

PRELIMINARY  
UNEDITED  
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
FOR THE PERIOD:  
3:00 P.M. - 6:00 P.M.  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1982.

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Chairman in the Chair

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

Before we begin today's proceedings, it is a distinct pleasure for me to welcome to the Speaker's gallery today members of a Select Committee from the Nova Scotia Legislature led by the Speaker of the Legislature, the hon. Arthur Donahoe, members Mr. Hugh Tinkham and Mr. Vince McLean, and secretaries to the committee Dr. Henry Murgah and Mr. Graham Walker. On behalf of all of the hon. members I indeed welcome you to our Legislature today.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

MR. WM. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, it was with a feeling of profound shock and concern that the government learned recently of Bowaters plan to shutdown its Number 7 machine in the mill at Corner Brook. Since then, government has been striving to have Bowaters postpone announcement of its decision to enable a full assessment of the facts to be made so that the possibility of a counter proposal or proposal could be explored. It was for this purpose that the Premier met with the head of Bowaters International in London last Friday. It was for this purpose that the Ministers of Development (Mr. N. Windsor), Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. C. Power) and Education (Ms. L. Verge) went to visit officials of Bowaters North American headquarters in South Carolina. Government was seeking a postponement

MR. WM. MARSHALL: of the announcement. We felt, Mr. Speaker, it was better to be able to assess the situation and any counter-proposal or proposal would have more favourable prospects of reception if there was the opportunity to make them prior to the taking of a public decision. The reason for this, Mr. Speaker, is obvious: It is more difficult to have decisions reversed or modified prior to a party having publicly announced that decision. As everyone knows, the prospects of having decisions reassessed, if reconsideration is in fact possible, are diminished once public positions are taken. It was for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that government decided it was in the best interests of the Province, and the people of the West coast particularly, to make every effort to have the announcement delayed. I might add it was also for this reason, Mr. Speaker, that on Friday last I indicated in the House that it was not in the best interests of the people of the Province, and particularly of the West coast, to comment on the questions that were made. But unfortunately,

MR. MARSHALL: as we now know from the releases that have been made on the West Coast, Bowaters refused to afford us this opportunity and the decision has been made.

It was also for this reason that government was so concerned over the Opposition's approach to Question Period last Friday. By now it must be evident that the Opposition acquired this information from some confidential source. By choosing to make it public, Mr. Speaker, any chance government had to obtain the much needed postponement of the decision -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MARSHALL: - was virtually eliminated. If this statement requires verification, if the hon. members require verification, Mr. Speaker, I can advise them that I was speaking with the Premier approximately an hour -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MARSHALL: - and a half ago, and I can refer them to the response which the head of Bowaters International made to the Premier this morning, when the Premier called him in a last-ditch effort to have the announcement postponed. The Chairman's response was words to the effect, "What do you mean? The decision has already been made public."

Now, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the decision of Bowaters has now been taken, government is going to proceed to have a complete reassessment of the facts relating to this most serious situation. This will proceed immediately so that the full impact of this decision on the people of the West Coast can be determined and every effort will be made to see if it is possible to formulate an acceptable proposal or counter proposal.

The Premier has already wired the Mayor and union officials to that effect, and indicated that he will meet with leaders in Corner Brook next week. A copy of his telex is attached to my statement and I shall

MR. MARSHALL: read the text of it; it is rather brief, Mr. Speaker. It reads: "The Provincial Government is deeply concerned about the Bowaters situation. As you know, three minister of the government have been in South Carolina these past days. I have had a meeting with the Chairman of the Board in London. We have been attempting to have the company delay announcing its decision until government had all the facts from the company. After receiving this information, government wanted to prepare a counter-proposal or proposals. I have spoken to the Chairman of the Board today and I will be speaking to him again later today. The ministers in South Carolina are not having much success in obtaining a delay to the decision to be announced. In any event, a serious situation exists."

The Premier went on to say, 'I should like to brief all the relevant organizations in the Humber Valley-Bay of Islands area and to receive your views on the matter. Therefore I wish to meet with you, and the leaders of the other groups copied on this telex, next week in Corner Brook. My office will be in contact with you to organize the meeting. I look very much forward to discussing this matter with you at that time. Signed A. Brian Peckford, Premier.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, in addition to that I can announce that government has also moved to establish a high-level committee to be co-ordinated under the Departments of Finance, Forest Resources and Lands and Development.

MR. HISCOCK: Nationalize it.

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman might think that this is a humorous situation, but it has very serious implications to the people of this Province and the West Coast. The purpose of this committee that is being established, Mr. Speaker, will be to gather all facts relating to the Bowater decision and

MR. MARSHALL: assess the entire situation with a view to assuring that every conceivable step is identified to alleviate the impact of this decision and to recommend such proposals or counter-proposals that government might make.

The committee will consult with and obtain the benefit of such experts as might be necessary. Government has also considered, Mr. Speaker, inviting, and has decided to invite the federal government to set up with it a joint consultative committee under applicable labour legislation to help alleviate the ultimate impact of this decision. This action should not, however, Mr. Speaker, be interpreted as derogating in any way from government's primary focus which is to assess all factors relating to this decision with a view to formulating whatever proposals or counter proposals are possible.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, may I assure the people of the West Coast, and Corner Brook in particular, of government's deep and abiding concern for the workers directly affected. This is a traumatic experience which all Newfoundlanders share but most especially is it felt by the workers and their families. To them we give our pledge and assurance that no stone will be left unturned to see that everything possible is done in the circumstances.

May I also say, Mr. Speaker, when I am making this statement, because I would not wish these efforts to be maintained, that government has also indicated that it is not going to leave no stone unturned in connection with the situation down in Burin which is very much to the forefront as well. We have made a statement with respect to Burin earlier this week and

MR. MARSHALL: we will be dealing with that as well. But this is the statement that is necessary with respect to Bowaters immediately. Our concern is equally for both areas of the Province - as a matter of fact with all areas of the Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the President of the Council's statement took approximately eight minutes and it is understood that the Opposition has approximately one half that time, so I recognize the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am not going to be intimidated by remarks made by the hon. gentleman, neither am I going to play politics as the hon. gentleman did in his statement. The hon. gentleman knows that the Premier last night from Bonn confirmed that he knew about the Bowaters' situation two weeks ago, that he left the Province with this information only after giving the information to a few of his Cabinet colleagues.

MR. MARSHALL: A few?

MR. NEARY: A few, and they have not been identified yet. And over the days and weeks ahead we will be dealing with that situation. The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that three Cabinet Ministers went to North Carolina only forty-eight hours before Bowaters was scheduled to call a news conference in Corner Brook to make the announcement. And when they went to North Carolina they went ill-prepared, they had no proposal, they had no papers with them. They went ill-prepared and they asked for a thirty day moratorium. Now,

MR. NEARY: remember the government had this information for two weeks, and if I had not raised it last week they probably would not have went to Carolina. They went there 48 hours before Bowaters was to make the announcement and asked for a thirty day moratorium and that was rejected. And they spent the rest of their time in North Carolina touring the paper mill down there. Now that is the effort that so far we have seen on behalf of this government.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we make no apologies at all in this House for raising this situation in order to try to protect the jobs of the employees of Bowaters in Corner Brook.

The set-back at the Bowater paper mill is tragic, Mr. Speaker, in the extreme, and although we are not at all pleased with the way the Premier handled the situation, there is still time to try to stave off this impending disaster. The actions of Bowaters today, Mr. Speaker, are actions of heartless brutality. It is tragic that this company, which just a few months ago bragged about its high profits in the financial newspaper The Guardian, would now seek to tidy up its financial book-keeping on the backs of paper mill workers and the city of Corner Brook.

This company, Mr. Speaker, which has taken billions out of this Province for its foreign shareholders year after year, is now trying to make their employees and the people in the Western part of this Province suffer.

The Liberal Caucus, Mr. Speaker, have instructed me to offer any help or assistance that we can to the people of Corner Brook in these trying times. If government have any alternatives to these layoffs, any



MR. NEARY: plans, any proposals, or any ideas to save the jobs or lessen the burden on the people of Corner Brook, we will support them in their endeavours. But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we will be keeping a close eye on the situation ourselves and will not hesitate to put forward ideas and proposals of our own whenever we feel that they are in the best interest of our fellow Newfoundlanders in the Western part of this Province. And if the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, wants to do a service to the people of Corner Brook, and the people in the Western part of this Province, he would lay aside his partisan politics for a few days, maybe a few weeks or a few months, and let us roll up our sleeves and get down to brass tacks and see if we can stave off this situation. We are prepared to forego Private Member's Day in this House today to have this matter debated, if the hon. gentleman will concur. We need the unanimous approval of the House, and if the hon. gentlement will concur, Mr. Speaker, the resolution that we are debating today in Private Member's Day is one put forward by my colleague, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) to have live coverage of the proceedings of this House. We are quite prepared to give up that resolution, we made a decision in caucus, if the hon. gentlemen will agree to debate the Bowaters situation in this House this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS:

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

MR. NEARY:                               Mr. Speaker, I just want  
to ask the hon. gentleman about the Bowaters situation.  
Can the hon. gentleman tell the House, in addition to the  
746 employees - again the hon. gentleman

MR. NEARY:

came into the House again today , I would suspect, very ill-prepared to deal with this situation. He did not even know the numbers and I doubt if he knows the numbers yet- in addition to the layoff of 746 employees, what other steps are being taken by Bowaters to cut back the operation in Corner Brook? Are they closing down any other part of the mill? Will there be any further downtime in Corner Brook as a result of the economic conditions throughout the world? Could the hon. gentleman give us this kind of information?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, I can state that the only information that we have, apart from the 496 mill workers who are going to be laid off as a result of the shut-down of the machine in Corner Brook and the 250 loggers who are working in the woods operation, that is the extent of the layoffs. I have nothing more, I think, than the press conference by Bowaters in Corner Brook indicated today, that in addition they are going to shut down the stone groundwood mill but that is not going to add to the numbers of people who will be without work.

