her time more productively in this Province by trying to negotiate a settlement in the teachers' strike, by being able to tell the people of this Province whether or not their Grade XI child is going to be able to enter the university this Fall in the event of a strike. She would be better off spending her time standing in this House explaining to this House why neither



MR. THOMS: she nor anybody in her department has contacted the university to find out what plans they have in the event that Grade XI students cannot complete it. And she can keep her own opinion on whether or not I give swift passage to a piece of legislation to herself.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. X

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

X MR. MOORES: Mr. Speaker, it is hard to get going on a topic such as this. It is very hard to get going if you had to take the amendment, the substance of the amendment in itself. But as always in debate in this House, controversy, provocation, stimulation is provided by other speakers and by members of the Government side. And in this case, Mr. Speaker, I am happy myself, as a former student of a post-secondary institution in this Province and a student who entered into a work programme myself in my student years, very, very happy to see that finally this government is doing something for the students of this Province, because since 1972 they have done nothing to assist students in any way, shape or form.

One might look, for instance, at student aid in this Province and I am just side-tracking for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to emphasize a later point in my discussion. If one looks at the student aid programme in this Province since 1972 particularly, there has been nothing but a continual downgrading, nothing but a diminishing of the actual amount of non-repayable monies given to students in this Province to help them further their education. And it is nice, no doubt about it,

MR. MOORES:

no question about it at all, Mr. Speaker, it is certainly nice to see that at least in this one isolated little act amendment, that the government is prepared to do something for students in this Province. And students, by the way, whether we like to admit it or not, are the substance of our future. Without students, without well-trained, well-qualified, well-educated people, students generally, then this Province, not only this Province but our society in general is finished, finished as a contributor to our well-being, intellectual well-being and our physical, financial, socio-economic development as a society.

How long - and this is the crux of my criticism of this amendment - how long does it take for a government, a group of twenty-one Cabinet ministers and thirty-three members on the government side -

AN HON. MEMBER: Thirty-four.

MR. FLIGHT: How many in Cabinet?

MR. MOORES: Twenty-one, are there not?

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible).

MR. MOORES: No, when you include the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) and a few other flunkies over there you get up to twenty-one pretty quickly, do you not?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MOORES: Well, you should make it twenty-one. Because you have a number of backbenchers over there who are so aggressive and so anxious to join the Cabinet. And you have the member for Baie Verte - White Bay (Mr. Rideout) who was promised a Cabinet position when he went across the House. It is time for you to expand it to twenty-one, time to get on with it and give the people of this Province more service. Perhaps that is what is wrong, Mr. Speaker. Now maybe we have hit the real problem with

MR. MOORES: this government, that there are not enough Cabinet ministers, that there are not enough specific individuals who are assigned to particular areas of servicing the public. Perhaps that is why this government have so many deficiencies, so many shortcomings, it is because they do not have a large enough Cabinet.

If I recall correctly, in 1971 that was one of the main criticisms towards the Smallwood administration, they had too many Cabinet ministers.

Mr. Speaker, in six years as a member of this hon. House, I have had the distasteful pleasure of representing on five different occasions, a constituent who was appealing to the Workers' Compensation Board, and semantically, it does not matter whether you call it Workers' or Workmen's or Workwomen's, the perception and the concept of the compensation system as it is does not change because you refer to it by some word or some intended meaning. What matters is, is the compensation concept a concept that enables business people and workers to protect themselves against injuries in the work place, if it is working, and if it is working satisfactorily? And as I see this amendment, Mr. Speaker, it will contribute nothing to the very serious problems confronting the Workers' Compensation concept in our nation today.