MR. NEARY:

A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Would the hon. gentleman tell the House now then what steps the administration are going to take to deal with this situation? Could the hon. gentleman give us some idea of what plans and proposals and what suggestions will be made to try to stave off this impending disaster? We would like to know, Mr. Speaker, because we want to help the government. We want to know what plans they have so we can support any plans and proposals that they might have. Could the hon.

MR. NEARY: gentleman tell us how they intend to deal with this situation? And will the hon. gentleman also tell us if it is the intention of the administration to redesignate the Fishery College that the Premier wanted built in St. John's and the people wanted built out in Corner Brook, is that one of the items that will be given top priority, the redesignation of the Fishery College from St. John's to Corner Brook?

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, as to what the government is going to do with respect to the situation, I think that has been outlined and detailed in the statement itself. We have already taken action with respect to the establishment of the committee that I have referred to. The Premier will be in consultation with the various leaders in the West Coast community when he returns next week, plus the other items that I have mentioned in the statement.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to speak directly to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) with respect to the second part of his question, as to whether or not we are going to move the Fisheries College. I would caution him not to use an unfortunate situation for the purpose of attempting to set one part of this Province off against another. This is a very unfortunate situation, and I tell the hon. Leader of the Opposition directly that the government is going to use its best efforts in every way to see what it can do to alleviate this unfortunate situation. So if the hon.

MR. MARSHALL: gentleman wants to engage in his penchant for politics at the expense of the people of Corner Brook, such as he did last Friday, he can do it, but I will not partake with him in it.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am not even going to bother to answer the hon. gentleman, to answer such low trash coming from the lips of the hon. gentleman. Mr. Speaker, that suggestion was made in good faith and in sincerity, and if the hon. gentleman does not like it, if they are a St. John's government, well then, Mr. Speaker, so be it, let him be man enough to stand up and say so, but they cannot see beyond the overpass in St. John's.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me ask the hon. gentleman, in connection with down time, my understanding is that in the first quarter there will be eight weeks down time in the mill in Corner Brook that the hon. gentleman does not seem to know about and probably does not care about. Now, Mr. Speaker, why should Bowaters - this is the question I am asking the hon. gentleman - why should the employees of Bowaters and why should the mill in Corner Brook be asked to take all the down time in the Bowater organization and the other mills in the United States and in other parts of the world not share the down time with Corner Brook? And would the hon. gentleman tell the House what steps he is going to take to try to remedy that situation?

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

MR. MARSHALL: The eight weeks down time, we are obviously aware of it. The eight weeks down time, Mr. Speaker,

MR. MARSHALL: is brought about as a result of the - indeed, we are told that the major reason for the unfortunate situation in Corner Brook, in addition to the eight weeks down time, is the unfortunate financial situation both internationally and nationally that we find ourselves in. As I referred to yesterday, the international and national recession is going to reflect on a fragile economy such as that experienced by the people of Newfoundland probably much more so than many other parts of Canada. So that is the reason that has been given. As I say, we are in the process of assessing the situation and assessing and weighing all of the facts. So I am not going to comment and neither am I going to enter into recriminations against anyone at this particular time lest it adversely affect the ultimate resolution of the situation which we earnestly hope and will really strive to make a positive one. I mean, you know, you have to watch the questions that you ask. Last Friday, the hon. gentleman, who could have quite easily behind the curtain of this House asked me the questions and I would have responded, instead chose to come out like he did and in a large measure then foreclosed and eliminated the possibility that we were striving to get, a postponement of that decision in order to have a rational time to be able to answer the questions -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. MARSHALL: - the very questions that the hon. gentleman

MR. WM. MARSHALL:

proposes. So that is the answer that I give to the hon. gentleman. As to being a St. John's government, Mr. Speaker, I refer the hon. gentleman to the decision rendered by the people of this Province on April 6, last. This is very much a Newfoundland and Labrador Government as witnessed by the few members on the opposite side.

MR. S. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, as I have said earlier I am not going to get down in the mud and roll with the hon. gentleman.

MR. H. BARRETT:

You have never been out of it.

MR. NEARY:

But that has to be about the lowest, filthiest, most rotten - and it could only come from the lips of the hon. gentleman. If the Premier, Mr. Speaker, has designated the hon. gentleman as his hatchet man, he could not have picked a better member on the government side. But I am not going to get involved in debate with the hon. gentleman at this particular point in time. They are smarting enough now because the Premier ran away from the Province with this information like a coward, went off to Europe on the seal ban and left the people of Corner Brook in the lurch.

MR. SPEAKER:

Order, please!

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition is entering into the realm of debate and I would ask him to pose a direct question.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, it is hard not to debate with the hon. gentleman, although I said I am not going to be intimidated by the hon. ultimate in nastiness

MR. S. NEARY: in this House. Now, would the hon. gentleman tell us if he is prepared to forego Private Memebers' Day in this House today and debate the Bowaters situation?

MR. WM. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, knowing full well the harm that was caused to this situation by the hon. gentleman's participation in it last Friday, I hardly think, as urgent as this situation is, that anything that the hon. gentleman could contribute to it could do anything other than harm the people of Corner Brook and the West coast. I will ask the hon. gentleman there opposite, when he talks about debate, is he prepared to apologize to the people of the West coast and Corner Brook for what he has perpetrated by the unwise way in which he dealt with it and the irresponsible in which he dealt with it himself on Friday last?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, judging by the number of phone calls and the messages that I have had from Corner Brook, from people, I would say that the people of Corner Brook are very happy and proud that they had an effective Opposition in this House, that the government was not allowed to sit on the information until the House of Assembly closed, because that is what they intended to do. They were going to sit on Durin and sit on Bowaters until the House closed. The minister knew the House was closing on Friday of this week, and the Premier would be out of the Province when the bad news would come, and they were hoping they could sit on it, keep it from the people, and the hon. gentleman



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MR. WM . MARSHALL: could decide when the people would be told the truth. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a very poor and shabby way to treat the people of this Province.

MR. T. HICKEY: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the Minister of Social Services on a point of order.

MR. HICKEY: Mr. Speaker, is there a question there somewhere?

MR. G. WARREN: You have cut off welfare. Sit down now!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The Chair is also wondering if there is a question.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, let it be noted and let it stand on the public record that the hon. gentleman is too ashamed of the government's actions and is not prepared to have this matter debated in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to be more precise in his questions or I will have to rule him out of order.

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. J. Collins),

MR. LUSH: the gentleman who is passively watching over the economic demise of the Province. The question, Sir, relates to his economic statement some weeks ago, when the minister announced the increases in taxes, and it was suggested after that one of the reasons to increase the taxes was to minimize the number of layoffs that might otherwise result within the public service. Indeed, there was very little reference to layoffs. There was some mention of selective layoffs, and there was a specific mention of twenty-seven park officials being laid off. So related to that, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the minister can indicate whether there have been any layoffs since that statement, or whether there will be any layoffs in this fiscal year, and if the minister has any idea of what numbers we are talking about in the civil service with respect to layoffs and what the categories or classifications might be of these layoffs?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I presume the hon. member wants to maximize the layoffs in the public service. This government does not take that view, this government takes the view that to achieve a certain objective it will minimize the effect on the workers in the public service. We will do what is necessary, but we will not cause unnecessary harm or difficulty to the employees in the public service, employees who are faithful workers, who do the people of this Province proud by their efforts, and we will not take the attitude that the hon. member clearly projects of trying to do the greatest harm possible to them.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of dealing with the problems we are facing passively, I think the hon. member must have been asleep the other day when the message was given. This was an active measure, it was not a passive measure. The statement was a measure that looked

DR. COLLINS: at a difficult problem facing us, did something about it, and we fully expect it will achieve a very positive result, far from being passive.

In terms of no mention of layoffs, if the hon. member takes the trouble to read again the statement he will note that in that statement there is a saving of something in the order of \$4.3 million to be achieved by certain selective layoffs in the public service, and certain delays in employing, especially temporary employees, who would normally come on at this time of the year and in the ensuing months.

MR. LUSH: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): A supplementary, the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, the minister certainly did not get to the essence of my question. The question was related to the intensity of the layoffs in terms of numbers, and what categories, what classifications would be affected. Are these people just temporary workers? Are these people workers who have been working for the government for a long time, ten, fifteen years? So can the minister be more specific in terms of just what numbers are involved in the layoffs and what the classifications of these workers are?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I think I have already indicated that, by and large, the workers who will be laid off will be in the temporary category in such areas as Transportation, Public Works and Services and so on. These departments, in particular, have occasion to use temporary workers to a large extent and these are primarily the workers who will not be engaged for a number of months.

In addition to that, however, it has been necessary on a very selective basis to discontinue the employment of some permanent workers. This has to go through the usual process that is put in place, through the collective bargaining arrangement essentially. And it is difficult to give precise numbers, but the numbers of the permanent employees will range somewhere around sixty to eighty.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker,

the minister has indicated that there will be sixty to eighty workers laid off. Well, Mr. Speaker, we hope that to be an accurate figure. And leading on from that, Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Young): I wonder if the Minister of Public Works can indicate

MR. LUSH: whether or not his department has been affected by these layoffs, whether there have been or whether there will be any layoffs within the Public Service? And if so, how many workers have been laid off to date?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. Minister of Public Works and Services.

MR. YOUNG: Mr. Speaker, to date there have been twenty-two people affected, in my department and these are mainly labourers and some carpenters.

the hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) said, due to the restraints, and these are temporary people.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: My question is to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goudie), with regard to a letter I wrote your department on July 15 of this year asking that your department would provide some help in the purchasing of food and fuel and give direct loans to smaller general stores so they can buy food and fuel instead of going to Avco Finance, because the wholesalers will not give them that much credit, is your government looking at the possibility of helping these smaller businesses to help carry them over the winter stock, with regard to food and fuel? The question I have to ask the minister;

MR. HISCOCK: Is there truth to the rumour that down in the community of Fox Harbour - commonly called St. Lewis, Labrador - one-quarter of the residents now are without gasoline for the Winter and here the freeze-up has not even taken place?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, on the first part of whether or not government will provide financial assistance in loans and grants to these particular businesses referred to, the only answer I can give is on behalf of my own department in which we have a grants and loans programme, neither of which is designed to assist the retail trade. So that answers that particular question.

As to the state of gasoline supplies and other fuel supplies in Fox Harbour or any other communities on the South Coast, I cannot answer that question either. The only communities in Labrador in which we have any direct involvement in terms of distribution of fuel supplies are in some of the North Coast communities and they are in fairly comfortable shape as I understand it. But perhaps the gentleman might be better advised to direct his question to either Mr. Ian Strachan or Mr. Mel Woodward.

MR. HISCOCK: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Supplementary, the hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: With regard to the letter that I wrote you on July 15th saying that if we did not do something then what would end up happening is that the government would have to take over the stores in Eastern Labrador like they have in Makkovik, Nain, Postville and Hopedale. I received a letter from his Parliamentary Assistant October 14th - three months later - saying that the Northern Development

MR. HISCOCK: Division in Goose Bay had been making contact with stores in Eastern Labrador. So if it is not the responsibility of the minister, why is the Parliamentary Assistant looking into an area that is not even his responsibility either? And the question I want to ask is if he is the Minister for Northern, Agriculture and Rural Development, what action is going to be taken now that the ships are not going in and a quarter of the community does not have any gasoline and fuel? Are we going to make some arrangements with CN Marine to make sure that there is fuel in there so they can go hunting this Winter, so they can go and get wood supplies and water, what action instead of saying, 'Okay, turn it over to the companies'?

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, the letter that the hon. gentleman refers to coming from the member for Menihek (Mr. Walsh) in his capacity as Parliamentary Assistant, I think reflects the concern of this government in relation to all peoples in Labrador. As a matter of fact, the member for Menihek and a number of my staff have visited not all but most of the communities along the Coast of Labrador over the past several months to have a look at the situation and apprise themselves and me of the general situation on the Coast of Labrador. But as I pointed out, I have no programmes available in my department to assist retail operations in the Province be it through a grant or a loan programme. And in relation to the fuel, I have no responsibility, and as far as I know neither does the provincial government, for the distribution of fuel or other supplies on the South Coast of Labrador, but rather two commercial operations, one, the Woodward group of companies and another called Labseaco have been plying the waters all Summer, as I understand, in their cargo vessels supplying fuels

MR. GOUDIE: down there. What the status of it is now I do not know. But I would also suggest to the hon. member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock), who has responsibility for that district, should apprise himself properly and accurately of this situation and take action. That is his job, after all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the minister again, Labseaco did make representation to the Department of the Environment to have temporary tanks installed because Fishery Products no longer has their operation there after December 1 with regard to fuel. They made application for temporary permits so they could put up the tanks and as a result the majority of the people thought that fuel was coming in. But the Department of the Environment did not do it. Did the Parliamentary Assistant, or the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goudie) in conjunction with the Department of Environment make a special exemption for Fox Harbour?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, I cannot speak on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Andrews). I do not think he is in the House now so I do not know what his response will be. But I have already given my response in relation to my ministerial responsibilities.

MR. HISCOCK: One further supplementary.



MR. SPEAKER (Russell): A final supplementary, the hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: I have asked the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development, with regard to this matter several times in this House, and every time I get up on a sticky question concerning Southern Labrador I have always been told that his jurisdiction does not come down into Southern and Eastern Labrador, Can the minister inform me, with regard to Southern and Eastern Labrador, to whom do I go? Do I go to the Premier, do I go to the Minister of Justice? Why is the minister and his officials coming down to Southern and Eastern Labrador if they do not have any jurisdiction and would it not be better if the money that they are using in travel go to some other department?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. SIMMS: It is the same question.

MR. NEARY: You are not Speaker now, Len. You are not Speaker anymore.

MR. GOUDIE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition would remain silent for a moment so I can answer his colleague's question I would most certainly appreciate it.

I am going back again to the original question asked by the hon. gentleman. I did not say we did not have any responsibility down there, but rather no responsibility in relation to retail trade or the distribution of fuel. I would also point out to the hon. gentleman that in his district this government, in co-operation with development associations in the area, helped implement one of the best and most efficient Winter transportation systems there is in this

MR. GOUDIE: Province as it relates to that kind of a regional area.

So to indicate that there is no care or feeling on the part of this government for people in the Eagle River district is obviously incorrect. But again, I will reiterate, in the distribution of fuel and other like commodities, and in the retail trade, I have no ministerial responsibility for that particular aspect of our economy and I do not know if anyone else does other than through the regular loans programmes of which I have no programme to assist.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goudie) also. Could the minister advise the hon. House if his department has fuel delivered to government stores operated by his department in Northern Labrador without a public tender being called?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. GOUDIE: No, Mr. Speaker, not that I am aware of. I understood that the fuel in some communities on the North Coast of Labrador, the facilities themselves have been turned over in Nain, for instance, to one Melvin Woodward, and his group of companies to supply and stock, and in the case of other depots along the North Coast of Labrador where the distribution of fuel has taken place, it has all gone through the public tender and public proposal process.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the minister is could the minister further advise the hon. House if there was some fuel oil delivered to the depot in Makkovik in mid-Summer by an individual oil company without public tender?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development.

MR. GOUDIE: As I have said, Mr. Speaker, not that I am aware of, not to any degree at all, but I will undertake to check into the matter and see. I can accurately point out that in the case of Davis Inlet, for instance, where we are responsible for the distribution of fuel, commodities were delivered there by one Melvir Woodward's group of companies, of such an inferior quality that the stuff had to be removed and replaced.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDIER: A question for the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins). Retailers throughout the Province

MR. HODDER:                    have complained and are complaining that the forms used for determining whether or not children's clothing and shoes are exempt from taxes are not adequate. As a matter of fact, to quote the retailers, they say that they are ridiculous! I would ask the minister if he intends to issue new forms and will he set up a system which will not make use of cards or forms, one without the use of cards or forms?

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

DR. COLLINS:                    Mr. Speaker, I must say I find the tone of the hon. member's question somewhat disturbing. It seems clear that the Opposition is very much against this proposal that children under the age of fifteen, who are nevertheless above certain sizes, should not get the benefit of tax-free clothing and footwear. I find that attitude on the part of the Opposition rather regrettable. They would like clearly to see the mechanism we put in place not work.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:            Oh, oh!

DR. COLLINS:                    But I can assure the hon. member that the mechanism we have put in place has been tried and tested in other jurisdictions which are faced with the same problem, that we have been in consultation with them as to the methods used and to get their assessment of the method, and we have tried to use the best aspects of the methods they have used. We are putting it in on a trial basis. We expect that, as time goes along, we will get suggestions for improvement, and if we do, we will certainly implement them. But to cast some doubt on the validity of putting in such a programme, as the hon. member's question certainly seems to do, I think is very regrettable indeed.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, we on this side are not against the proposal but we are certainly against the tax.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HODDER: We are told by retailers across the Province that the citizens, the taxpayers who have been hit with this tax, are not informed as to what is taxed, which has led to disputes at the cash register and line-ups at the cash registers right across this Province. Will the minister do something to inform the people of this Province of the full impact of the infamous Ministerial Statement, sometime budget, that he brought in a couple of weeks ago? Will he do something to clear up the confusion not only in the minds of retailers but in the minds of the citizens of this Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, I certainly would like to make great efforts to clear up the confusion in certain people's minds and I would like to start with the hon. member opposite. I would like to clarify the confusion in his mind when he referred to he is against this tax which is being placed upon the oversize but under fifteen year age child. I would like to inform him that there is not a tax on the clothing and footwear of children who are age fifteen or less even though those children in size exceed the laid-down sizes in regulations already sent out. There is no tax on those. That is the object of this particular move that if a child who is fourteen years or less and nevertheless exceeds fourteen X in certain types of clothing that they will nevertheless be able to get their clothing and their footwear free of tax.

DR. COLLINS: And if there is a confusion otherwise in the hon. member's mind, if he wishes to write me a note I will even put it in writing for him. In regard to any other confusion that there might be in the citizens' minds, I would like to point out that the vendors, those who are in the retail trade and actually sell certain goods, they receive updates on a regular basis from the Department of Finance in regard to any changes in the taxation system. We also have a phone system whereby there are individuals in the department available to them at any time they wish to phone in and get information on a urgent basis, and that both those mechanisms are now being used, that is, the tax update mechanism and the availability of telephone communication.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: You know, Mr. Speaker, the minister cannot even listen to a question let alone answer one. But the confusion in the minds of the people in the building trades and in certain foodstuffs that are sold in retail outlets and bought in supermarkets is that people just do not know what eight per cent goes on and what twelve per cent goes on, particularly with building materials. Mr. Speaker, this came about because the minister gave no warning or was ill prepared himself to let people know as soon as the announcement was made. But, Mr. Speaker, the government, I understand, has not prepared its tax cards. These are the precalculated tax forms which it has been traditional for this government to have always supplied to the retailers. When will the government have these forms ready?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Finance.