Now, last year in the Province of Ontario, a commission of inquiry or a select committee - it does not matter what the vehicle was - there was an inquiry into Workers' Compensation as it exists today in Canada and how monies are being awarded to injured work persons in the work force today. And the very clear conclusion of the Committee in Ontario was that the Workers' Compensation system of paying monies to workers is antiquated, is obsolete and is not realistic in today's work force and in

MR. R. MOORES:

today's economy. And they recommended that very serious and wide-ranging changes be made in Ontario's workers' Compensation system. Now giving credit where credit is due, the minister, the Labour and Manpower Minister of this Province (Mr. Dinn) appointed a similar commission in Newfoundland with a very renowned civil servant at the helm, a Mr. May, Mr. Willie May, He has been known - I have known the man myself for fifteen years. I remember in 1963 I met him as a schoolboy, and at that time he was with the Department of Education or Public Works, I am not sure.

MR. J. MORGAN: He was a big wheel, eh?

MR. R. MOORES: Unnecessary 'Jim', most unnecessary. It will not get you any votes in Bonavista South, none at all.

MR. L. STIRLING: He knows he is finished. The people invited you down to Bonavista, you have to go down -

MR. R. MOORES: Yes, that is a fact.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please!

The hon. member.

MR. R. MOORES: And I am hoping - I was talking about Mr. May and in addition to him being a capable and able civil servant for many, many years he very distinguishingly contributed his wealth of understanding as a civil servant and as a Newfoundlander to the civil service. No question about it. But we have met in two separate appeals to the Workers' Compensation Board, in 1977 and 1978, We have met nose to nose, very serious disagreements, there at the Board, there at the appeal hearing on behalf of constituents of mine. And the basis of my disagreement with Mr. May at that time was that the regulations governing the payment of monies to workers who had been injured was completely

MR. R. MOORES: unrealistic. I had a woman there who suffered a back injury at the Carbonear General Hospital and as a result of that back injury she could not go back to her work ever. No question about it, she could not go back. The woman was on the broad of her back in a bed for most of the time that I was talking to her, interviewing her so that I could arrange for her appeal. And she had no education, very little education, she could read and write but that was it, she was fifty-three years old which meant she could not become re-trained. No question about it, you could not expect this woman to go back to school and take up a secretarial course or some other type of skilled trade or even an 'unskilled trade', Mr. Speaker. And the Board decided, along with its medical advice, that she was 10 per cent disabled, 10 per cent disabled and her monthly payment for the rest of her life, allowing for increments each year, was ninety-three dollars a month. I am telling you, when the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Board at the time, Mr. May, said that, I just about came right off the Chair. It is one of the very few times that I have ever lost my cool in that type of forum. I was so upset that I could hardly restrain myself, that a group of three or four men around the table, one of them a professional, a doctor, had concluded that this woman for the rest of her life was going to get ninety-three lousy dollars for her to survive on. And her husband, of course, was not much better off. I think at the time he was betwixt and between, he was on unemployment insurance waiting for old age security. Just incredible, Mr. Speaker!

And it is important for the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) to realize that there are changes taking place in the concept of Workers' Compensation all over the country,

MR. MOORES: and I do not mean minor changes. The whole idea, the whole substance of Workers' Compensation across the country is being reviewed and there are some very serious changes taking place and continuing, I hope, to take place and I hope Newfoundland does not wait for ten years, like it did with this amendment, to bring in suitable legislative changes to meet the demand of the economy, to meet the demand of unions and the work place. Do not wait ten years to bring in the legislative changes to meet those demands.

Mr. Speaker, I absolutely have no qualms at all in supporting this amendment with the proviso, of course, that some consideration be given to my attending remarks as they relate Workers' Compensation as a whole not only in this Province but in Canada.

Thank you very much. X

MR. NEARY: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): A point of order. The hon. member for Lapoile.