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member referred to building supplies.

DR. COLLINS: On the day the announcement was made I held a press conference and in that press conference made available to all the media that attended it, and there was the electronic media, there was the published media and so on, the regulations as they applied to building materials. Similar information was made available to the major vendors of building supplies. I am not sure where the hon. member is getting his facts, but I would have to reiterate that we have written material going out to vendors in regard to this, we have people manning telephones, who are available to give information on a one to one basis, and if the hon. member does have a vendor who is in any way uncertain about the application of the regulations, all he has to do is give him the number of the Department of Finance and at least over an eight hour period there are individuals there who can pass on the information and answer any precise questions they may have.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the member for Port au Port. This will be the final question of Question Period.

MR. HODDER: Yes. Mr. Speaker, my information comes from a great deal - I would suggest to the minister that perhaps he should take a trip around town or anywhere in the Province, he should also read the papers and perhaps listen to the Open Line shows. But I would ask the minister, in light of the fact that the St. John's retailers are upset with the government because of the new taxes that have been implemented, and they have asked the minister to meet with them - and perhaps the minister does not know about that yet - would the minister tell me when he will meet with the St. John's Board of Trade about the matter I have raised, and would he tell me if he will meet with them when that meeting will take place?

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wishes to come to my office, I will leave instructions with my secretary that he can have a look at my appointment book.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The time for Question Period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: I move that the regular Order of Business of this House be suspended for today to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely the partial close down of the Bowaters mill in Corner Brook and the resulting layoffs of some 700 direct employees and the loss of another 1,300 indirect jobs.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, nobody discounts the urgency, as the government has indicated, of the matter that the motion refers to, but in order to have a suspension of the ordinary business of the House it has to comply with the rules, and I refer Your Honour to Beauchesne, the Fifth Edition, page 92, paragraph 287 defining urgency and it says: "Urgency" within this rule does not apply to the matter itself, but means "urgency of debate", when the ordinary opportunities provided by the rules of the House do not permit the subject to be brought on early enough." I submit the rules



MR. MARSHALL: do permit it to be bought on early enough. There are plenty of opportunities. And it goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, very significantly in this context, 'public interest demands that discussions take place immediately.' Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not really feel in this particular case that public interest will lend anything to this particular situation, to have a debate on it at this particular time, and I point out that from the performance of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) last Friday, his statements which were very much against the public interest, go to show why this government cannot consent to the motion and says that it is not within the rules. In actual fact, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman's utterances to date in connection with this have derogated from the situation and has done nothing to help it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Chairman, it is my submission that under Rule 287 of Beauchesne, page 92, it is of urgent importance. I would think that the people of Corner Brook would certainly like to know what the government's plans are as far as the Corner Brook mill is concerned. The government has been withholding information from the people of Corner Brook and from this House for two full weeks, Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: Right.

MR. HODDER: - and I believe that any information that we might be able to drag out of the government in a debate, the people of Corner Brook would

MR. HODDER: certainly appreciate it,  
Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this  
is an important matter. I want to emphasize that the  
government does not consider anything to be more urgent  
in this Province today than the situation in Corner Brook  
as well as the situation -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. MARSHALL: - as well as the situation in  
Bowaters. So let there be no doubt about that. The  
allegations by the hon. gentleman when he gets on about  
the government sitting on it are totally without foundation.  
We are acting in a responsible way, attempting, Mr. Speaker,  
to get a postponement of that decision, and we were  
precluded from so doing in large part by the irresponsible,  
unforgiveable and revolting actions of the Opposition last  
Friday.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair will hear one more  
argument from the hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: The slime and the filth flowing  
from the lips of the hon. gentleman. They are still  
smarting under the fact that the Premier ran away from  
this Province with information that he had about Bowaters.  
He would not even confide in his Cabinet.

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

December 1, 1982

Tape 2940

PK - 1

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): I suggest the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) speak to the point and the motion that he made.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is an urgent matter, it is probably one of the few occasions in this House when a matter has been brought before the House and the Opposition asked to have the rules suspended to debate a matter of urgent public importance. What could be more urgent than the loss of about 2,000 jobs in this Province right at a time when we can least afford it! The trouble is, Mr. Speaker, that the hon. gentleman does not have the courage to have this matter debated in the House this afternoon. And if he does not have the courage let him get up and say so.

MR. MARSHALL: All the information has been brought before the House.

MR. NEARY: All the information is not brought before the House. We had to drag the information -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WARREN: What information?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the trouble is the administration has been sitting on the information for two weeks.

MR. WARREN: Shame! Two weeks.

MR. MARSHALL: Yet you only used one-third of Question Period on it.

MR. NEARY: One-third of the Question Period.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Today.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes, today.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we will not have an opportunity - the House is closing on Friday - we will not have an opportunity to debate this matter, we are on money bills. And the hon. gentleman will not even call the Throne Speech.

MR. NEARY: There is no opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to debate this matter other than to have the regular order of business suspended. And I call upon the hon. gentleman again, I challenge him to have the courage, to show a little courage in this matter and agree to have this matter debated in the House this afternoon. If not, Mr. Speaker, I would submit to Your Honour and to the House that it is a shameful dereliction of duty on the part of this administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

I have been listening to the arguments put forth by both sides of the House. I would have to say there is an opportunity on the Order Paper, if the order is so called, the Address In Reply, to debate this matter. While the Chair recognizes that the matter is of some importance, it does not feel that the urgency of debate is there at this particular time.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, no! Oh!

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day we shall -

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I mean, the hon. gentlemen there opposite cannot question the ruling of the Chair. Hear the gentlemen there opposite when Your Honour is giving a ruling, making comments of the nature which is questioning Your Honour's ruling and I invite them in the interest of parliamentary democracy to withdraw their remarks and apologize to Your Honour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair was not aware and was not listening to any comments that were made from the other side, so I did not hear any comments that were made.

It being Private Members' Day we shall move on to Motion No. 14, which was moved by the

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) and which was adjourned last day by the hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), and he has ten minutes left to speak.

MR. CALLAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have used ten minutes and I have ten minutes remaining, Mr. Speaker. In the first ten minutes, last week, I referred to the fact that there is ample room in this Legislature when you compare it, as I said, with the size of the Legislature in Nova Scotia. This Legislature is quite large. There is lots of room here for television cameras and radio and television microphones and so on.

MR. W. CALLAN: So the space is not an argument against bringing in the electronic media, cost is not an argument against it, even though some members on the government side tried to use that argument, because as the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. E. Roberts) who introduced resolution 14 said in his introductory remarks, in introducing the resolution, if the electronic media wanted to cover the live sittings of the Legislature, then they were welcome to do so but at their own expense. So, the first ten minutes last Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, I did spend more or less refuting and rebutting the several phony arguments that were used by the former Speaker, the Minister now for Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. L. Simms).

Mr. Speaker, to end off in the next ten minutes that I have today, I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that we on this side are fully aware at this point in time that obviously this resolution will not be passed. Not only will it not be passed, but it will not be supported by anybody on the government side of the House. And as I said last week, the reason is obvious: It is the Premier who made that decision and who told the government members in caucus, 'No, we are not bringing in the electronic media.'

Now, why would the -

MR. J. CARTER: Untrue.

MR. CALLAN: How do you know, you were in your savory patch?

- why would the Premier not want the electronic media brought into the chamber? Why? The answer to that question, Mr. Speaker, is quite simple. You see the Premier is the kind of a person who wants to call his own shots. He wants to select his own forum.

MR. CARTER: How do you know?

MR. CALLAN: That is why over the past three

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Tape No. 2941

MJ - 2

MR. W. CALLAN: years, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the Premier calling these weckly, bi-weckly, bi-monthly, regular, very, very regular, press conferences where he lays out what he wants to say. And of course, Mr. Speaker, we have also seen the Premier, last year when he was invited by the university to go over and take part in a debate with the then Leader of the Liberal party, refuse to go

MR. CALLAN: to the university. Why? Because again that was not his forum. He wants to provide his own forum. And here in the Legislature, since the Premier does not know what questions will be asked during the Oral Question Period and what will be coming up from time to time in other debates, the Premier does not want to be caught off guard, he wants to keep the electronic media out of the Legislature. You see, Mr. Speaker, not only is the Premier a master at creating his own forum as far as it comes to regular press conferences, the Premier is on record as chastising the CBC - 'Unless you' -

MR. NEARY: Do it my way.

MR. CALLAN: -'do it my way, unless you present the interview the way that I want you to present it, then I will not be interviewed at all'.

MR. ROBERTS: I am going to sulk.

MR. CALLAN: I am going to sulk and I will not grant any more interviews to you. And just before the Question Period ended, Mr. Speaker, somebody made mention of the Open Line programmes and a jeer went up from the government side, the same jeer that we have heard on many occasions in the past several weeks.

It seems rather strange to me, Mr. Speaker, that it is only in the last three or four weeks that the members on the government side seem to be turned off with the Open Line programmes, because it is the government members and the Premier who are now on the ropes.

MR. TULK: Do they not like 'Bas' any more?

MR. CALLAN: Well, they say Open Line programmes meaning, of course, not both but one, the obvious one we know about. But, Mr. Speaker, whether the Premier and his colleagues allow the electronic media in this Legislature or not is not really all that important, because the truth will out. People are beginning to see through, now, the transparency of the



MR. CALLAN: Premier, the Premier who has pulled many colossal bluffs on them, The latest one, of course, was the phony issue that the April 6th election was fought over when the real issue was lack of money, lack of a budget and so on. But the people are beginning to see through the Premier. They know how transparent he is. And in the next couple of years, Mr. Speaker, whether we have

MR. CALLAN: electronic media in this Legislature or not, other opportunities will be provided. For example, the Legislature closes on Friday, the 3rd., on Monday of next week I will be out in one of the high schools in my district because under the new high school programme, in the Grade X class there is a subject called Democracy. And of the seven high schools in the district of Bellevue, of the seven high schools there I already have invitations from four of them to come and spend an hour or whatever with these Grade X students so that they can ask questions, and so on, about democracy.

And I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that other members on both sides of the House will be invited out to the schools in their districts, where they can be interrogated and of course, give information and be asked questions about democracy. And in the last several days we have seen, and even the students in Grade X, and the students at the university, Mr. Speaker, are beginning to see now the lack of democracy in this Province.

The Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe), because he has favoured his own district and other Tory districts so much, is too embarrassed to table his roads programme, a list that has been tabled for the past three years, but that is not cut off. We cannot let the people see what we are doing.

We are not surprised, Mr. Speaker, we are not surprised that the electronic media are not permitted in the Legislature. This government is slamming every door. They pump out their own propaganda, their own leaflets, through the Information Service, and, of course, regular press conferences, they pump it out themselves at taxpayers' expense, most of it, but the people are not being fooled. So whether you bring in electronic media or not will not matter. That is the answer, Mr. Chairman. It

MR. CALLAN: will not matter. Because not only do we have the Open Line programmes where people have an opportunity to express their opinions and so on, and their frustrations, but there are excellent writers in the daily papers, in the weekly papers, and the other magazines. One of the best writers, Mr. Speaker, one of the best writers that we have in all of Newfoundland today is a gentleman who was born and raised in the historic district of Bellevue, where the Premier was born -

MR. TOBIN What?

MR. CALLAN: - and the last President of the University and others that I have mentioned.

MR. SIMMS: The member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: But this writer, Mr. Speaker, that I am referring to, was born in the district of Bellevue, in Arnold's Cove and raised there, I am talking, of course, about a man who is an excellent writer and has been given that recognition, especially in recent months. And he has a

MR. CALLAN: biting wit about him, a biting wit in his humour. Just let me quote what this gentleman wrote. Mr. Speaker, this was not written over the last couple of weeks, when every Newfoundlander has seen that Tory times are hard times this was written over a year ago. This article was written on September 5, 1981, it was written over a year ago, long before the April 6th. election. The man who wrote this item said, 'When the goodies present or prophesied are on the go it is the chief business of this government to take all the credit, but when there are showers of nasties, this government ruptures itself to place the blame elsewhere.' So true, so true of this government, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the last thirty seconds that I have let me say that this gentleman, this writer from the district of Bellevue will be writing many other articles. And what he saw a year ago, and what those of us on this side of the House saw a year ago, and what the people in the district of Bellevue saw in the '81 by-election, and, of course, again this Spring in the general election, what the people in Bellevue saw, and defeated the Premier three times - the Premier has never been defeated three times anywhere else in this Province; three times he has been defeated in his own birthplace, in the district of Bellevue where he was born. Why? Because the people in Bellevue know the Premier best. And once it starts to filter out to the rest of the Province and they see what kind of a man this man really is, then, of course, the tide is gone.

MR. STAGG: Read this.

MR. CALLAN: I saw that article last week, someone was waving it around. I have hundreds home, do you want me to bring in some to you?

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion let me say that I support this resolution introduced by the

MR. CALLAN: member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), knowing full well that it will never be passed by the government on the other side.

By the way, the famous Newfoundlander I was talking about, everybody can guess his name, I am sure, he is Ray Guy who was born and raised in Arnold's Cove.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): The hon. the member for St. John's Centre.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, last week I was completely relaxed here in my seat, almost lulled to sleep by the sweet melodious tones of my hon. friend from Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) and I suddenly became wide awake on hearing St. John's Centre mentioned among other districts. My hon. friend said that I do not take part in debate, or that I did not in this term, and I must admit he was right, and I decided then that one of my New Years Resolutions would be that I am going to take part much more in debate in this coming term. Maybe

DR. McNICHOLAS: the hon. members on the other side will not like it all that much. In fact, maybe my friends on this side will not like it all that much either. In fact, maybe the Premier will not like it because I do not speak very much, but usually when I do I speak my mind and it might not necessarily be just what people like.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. McNICHOLAS: I am not going to apologize for my speaking abilities. I suppose most of my life has been spent in perfecting, if that is the word, my surgical and diagnostic skills, but I think I could have also done a little bit more practice on the soap box. I have always admired orators and I always spend considerable time here, particularly when there are good speakers on the opposite side and on this side speaking. There are good speakers on both and I admire their ability, some to speak for twenty minutes very cleverly and say nothing and some to speak and say a lot. And I am also well aware that there are many with what I would call bird brains who speak absolute dribble for twenty minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. McNICHOLAS: I have come to realize since I came to this hon. House that it is really no handicap whatever to know little about a subject or nothing about a subject, you can still get up and speak for twenty minutes. I was amused at the comments of my hon. friend for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), that I should advocate TV because the constituents in St. John's Centre could see how I perform. Now, I do not think the constituents of mine in St. John's Centre could care less how I perform here. I think they are far more interested in how I

DR. McNICHOLAS: perform in Cabot Street and in Central Street and in Springdale Street and in Bonaventure Avenue and in every other street and avenue in St. John's Centre. I realize only too well that as a member of this hon. House one is a member for all off Newfoundland and Labrador, and as a backbencher that is largely theoretical.

I think my main function as a member is to look after my constituents in St. John's Centre. I think I do it to the best of my ability and I think anybody who does not will pay the price for it next time around, as many and some members in this hon. House have done so already.

Now my hon. friend for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) mentioned that we have so few arguments on this side that we can only speak for five or ten minutes. Now, I would suggest to him that he should digest more editions of Hansard. Read this

DR. McNICHOLAS: There are very few speeches in Hansard of twenty minutes duration that you could not really condense and have a much better presentation at five or three minutes.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. McNICHOLAS: Now, a thing that has struck me for a long time is that we tend to get into a cocoon or an ivory tower or whatever you like here. We go out to our constituents and most of them will tell us we are great people, but I wonder do we really know what the general public think of us as politicians.

Last night, I was reading the latest edition of the Medical Post. Now, this is a MacLean Hunter newspaper for the Canadian medical profession. It comes out every week and this is the November 16th edition, two weeks ago, and I will table this paper afterwards. There is an interesting account in the editorial on the Ottawa by-line on a recent Gallup poll, and if I may, I will read a few extracts. First, of course, I will have to read the little one praising the doctors. It reads as follows: "It probably came as little or no surprise to most doctors when a recent Gallup poll suggested the average Canadian trusts his or her doctor above everyone else. Asked to rate the honesty and ethical standards of a number of professions, 59 per cent of the respondents said that their trust in their doctor was high or very high." Now, this is the August survey of more than 1,000 adults across the country by Gallup International of Toronto - done in August. And in that survey there were police officers, engineers, university teachers, psychiatrists, lawyers, journalists, business executives, building contractors, members of Parliament, advertising executives and labour union leaders,



DR. McNICHOLAS: and that is the order in which they came in the survey.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it is of particular interest here that MPs were so far down the list, trailing building contractors and leading only the ad men and union bosses. MPs were rated high or very high by only 14 per cent of the sampling, while 46 per cent thought them average and 39 per cent had them down as low or very low. It goes on to say, "Rodney Dangerfield would feel right at home on the hill. He is a portly pop-eyed comedian who don't get no respect. Harsh words? Do not blame me, blame John Evans, the Ottawa Centre MP who said recently that MPs are losing the public's respect.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: People increasingly see MPs as a bunch of clowns", Mr. Evans said.

"Mind you his remarks were delivered in the context of the first session of the current Parliament which has been one of the most nastiest, most brutish, and just plain bitchy sessions I can recall. Tempers on the government side have been high because of the continuing inability to do anything about the economy. Tempers on the opposition benches have been high because of the tremendous frustrations the Tories have experienced in the wake of that brief taste of power."

And listen to this, "It can make for good T.V. but it does not make for good legislation." I would like to table that paper.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the speakers on the other side mentioned last week that we are being coerced by the Premier, that we were being dragged by our lapels and told what we should do on this motion.

MR. TULK: That is not true for you 'Paddy', but it is true for most of them.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I have been a member for the past three years and I have never been coerced-

MR. TULK: It might be true for the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goudie).

DR. MCNICHOLAS: -and I do not know of any member who has been coerced. I say exactly what I feel in caucus, and I say exactly what I feel at any time. And I have never been coerced by anybody on this side.

MR. TULK: You are too strong on your feet that is why.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: We discuss things like any other party and we come to an agreement and, I suppose, really, if there was a fundamental matter of principle and we could not

DR. MCNICHOLAS: get our colleagues, or certainly if I could not, I know exactly what I would do. I am quite happy here. I have never been intimidated or coerced in anyway.

MR. STAGG: And never will be.

MR. TULK: It is hard to believe. If we could only see the same approach by the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goudie).

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Now, Mr. Speaker, I suppose T.V. is inevitable here, I am sure it is going to come. I am going to vote against, because I honestly believe that it is wrong, and I will give you the reason. It is not a reason that anybody else has given. My honest reason for voting against this resolution is that we have a majority of five and a half people to one on that side.

MR. NEARY: A lot of them are half size.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

DR. MCNICHOLAS: And it is just as simple as that, it is forty-four to eight. And I think it is absolutely wrong that -

MR. NEARY: It is not the quantity it is the quality.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: -I think it is absolutely wrong that the back-room boys in any T.V. station can cut and slice what goes on here so that the opposition, who are only eight, will get about equal time to what we with forty-four will get here.