X  
MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I want to raise the matter, and I think this is a very important point, the matter of security here around the House of Assembly. I notice this morning that we are besieged with security people standing outside the doors. This is no reflection on the people who are doing the job now, Mr. Speaker. I know they have a job to do and that they are acting under instructions but in any other jurisdiction that I have ever been in, including the House of Commons in Ottawa and in Westminster, security people sit outside the door or the doors to the entrance of the public gallery. We have here a seat outside our door where the policeman usually sits when he is not relieving the Sergeant at Arms, and he can see everybody coming off the elevators into both entrances

MR. NEARY: to the members' common rooms. But it is most unusual, Mr. Speaker, to have security people standing right outside the doors of the House of Assembly. I mean, if somebody did, and God forbid, if somebody did try to throw something or to threaten the Premier's life from the public gallery, well anybody can walk into the public gallery and pelt an egg at him or a tomato or take a shot at him or do anything. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe this is a matter that has to be cleared up. I do not think it is right. I mean, who are they protecting the Premier from, members of the House? Surely we are not the ones who are suspect? But that is what it would look like when you have a security man standing outside the door ready to do battle. Is he protecting the Premier from members of the House?

MR. SPEAKER (Butt): Order, please! I think the Chair has heard enough to make a ruling on this point.

MR. NEARY: No, not enough.

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. NEARY: Well, a point of privilege then.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the point of privilege?

MR. SPEAKER: On a point of privilege.

MR. NEARY: Well, it involves the privileges of the House. I am all for the Premier - if indeed the situation is as serious as he indicated this morning, and he has not told us what it is, I would suggest that he consult with the Leader of the Opposition because -

AN HON. MEMBER: How silly -

MR. NEARY: Of course. Why not? If there is a matter of the Premier's life being in danger and we have to bring in security and so forth, I think it is a matter of courtesy that should be discussed with the Leader of the Opposition to find out what is involved.

MR. CARTER: That is where the danger lies, over there.

MR. NEARY: Well, that is exactly the point I am making, Mr. Speaker. The hon. gentleman just made a snide remark, 'That is where the danger lies, over here.' Well, that is certainly what it would look like the way the security is placed around this House of Assembly this morning. And I would like to have a ruling, Mr. Speaker. If we are going to have security around the House of Assembly, just tell us where they should be posted and why they should be in on the floor of the House.

X MR. SPEAKER (Butt): The Chair will take the hon. member's comments under advisement. There is obviously some confidentiality around this matter, but I will certainly take it under advisement.

The hon. member for Eagle River.

X MR. HISCOCK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this amendment to the Workers' Compensation Act and I do it with great pride. But I do regret, Mr. Speaker, that we had to wait then years to get it.



MR. HISCOCK: We had to wait nine years to get the fishermen of this Province included in it. And I would go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, there are still certain groups within the Province who are still not here. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on a thing the Minister of Labour (Mr. Dinn) did make reference to; a person in my district, and they are reviewing it. When we had the fishermen's compensation come into legislation on May 28th of last year, one of the people in my district had an accident on the 26th of May, never on social assistance in his life, never out of work in his life, acquired a longliner, very, very hardworking and a credit to his community, the district and the Province, But unfortunately, by an act of fate, he found himself in an accident caught up in the girde while he was hauling in his net.

So, Mr. Speaker, we brought in the legislation long before. This like we are bringing this in now. We are bringing it in today, Mr. Speaker, but this will not become law until the Lieutenant-Governor signs this bill. That could be one week, two weeks, three weeks, one month or even longer. My question is to this House, when we bring in legislation, particularly when we bring in some workers' compensation, because it is a matter of pride and principle - a person does not mind accepting workers' compensation because he paid into it and it is his right and duty, but if you have never been on social assistance in your life, there is a little bit of a stigma, a little bit of injury to one's pride when, after working all one's life, finding one's self in an accident, one has to go on social assistance.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am glad that I made representation to the Workers' Compensation Board. They said no. I made representation then to the minister and the minister went back to the Workers' Compensation Board and the Workers' Compensation Board again said, no. I want to

MR. HISCOCK: the Premier, the Premier wrote the minister and asked him to look into it again, We have had several letters from the social worker, the person who ends up helping him to get back training, a physiotherapist in the hospital, we have had personal friends intervening on behalf of the person in my district. But, Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if there is any way that this government can find ways, when we are bringing in legislation, from the date that we bring it in to the date that it becomes law, that the people caught in between who get their hopes and aspirations up, as a student may now out on a work term who might have an accident - does he or she qualify? No, they do not qualify until it becomes law.