AN HON. MEMBER: Right on!

DR. P. MCNICHOLAS: Maybe in the next century, when the Liberals or the NDP begin to come up as the Opposition, will be a time to think about it again.

Mr. Speaker, before I sit down I want to thank the hon. the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. G. Warren) for stimulating me into getting up on my feet today. You are going to hear more from me in this coming year. In the meantime, I want to take this opportunity of wishing you all on this side and the other side a very happy Christmas and all the best in 1983.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. E. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, I just want to speak briefly on this motion regarding having media coverage of the House, allowing the electronic media to plug into our live debates instead of having to go upstairs and be interviewed and be interrupted in our speeches with notes coming in across the floor, asking us if we could be interviewed. So, Mr. Speaker, for no other reason than that then to streamline the House of Assembly here.

Also, in regard to the other part, the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. P. McNicholas) ended up saying that he was not going to speak because he was off in a doze and it was only when he heard the name St. John's Centre that it woke him up and spurred him on to get into the debate. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the main reasons why we should have the T.V. in the House, to let the people in this Province realize how many people there are in the government snoozing off, particularly the St. John's members. Because, Mr. Speaker, with regard

MR. E. HISCOCK: to the live coverage of the  
City Council in City Hall -

MR. J. DINN: At least we run in our own respects.

MR. HISCOCK: At least I am a Canadian, not like  
the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. P. McNicholas).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. HISCOCK: So if you want to take plugs.  
Mr. Speaker, with regard to the  
T.V. -

MR. F. STAGG: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. the  
member for Stephenville.

MR. STAGG: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if  
I heard the hon. member correctly, but did he indicate that  
one of the members of the House is not a Canadian? Is that  
what the hon. member said, indicated that the people of  
Newfoundland have elected a foreigner to the House of  
Assembly?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: That is what he said.

MR. STAGG: Or is the hon. member saying that  
because a person speaks with an accent that is not an  
indigenous accent that he is a foreigner? Is that what  
the hon. member is saying? I would like for it to be  
clarified, Mr. Speaker, because I think it is a gross  
insult.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, the  
hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, it is not a point  
of order. I think it is point of record of knowing that  
the hon. member for St. John's Centre does have a British  
passport and does not have a Canadian one, unless he has had  
it of late.

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DR. P. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, to that point of order.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order, the hon.  
the member for St. John's Centre.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, I do not have a  
British passport. I never had a British passport.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: At the present time I have a Canadian passport.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order, the hon. the Minister of Public Works.

MR. YOUNG: I think, Mr. Speaker, you should rule on it.

MR. HISCOCK: There is no such rule.

MR. YOUNG: Yes, there is a ruling, Mr. Speaker, because you are not allowed to become a member of the House of Assembly unless you are a Canadian citizen.

MR. DINN: He should withdraw.

MR. YOUNG: If the hon. gentleman is - shall I use the word? - ignorant enough to not know the difference, an educated ignorant man, I think he should withdraw the remark.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, to the part I would -

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order?

MR. HISCOCK: - never try referring it other than one of the ministers ended up saying, 'being born in a district'. And many members in this House are not born -

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order? The hon. the member for Eagle River. Order, please!

MR. HISCOCK: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: You are speaking to the point of order?

MR. HISCOCK: Yes, I am speaking to the point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK: There are many people in this House who are not actually living or were born in their districts, and the hon. the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas) is an example. With regard to his nationality, it was my

MR. HISCOCK:                   under: tanding that he did not have his Canadian citizenship. I am quite proud to know that he does have his Canadian citizenship, and I applaud that. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, from the point of view of clarification I will withdraw the remark.

MR. SPEAKER(Aylward):       To that point of order, the hon. the member for Eagle River(Mr. Hiscock) has corrected the statement that he made and I rule that the point of order is taken care of.

                                  The hon. the member for Eagle River.

MR. HISCOCK:                   Well, I did say, Mr. Speaker, that the member for St. John's Centre(Dr. McNicholas) was saying that he was enjoying a restful period and when he heard St. John's Centre mentioned it provoked him into speaking. I was saying, also, that there are a good many members in St. John's, in particular, who have a restful period - St. John's North(Mr. Carter) and a few other people. Probably it has to do with the decorum of the House and the level of debate. I would not argue with that. But I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if the residents throughout the Province saw some of the members, on both sides, how we carry on, they would probably be a little bit disgusted, as they are with the national level of government.

                                  With regard to that I would also go as far as to say that there are a lot of things that the residents of St. John's Centre are concerned about, particularly housing, low income housing, having to see all the area destroyed next to City Hall and not rebuilt, continually



MR. HISCOCK: seeing houses in that area boarded up, becoming fire traps and residents living on both sides wondering what is going to happen. Also with regard to Moncton, Halifax and other larger areas of the Atlantic Provinces having large convention centres, do we hear the members from St. John's advocating that we have a large convention centre of 5,000 or more? Do we hear them advocate that? And the answer is, Mr. Speaker, they are so comfortable in their seats -

MR. TULK: That is right.

MR. HISCOCK: - realizing that they will continue to get re-elected with the Conservative government that they do not give the representation that is needed, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. member for St. John's Centre.

MR. TULK: All the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr. Carter) does is grow and sniff savory.

DR. MCNICHOLAS: Mr. Speaker, every time I got up, except the last time, I have spoken about the downtown area in my district, and about houses being torn down and the concern I have for that and the necessity to have more housing. It is in Hansard. If the hon. member implies that I did not state that he is absolutely incorrect and I ask him to withdraw.

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

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

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker, I must say, speaking about emotion, I am rather surprised at the rises I am getting out of the other side.

Mr. Speaker, I did not in any way make a slur on the member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas), that he is not doing his job. What I am saying is that the housing in the downtown core is in deplorable condition. The

MR. HISCOCK: member has spoken on it several times. It is unfortunate he is not in the Cabinet, has no influence over the Minister of Housing, the member for Mount Pearl (Mr. Windsor). And in that regard, Mr. Speaker, there is no point of order but I would say that he has the sincerity of his constituency but he is not being listened to by the Cabinet and the housing situation is - and I think you will agree with me - in St. John's it is still deplorable.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order, I rule there is a difference of opinion between two hon. members. The Chair is also having difficulty in relating the housing situation in St. John's Centre to this particular motion. So I would ask the hon. member for Eagle River (Mr. Hiscock) if he would direct himself to the motion at hand.

The hon. member for Eagle River.

MR. TOBIN: You have been shot down twice.

MR. HISCOCK: With regard to being shot down I do not particularly mind being shot down or whatever. But I would

MR. HISCOCK: say, Mr. Speaker, that when a member gets up to speak and three or four other members jump up, then obviously he must be hitting a sensitive nerve.

I would also like to say, Mr. Speaker, that if we had partial TV in this House, because if it is going to be an expense, partial coverage, if we are going to get into expense at this time, I, for one, do not agree with the motion, if we are going to get into major capital ventures. But as was pointed out, by building the new Confederation Building, or the extension, we are going to move this House down to the first floor, and if that is going to be done, Mr. Speaker, it could be done in that manner then.

We are not saying it has to be done overnight. I would go so far as to say that I believe very strongly that we should put a freeze on this new extension to the building, and there is nothing wrong with the present Assembly here. But, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the TV coverage, and the exposure, we have residents in Stephenville, in St. Mary's-The Copes, in St. Barbe, in other areas, Labrador and Pogo, who would like to know how their members are carrying out their duties. What the government is saying, what the House of Assembly is, how it operates, what is the Sergeant-at-Arms, why does he sit there and carry the Mace, what does the Mace symbolize, what is the role of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Committee of Supply? And they would like to know a little bit more about that whereas now, Mr. Speaker, they do not - all they have is

MR. HISCOCK:            Here and Now, and a few of the other reports that are done on the radio station. Because the NTV station does not get into all areas of this Province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I for one, do support the motion as long as it does not cause any undue expense and also as long as the media themselves are willing to partake of getting involved and absorbing the expense themselves.

But I would say, Mr. Speaker, if we did have TV coverage today, and the Opposition ended up asking that all business, even this motion be suspended to debate the West Coast to find out, Mr. Speaker, that many, many people in this Province, particularly on the West Coast, would be appalled, and they would also be appalled at the members for the West Coast who have not spoken out on this. And there is not one member for the West Coast in his seat now other than the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development. And I would like to know why is the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development not down in Carolina also.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:    Hear, hear!

MR. TULK:                He would not take him, boy. He would not take him.

MR. HISCOCK: So, Mr. Speaker, the motion is not the most earth-shattering motion that has been brought in on this side, but it is a motion that we have been bringing up for the past several years with the idea of making - the Premier is one, for example, who has said he takes the Cabinet and has Cabinet meetings in Corner Brook and Goose Bay and in Gander and other areas so he can bring government closer to the people. How much, Mr. Speaker, do we have to pay for that, with the Hansard and with the hotel rooms and the plane fares and the meals and the partying after? How much do we have to pay on that, Mr. Speaker? Why is it that we cannot take that money, Mr. Speaker, and adopt the plug-in system? - just even up to this point, Mr. Speaker, have the radios to have it. If it is the PB that is the major expense, then why do we not just go into the electronic media by way of plug-ins? But no, Mr. Speaker. We talk about getting closer to the people but all we know is that when there are Cabinet meetings in Corner Brook then basically there is a party of the P.C. Association out there afterwards or a ball or a dinner and, of course, it is supporting the troops, Mr. Speaker.