And with workers' compensation in particular, Mr. Speaker, I think that there is some way in the act itself we can make it retroactive from the date of introducing the legislation. There has to be a cut off date, yes. We cannot say that by bringing this in it is retroactive to last year, or two months, because if somebody had an accident before that year and before that two months - but from the time that this piece of legislation is introduced on the floor of the House of Assembly surely, Mr. Speaker, it is the intent of this government to pay workers' compensation to these groups and to the fishermen once it becomes law. So I found that after May 26th he had the accident, it became law the 28th. The process was he was in hospital in intensive care, is paralyzed, arms and legs, and the person now is just gradually getting the use of one hand. So, Mr. Speaker, surely we have to come up with a better intent of our laws not only intent

MR. HISCOCK: to cover this, but surely we have to be able to cover them. And I hope, and implore the minister, and the Premier, the Workers' Compensation Board, to not only give an allowance to the person in my district, but there are two or three other cases that occurred between the time the legislation came in and the time it became law. It was almost a year ago, Mr. Speaker, that the fishermen's compensation, or maybe for the benefit of the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) we should say fisher-person, with regard to that now it is almost a year and the case is still not resolved. That person not only has to fight with his spirit to try to get back some of the strength and some of the workings of his body, he not only has to do that, and cope with that and cope with his family being disrupted, cope with the idea of income coming in, but he also has to cope with the mental anguish of how is his family going to be looked after. How is his family going to be looked after? How is he going to be looked after after he ends up returning back to his community.

And after a year, Mr. Speaker, with undue process of bureaucracy, surely that person should have been given an answer, either yes or no. But that is not the case, the person is still hanging and still does not know what is going to happen. But I am very, very pleased to hear the minister today refer to the case and I am glad that it is still current, in his mind, in the Minister of Justice's (Mr. Ottenheimer) mind, in the Premier's mind, and into the Workers' Compensation Board. And hopefully we will be able to resolve this, not resolve it by bringing in another piece and having the negative remarks made by me criticizing this piece, I am not that type of person. I have no intention of making petty little remarks like that. I am glad to be able to work with the minister and work with the Premier in alleviating some of the mental frustrations and some of the hardship that is occurring

MR. HISCOCK: to a constituent in my district.

So I will pass that and hopefully the minister will have a word within the next two or three days or a week or so of a positive nature. If not, then I will come back on the negative parts at a later date.

But I am very pleased that this Workers' Compensation Act amendment was brought in because it is built on a good foundation. It is built on a good foundation of being introduced by the Liberal Administration a long while ago. We have had ten years. Remember the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Hollett) turned around when he was reading the book of 333 parts done by our former Premier and I said, "I am glad you are reading that." And he said, "Well," he said, "you know, Eugene, it is like this," he said, "when we entered Confederation we were so poor, we had nothing and our services were nil. We had no other choice but to go up." He was right. But going up and bringing in progressive legislation is also another fact. I also stated to him, that after ten years of government surely this government itself has no other choice but to go up, and to bring in new pieces of legislation. That is what the House of Assembly is for, to bring in legislation.

So for the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn), or for any other minister to get up and criticize the anti-legislation that was done in the Smallwood days and not let us forget that this country, this Province, did not start with Mr. Smallwood. We are going to be celebrating 400 years in 1983 of taking ownership of this Province on behalf of the British Empire, the first colony. We had Bond, we had Whiteway, we had Morris, we had Little, we had all these people in the past-

MR. BARRETT: Were they all on workers' compensation?

MR. HISCOCK: And for the member for St. John's -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: West, West.

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1411

NM - 3

MR. HISCOCK: - they may have been on the Compensation Board or they may not, but they laid the foundation of the progressive legislation. We are following a long line of tradition. We are following the tradition of

MR. HISCOCK: former Premier Moores, former Premier Smallwood, Prime Minister Bond, Prime Minister White-way, Prime Minister Morris, Prime Ministers Little and Squires and all of our past statesmen and politicians.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us not, and let this administration not, after ten years - surely they can refer a little bit more to our past than the Smallwood years. Surely the Opposition is not always going to be referring to the past administration of Mr. Moores. Surely there was something before Mr. Moores and Mr. Smallwood and surely, Mr. Speaker, we cannot continue to have the bogeyman taken out of the closet and shaken and say, oh the Liberals are the resources and that we never had this legislation under the Liberals and an X number of other problems.

So, Mr. Speaker, with regard to this piece of legislation, it is long overdue. But we can pass as much progressive legislation as we like in this Province by any government, but after the day it is passed, the next day something else comes up in the world or in the country or in the Province to make that outdated so we need to bring in an amendment. We see the Municipalities Act that was hailed as one of the greatest pieces of reform legislation brought into the House of Assembly. Now, the minister is introducing, a year later an amendment. Now, with the Workers' Compensation for fishermen, now we are seeing an amendment to it.

So, Mr. Speaker, as the member for Carbonear (R. Moores) has said, we have very, very progressive pieces of legislation coming in all over the world. It is a re-thinking, an attitude of Workers' Compensation and I am glad to see that this government is also bringing in legislation of this nature.

MR. HISCOCK: But I would like to ask the question, even though it is the technical part, a secondary student, is this piece of legislation going to look at the students who are employed on Canada Works programmes, employed by the Provincial Government in its parks, in its military tattoo, in its various other Summer programmes? Are these pieces of legislation going to affect these students on a work term? I would assume, because they are students, the Summer holidays themselves could be referred to as a work-term, technically, because it is a matter of preparing for the following year.

But with regard to the piece of legislation, Workers' Compensation, it is applying to this House, it is a very progressive part just like the progressive step that our Prime Minister made in clarifying the issue, Mr. Speaker, of ownership of offshore. It is because of a progressive step like that and the progressive step of the Workers' Compensation pieces of legislation that go hand in hand, Mr. Speaker. It is an advancement in our society when we say, Mr. Speaker, that students should be covered. And when the Prime Minister turns around and says to us as a Province, 'yes, you can get your ownership as if it is in the center, as if it is in the center of the Island, forty-five per cent, the same as Alberta! No doubt, Mr. Speaker, it may have to change just like this piece of legislation may have to change. It may drop down to forty-three per cent. It may drop down to forty because the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) -

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please! I believe the hon. member now is really extending the bounds of relevancy.

MR. HISCOCK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I may be extending the bounds of debate but I am trying to make the connection, Mr. Speaker, by saying that this progressive piece of legislation is coming in and our post-secondary

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1412

EL - 3

MR. HISCOCK:                   students are involved. The Prime Minister is also with a progressive piece of - not legislation, but hopefully it will become-as the President of the Council (W. Marshall) said, it has to be done by the Constitution. It has to be done by an act of Parliament so hopefully we will see, Mr. Speaker, that this government



MR. HISCOCK: will be in negotiation - not wait for the Prime Minister to contact him, Mr. Speaker, because it is not the Prime Minister's problem, it is our problem. We should be going to them, not with cap in hand, but we should be going to them and setting up meetings.

Mr. Speaker, I find it interesting that after all the confrontation tactics, now we have a piece of legislation like this. After all the pieces of legislation, we are finding now the confrontation attitude, the hang tough attitude, is the result of this legislation among other things. We are finding now our Premier actually saying the reason why the Prime Minister clarified the issue is because of his attitude.