I would go as far as to say that this government - any government that does not want any exposure to the people has something to hide. And with forty-four members, obviously the forty-four members and the Premier and the Cabinet feel they have more and more to hide and will have more and more to hide in the future. Why is it that we can call the Fisheries Loan Board to find out how many fishermen are in arrears and cannot get the answer? How is it that when I phone the Department of Social Services and ask what is the role of the St. John's Boys School that

MR. HILSCOCK: I am told, 'You have to contact the minister'? Why is it that when we contact other provincial civil servants, 'You have to go to the minister'? Is it, Mr. Speaker, that in our public service now, knowing that there are twenty-eight laid off in Public Works and other layoffs coming in other departments - is it that our public servants are now fearing their jobs so much that they will not give any day to day information and instead you have to go through the minister and have everything screened by the minister? Is that what we have, Mr. Speaker? If that is the way, Mr. Speaker, it is not a democracy, it is a dictatorship, it is a public service that is operating in fear. And I would say, more than ever before in our history, we have a public service now in this Province that is operating in fear -

MR. NEARY: Right on!

MR. HILSCOCK: - operating from the point of view that they are afraid to answer their telephones when an Opposition member calls, saying, 'I am sorry, you will have to contact the minister on that.' And, of course, we know what the minister's answer is, 'Put it on the Order Paper.' We put it on the Order Paper and there are 200 questions there that we do not have answered. So, Mr. Speaker, not only are

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MR. E. HISCOCK: the public servants of this province living in fear but the Cabinet ministers, themselves, are also living in fear of it. So, with regard to it I do think, Mr. Speaker, we have to for the hope of democracy if we believe in democracy - and this was the government which was supposed to have brought democracy - if this is the government who says it and believes it, as they are going around the Province having their Cabinet meetings, the money could be well saved. Also, there are other ways of saving, by Mount Scio house and other things. If the Premier really wants to get close to the people he will not have to put a wire fence up around himself and live in his twenty-seven room house on Mount Scio Road. That is not going to bring him closer to people. And if the Premier is sincere and compassionate, then by seeing him on television on a press release is not going to make him any less a premier than by having the people see him in the House when he gets up and answers the questions. He might lose his cool here a little bit and maybe that is what he does not want the people of the Province to realize, that he does lose his cool and we do have a tendency to get his goat.

So, the motion, Mr. Speaker, I support the motion particularly with regard to the radio and the T.v. part of the electronic media. I believe very strongly in opening it up to our rural areas of this Province so our people can have the option. The Minister of Recreation, Culture and Youth (Mr. L. Simms) said too many people would be grandstanding. Well, I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if the camera has any ability, it has the ability to detect falseness. It has the ability to detect hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker. So if there are any members in this House who get up and grandstand, then the local people are the first ones by way of the media coverage to see this. So I do not accept that

MR. E. HISCOCK: argument. And if it also means that they are trying to act anything, I would go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, it would raise the level of debate a little bit more. It would mean that when one person is speaking, Mr. Speaker, he would not be interrupted by several, or there would not be private conversations going on in corners while one of the hon. members elected by a constituency of this Province has the opportunity to speak. I would again point out that I am sure - moreso than anything that the Opposition has to admit - that it is unfortunate that we are debating a motion on having live electronic coverage of this House when the Province around us is crumbling. We have rumours of Corner Brook and we have rumours of Burin and there will probably be more rumours of Wabush before the Winter is out and we have the construction trade and we have the Grade XII. The Grade XII, Mr. Speaker, if we only knew the truth and if only the T. V. cameras were here. If we only knew the truth of what will happen next year with Grade XII. The Minister of Social Services (Mr. T. Hickey), Mr. Speaker, ended up saying on national radio last night, that he does not support the new Juvenile Act because it will take \$10 million to build new institutions for the youth of this Province instead of putting them in prisons with adults, with murderers and other people, and he



MR. HISCOCK: cannot support that because they do not have \$10 million. And the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Mickey) said that last night on national radio. They do not have \$10 million. Well, if they do not have \$10 million for that, how do we have the \$10 million to build the extra classrooms, the home economic rooms, the science rooms? And the answer is, Mr. Speaker, we do not have it, and this government has gone on with Grade XII. And we will find out now, Mr. Speaker, they will go on, they will not admit that they are wrong and who are going to be the ones to suffer, somebody in Lewisporte, somebody in Grand Bank, some youth in the Bay of Islands, some person down in St. Barbe, St. Mary's - The Capes? So I would hope that Cabinet will really look at this idea of Grade XII and not have too much damage done. And if we had this, Mr. Speaker, the TV in the House we would have more people debate over Grade XII.

Because in Lewisporte you might only need two classrooms but next to that, further in another district, Englee, you might only need one or in St. Anthony you may need two and then in Cow Head you may need two and Pouch Cove you may need one. All of those areas, and in a local area it does not affect them that much, but once they know the ramifications and putting them all together, it is talking about \$200 million that is needed to be spent on Grade XII next year to bring it up to standard and bring up the classrooms. And, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Social Services says they do not have \$10 million, then what is going to happen with Grade XII?

So in concluding I support the motion. I regret that we are debating it at this time of such economic severity in our Province. I would have much preferred being up debating how we can make sure that Corner Brook is not a one company town, that we look at ways of finding how we can - particularly the Minister of Education

MR. HISCOCK: (Ms. Verge), Mr. Speaker, I believe has let down her district very, very much. As Minister of Education she has the ability to encourage Memorial University to set up a full-time degree granting institute out there. She has the ability to encourage the College of Trades and Technology to have more courses out there. She has the ability to encourage the Fisheries College, whether it is going to be built in St. John's, she has the ability to have some of it located on the West Coast. But do we hear that, Mr. Speaker? No. And with regard to the offshore, when it comes

MR. HISCOCK: St. John's Housing will cost so much for rentals that the average student will not be able to afford it nor the people on low incomes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Curfew!

MR. HISCOCK: And instead of looking at the long-term and trying to put some of the education facilities, the School of Fine Arts etc. over on the West Coast and doing it now, it would, Mr. Speaker, end up a way of lessening the impact.

So, Mr. Speaker, I regret that it is not on T.V. to be able to debate, and the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) may chuckle, but before the year is out Abitibi Price in Grand Falls might close down, and the minister is fighting for a junior college in that area, and he is also fighting for other things. And I am sure that the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth would agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that one company towns are dangerous. And I am sure the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth is fighting for it. The motion is, Mr. Speaker, that we should have live electronic media in this House so that it could cover motions like this and speeches like this.

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): Order, please!

The hon. member's time has elapsed.

MR. HISCOCK: So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the courtesy of having it passed to me so that I could wind up instead of being cut off in midstream. I am rather surprised that I did not get that courtesy, to know that I had one minute.

So in concluding, Mr. Speaker, I do support the motion, but I regret that we are debating this, debating the electronic media instead of debating the economic situation in Corner Brook.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (McNicholas): The hon. member for  
St. John's North.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: Mr. Speaker, the applause from our side might be a bit premature because I would like to state at the outset that I support this motion. I think it is a very good motion. There are a lot of problems associated with it perhaps, but I think the arguments advanced by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) are very compelling. I am making a couple of assumptions here, of course, and that is that the report in Hansard is correct. Unfortunately, I was not here last week, I was unavoidably absent and so I have had to rely on Hansard for the afternoon's proceedings and I have read it fairly carefully. I think there are a couple of typographical errors because I noticed in one place the member for the Strait of Belle Isle says, 'I is decrepit' - but I do not think that can be correct. But I think his arguments are certainly correct and they certainly appeal to me. But I have to say with some regret that the Minister of Mines (Mr. Marshall), Youth and Culture (Mr. Simms), whatever it is -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CARTER: - his arguments are not as compelling and I have spoken to him privately and I think he is coming around to my way of thinking.

MR. TULK: It is good to know (inaudible)

MR. CARTER: Well, the problem is, I think it is the members who have been here for the least amount of time who are somewhat thin-skinned, I think after you have been here for a while you are thick-skinned enough to be able to reverse any previous stances.

MR. CARTER: I was against TV in the House certainly, because I did not like the idea of these very powerful lights and the bulky cameras, and all the cords trailing around, and all the paraphernalia, and certainly if that were the case today I would object. That is one of my objections.

But if what the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) says is correct, that you can use ordinary light, or only very slightly enhanced, and an inconspicuous camera mounted at some distance away, then I do not see any real objection, especially if there is no cost involved.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: So I do support this resolution. I must say I have often disagreed with the member for the Strait of Belle Isle in the past and I enjoy having the odd flick at him, but, you know, there is nothing personal. When I say that such-and-such a remark is the lowest remark that has been made in the twentieth century, what I am saying is that I mildly disagree with the hon. gentleman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: So one must not get carried away. So on balance I believe it to be a strong and sensible resolution. One quarrel I have with it is that I think it is overdue. I think this resolution should have been on the Order Paper two or three years ago, but I understand, at that time the technology had not advanced to the stage where television could be inconspicuous or, you know, would not be bothersome.

I do have a couple of minor procedural

MR. CARTER:                   doubts but they are of no consequence. I do not think, for instance, there is any need for a committee. I think if we were really serious about this we could settle it by debate right here in the House. The committee might be useful, I will not object to it, but I really do not see the need for it. And also, of course, we must not take too much for granted. We do take our House procedure for granted. It is simple enough to us although not all of us have mastered the rules. But it does seem fairly straightforward, but I would suggest to hon. members that the House procedure to an outsider is a great and deep mystery, and in keeping with the television, you know, if you are going to have television you are going to have to have an announcer, sort of a voice over, who, for instance, will -

MR. MARSHALL:               Or a commentator.