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: Now, Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the hon. gentleman and most hon. gentlemen opposite this morning and I could have gotten up on many points of order.

The purpose, Mr. Speaker, of this bill is the extension of Workers' Compensation to students. The hon. gentleman is now getting off into current constitutional matters and current federal/provincial relationships that are not in any way germane to this bill. That is the first point, Mr. Speaker.

The second point is, I would not have risen to my feet had the hon. member obeyed the ruling of Your Honour a few moments ago to the effect that the hon. gentleman was out of order and you questioned at the time his relevance to try to steer him on. And instead, Mr. Speaker, of complying with Your Honour's ruling, the hon. gentleman continues on in his own vein.

Now, we cannot have any order in this House, Mr. Speaker, unless Your Honour's ruling is

MR. MARSHALL: complied with and unless the normal parliamentary principles are complied with. And if hon. gentlemen there opposite or wherever they may be, think that they can flaunt the ruling of Your Honour like that, Mr. Speaker, there is only one remedy for it. You know, it is easy for the Opposition, if it wants to, to debate bills, our housekeeping bills - that they style as housekeeping bills - to debate them for four and five hours apiece, but the rest of the House, Mr. Speaker, and the people of the Province are entitled to have the matter of relevancy be complied with.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Order, please!

To the point of order, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. STIRLING: The first point when he brought it up, obviously is a question of judgement. He does not have to tell the Speaker how to keep order. The Speaker and the Deputy and the Chairman have done an excellent job keeping order and that last little lecture was unnecessary.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. STIRLING: As to the question of whether or not he was being relevant, Mr. Speaker, we were just following the same rules and the same latitude.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. STIRLING: And there is no question that the Speaker can bring a straying speaker - if he does drift a little bit, he strayed, and the Speaker brought him back and he may have drifted again, but he will get back to the points. But neither of the points he brought up was a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Well, with respect to the point of order, I must rule on the point of order.

I think there is a legitimate point of order and, obviously, it reinforces what I did a few moments ago. I am sure the hon. member is aware that he was not exactly being relevant to this particular bill when he was talking about other issues, so I bring that to his attention. It is difficult to define relevancy, but in this particular case I have no difficulty and I would ask the hon. member to address his remarks to the bill.

MR. NEARY: On a point of privilege,  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of privilege has been raised by the hon. the member for LaPoile.

MR. NEARY: A short while ago I raised a matter that involved the privileges of this House, and I realize Your Honour was not sitting in the Chair, but my understanding is that matters of privilege have to be dealt with quickly. The matter has not been dealt with yet, the situation still remains the same, members of this House are under surveillance by security people. I think it is wrong, I resent it, and I think they should be asked to leave the floor of this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: To the point of privilege,  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of privilege, the hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman is doing his usual thing, he is attempting to use this House to create his own circus. The fact of the matter is, he raised a point of privilege which, in my opinion, was not a legitimate point of privilege. It is being considered by the Chair. The hon. gentleman, in his zest to

MR. W. MARSHALL:

get in the paper, is obviously very careless of what import and what effect his positions will take. He has no point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, he is just trying to operate his circus once again.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Well, with respect - I believe I have heard enough. The hon. member only has a few minutes left in the debate and I would assume that he would like to continue the debate.

MR. L. STIRLING: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member has a new point to add to the point of order.

MR. L. STIRLING: To the point of privilege to clarify -

MR. SPEAKER: If I may, I understood the hon. member raised on a point of order.

MR. L. STIRLING: Privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Privilege again? Sorry.

MR. L. STIRLING: Dealing with the point of privilege. Just for clarification, Mr. Speaker, if the problem is as serious as it appears, I just want to be on the record that there has not even been the courtesy of a phone call, I have not been briefed on the situation, the caucus has not been briefed on the situation. If it is a serious problem of security for any member of this House of Assembly which is so serious as to involve the assurance that it is needed, then we need to be briefed, not in public but in private. And I think really it is something that the Speaker has to take under consideration for this whole House of Assembly. It is not a question of one member. And I do believe that my colleague has a legitimate point of privilege.

X  
MR. SPEAKER (Simms):            With respect to the point of  
privilege I agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition  
(Mr. Stirling) and I believe that is exactly what has occurred.  
It is the same point of privilege that was raised a few  
moments ago. The matter is under advisement -

MR. S. NEARY:                    When are you going to make  
a ruling?

MR. SPEAKER:                    Well, in due course. When  
the Chair is ready to make a ruling it will make a ruling.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:            Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER:                    Order, please! Order, please!  
When the Chair is ready to  
make a ruling it will make the ruling. But we have taken  
the matter under advisement.

  The hon. member for Eagle  
River (Mr. Hiscock) has a few moments left.

X  
MR. E. HISCOCK:                Mr. Speaker, I thank you.  
I regret that I was not relevant in my speech. But, Mr.  
Speaker, the rules of this House have been changed so much,  
changed so much by, not the Chair, but by the rules of the  
House, by having debate on the Budget one day, then a piece  
of legislation, then Private Members' Day and then going  
back. It is very hard, Mr. Speaker, as a member of this  
House, an elected official to make a point in one day.  
We came into this House this morning, we were supposed  
to be debating one piece of legislation and now we find  
that we are on something else.

  But, Mr. Speaker, with points of  
privilege, and points of order we are speaking to at times,  
when members are no longer relevant in their speeches, and  
talking about the House becoming a circus, we do not even,  
as the Opposition, we do not even know what piece  
of legislation - and we do not even know anything else that

MR. E. HISCOCK: is going on in this House.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank you for bringing me back but I regret that I had to go in that direction to make a point. But again, I do not question the ruling.

I do support this piece of legislation. But I have to say as an elected official in this House and as a person who supports the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) with regard to trying to obtain decorum in this House, I find it -

AN HON. MEMBER: Amusing.

MR. HISCOCK: Not amusing. It is not amusing. I find it distracting. After being in the House for two years, to be looking across the House, looking in the gallery and seeing security people, I just find it distracting.

MR. SPEAKER (Simms): Again may I bring the hon. member then to order. The bill under debate, I believe we all now realize, is an Act To Amend The Workers' Compensation Act. It has nothing to do with security. That matter has been raised -

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible) Mr. Speaker,

MR. SPEAKER: If I may. That matter has been raised and is under advisement. I would ask the hon. member if he would now bring his remarks around to the bill which we are now presently debating.

The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. E. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, when we are in the House - again if I say that I will be accused of contesting the ruling of the Chair so I will not say it. It is under advisement.

Mr. Speaker, I do support this Workmen's Compensation -

MR. THOMS: Workers'.

May 8, 1981

Tape No. 1414

DW - 4

MR. E. HISCOCK: Workers' Compensation Act and the amendment to it and I am quite pleased. I am also quite pleased that it is involving students. I do regret that after being in this House for two and half years the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) had not seen fit to bring it in before. She probably has used her influence to get the 'Workmen's' changed, but it is regrettable that we have had to wait over two years for this piece of legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I support this legislation and I again refer back to the incident in my district and hope that the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn) will do all in his power to make

MR. HISCOCK:

sure that the person is going through a lot of mental anguish because of the accident and because he was not included in it - he will do everything he can to make sure that this suffering is alleviated.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. X

MR. SPEAKER (Simms):

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

X  
MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, in one minute it is impossible to answer all the questions raised by the hon. members opposite. I have no intention of allowing a piece of legislation to go through without answering questions.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Hear, hear!

MR. DINN:

I cannot do it in one minute. I will attempt to answer as many questions as I can in the time that I have available to me.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. DINN:

Mr. Speaker, I adjourn the debate. X

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. minister adjourns the debate.

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I move that the House at its rising do adjourn until tomorrow, Monday, at 3:00 P.M.

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