MR. CARTER:               Well, not only a commentator, but he could introduce, say, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), and give a little bit of his background, that his middle name is Moxon, Edward Moxon Roberts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:       Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER:               Moxon was the name of his grandmother, she lives in Truro. Just a little bit like that, that he lives in St. John's. He has no interest whatsoever in the Strait of Belle Isle. His election is really an insult to them, because he is saying that, you know, the people up in the Strait of Belle Isle are not fit to send a member. You know, that is really what it says. And when the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) gets up - by the way, this is not the Mifflin Report that I was reading, this is Hansard - but the announcer could say, "This is the person who spent all that money on Bell Island, turned all the building supplies into rum. A bit of a magician there."

MR. CARTER: And, of course, you would have to have some visual effects, a backdrop for instance. I think a large picture of Joe Smallwood should be there.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: Flanked on either side by equally large photographs of Shakeen and Doyle. I think we need a few slogans as well. You know, resettlement, about the party of resettlement. Give it all away is another useful slogan and burn your boats, and who owns the liquor stores? and Hitler was a great man. I suppose you could have a large photograph of Hitler. And since the swastika was such a suitable instrument for their party, I think the Liberal party should adopt that as well, armbands with swastikas and swastikas in each of those squares over there. At the same time I think it is important to identify what Liberals and Liberalism is. I think this announcer that I figure would be part and parcel of the TV programme would point out what Liberal means. Now I have jotted down a few meanings of the word Liberal or Liberalism and I would like to see if the members agree with me. (a) Liberal, a term of abuse. That sounds reasonable. (b) Liberal, the rag-tag remnant of a party of Joey loving toadies. (c) Liberal, a thoroughly discredited political philosophy (d) A cult of devil worshipers. Now there is slang, a slimy, nighterawling lizard or toad. Also slang, a disgusting loathsome disease. Well, the announcer could point out that this is what Liberalism means for the edification of the public. Now at the same time no TV production would be complete without sound effects and I think, for instance, when the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) gets up we could have the Dead March in Saul. When someone else gets up we could have Tip Toe Through the Tulips.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: And when the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) gets up we could have thunder and lightning. But perhaps we should not, because people might be afraid that he might die of the clap.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: And when the member for Fogo (Mr. Tulk) gets up we could say, 'And now we will hear from the Incredible Tulk.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CARTER: Another minor problem that I have with this resolution is that it would allow people to slander the public wholesale. Now this is only a minor complaint, because I realize that members of the Opposition are always slandering the public. But unfortunately it is a rule of this House that if you do have a point of order, even if it is not a valid point of order, you are allowed to get up and state it even if it is a most outrageous point. And you can get up and slander who you like and all you have to do is withdraw it. And



MR. CARTER: I think that while we can safely do this in the House, and while these remarks are strained by the press, if they were put out live on T.V. perhaps the public would be slandered wholesale and this could be objectionable. It is only a minor point, I realize, because the Opposition slander people so often.

Another point I make is that this House has extraordinary powers, and I do not believe we realize the powers we have; we have the powers to say what we like in the heat of debate, we have the powers to discipline our own members, and, in fact, I think this House can put a member in jail. I believe we have that power. I know that we could have, for instance, the power to issue a horse whipping to, perhaps, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) every Friday.

Now, we would not be undemocratic about that, we would always take a vote on it first. The Sergeant-at-Arms could administer the horse whipping.

I think I would agree with Dr. Johnson when he mentioned when he spoke about public hangings, that the rich would be supported and the public gratified. So with these minor reservations I would certainly vote for the resolution, if these things could be incorporated into it, and I am sure they could be.

MR. TULK: No problem.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have been sitting and listening to this debate for the past two sessions and find it absolutely amazing and incredible that members on the opposite side can find it in their hearts and in their souls to vote against this motion, a motion, Mr. Speaker, a resolution which will give our people access to what takes place in this hon. House, which will give them full access, Mr. Speaker, to learn and to be able to be informed of what takes place in the highest court of the land. And yet, of

MR. LUSH: course, members on the opposite side want to restrict this kind of information, they want to keep this information away from our people.

I have been listening, Mr. Speaker, to the reasons given by hon. members as to why they are not supporting this resolution. And really, as I have listened, I cannot find one substantive reason, not one substantive reason. They found a couple of excuses, Mr. Speaker, but that is all it amounts to, excuses, but no substantive or substantial reasons as to why we should not give the media access, full and complete access to proceeding in this House.

Now, let us look at some of the reasons advanced by hon. members, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LUSH: One of the reasons given was the fact that true ratings in areas where people have access to the parliamentary process, the parliamentary procedure, was that they found out the ratings were low, to put it in the electronic terminology, that the ratings were low. Now certainly, Mr. Speaker, that is no reason why we should not give people access because, one, we found out that they are not interested and when they see what happens - I think it was the House of Commons in particular they were talking about - when people see the kind of activity that goes on that they become disinterested, that they almost lose some respect for what takes place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we use that as a reason, the fact that once people are exposed to what takes place in Parliament that they somehow lose some respect, if that were a reason for not allowing the electronic media into the House certainly we would close the House down, because certainly I think we find the same thing when people come into the galleries and observe what is going on. I venture to say that if we conducted a poll with people prior and after coming into the House of Assembly I would expect we would find a marked difference in their attitudes towards what takes place. I think the reason for it is that people have a preconceived idea, people have preconceived notions of what Parliament is all about. And once they are exposed to it, somehow it does not come up to these requirements, it does not meet their expectations. So automatically there is a reduction or a loss of respect. But, Mr. Speaker, certainly that is no reason to throw it out, because this is what happens. I think what we should then do - I think all hon. members then have the responsibility, all hon. members then, Mr. Speaker, have the obligation to try and change this image, to try and change this public perception. And I believe that if the electronic media were allowed to carry the proceedings that we would see a marked improvement in the decorum in this hon. House.

MR. TULK: Sure you would, yes.

MR. LUSH: Now, Mr. Speaker, people talk about - and along with this the idea that I mentioned of people losing interest or losing some respect for Parliament once they have seen the developments on television that they lose interest, also, of course, associated with this idea, Mr. Speaker, is the fact, somehow, that the House loses its decorum. And I would say it is just the reverse, that the decorum of the House would improve. Hon. members have advanced the notion that there would be a lot of grandstanding. Now, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of grandstanding that goes on all the time, and I certainly would prefer the grandstanding to a lot of the other nonsense that I have observed in this House, the sniping back and forth and the whispering, Mr. Speaker, and the sallying back and forth which sometimes cause tempers to flare and some very nasty and uncouth remarks being made.

MR. LUSH:

And I believe that if these proceedings were televised that we would rid ourselves of that kind of nonsense, that kind of sniping back and forth, that kind of uncouth and unrefined language. I believe that would leave, Mr. Speaker. Are hon. members afraid to get rid of that kind of debate? Are they afraid to rid themselves of that lack of decorum? It seems to me that they are afraid that the decorum is going to improve. Mr. Speaker, there are people who specialize in this sniping back and forth. They are what I call 'one-phrase people' - their vocabulary is so limited, their vocabulary is so restricted, they know so little of the English language, Mr. Speaker, they lack such fluency, they lack such knowledge in their own language that they are one-phrase people. that they are one-word people and they can just snipe back and forth; they could not give a speech. So, Mr. Speaker, they are afraid for the electronic media to come here because then the people of Newfoundland would see them for what they are.

Now I realize, Mr. Speaker - and I am not going to get down to the level of naming individuals, I think it is a recognized fact that some people can make better speeches than other people, that some people have more control of their language and therefore they can make better speeches but, Mr. Speaker, that is again no reason not to bring the television cameras or the electronic media into the House of Assembly, because certain people are not versatile in that particular media. That is no reason. Every member of this House has a function; every member is specialized in certain skills, and regardless of what media is here, that member is going to surface to the top and the people who elected him are going to recognize him for what it is, be it a

MR. LUSH: public speaker, be it a hard-working person in his district, that is going to be recognized.

In this hon. House we have fifty-two members, some of whom have been here for fifteen or sixteen years, many of whom have been re-elected two and three times and, obviously, Mr. Speaker, they have certain skills, they have certain abilities and the electronic media will certainly enhance that for them. But every member here has certain skills, certain abilities, and the electronic media is not going to do anything to diminish that. It is not going to do anything to discredit any particular MHA, any particular politician. The only person who is going to do that is the politician himself, that is the person who is going to discredit himself. So, Mr. Speaker, there is certainly no evidence at all, there is no substance to these arguments that the electronic media will somehow cause the public perception of the House of Assembly or Parliament to deteriorate, and there is no evidence, Mr. Speaker, that it will lower the decorum of the House, I would say it is just the opposite.

Some other member mentioned that maybe the electronic media was not compatible with

MR. LUSH: the nature of the House of Assembly.  
Now, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest, if that is so then we should change the House of Assembly. We should change the House of Assembly. Mr. Speaker, we should change it. And these hon. gentlemen opposite like to refer to themselves as the great reformers. They brought in a lot of rules to change parliament and to make it more functional, to make it more in tune, to make it more in harmony with the twentieth century. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if we do not make it in tune and in harmony with technological advances, then we have been very remiss in our duties. Then we are doing the people of this Province, and the people of Canada a great disfavor.

So, Mr. Speaker, if there is some incompatibility, if there are some things out of tune with this hon. House, with its tradition, with its custom, if there are things that are out of tune with the technological developments of today, then certainly we should do something about it. It is not a reason to sit back and say, "No, no, we cannot take part in this technological advance and technological progress, we are going to sit back and keep things the way they were ten, twenty-five, thirty years ago, we are not going to march forward. We are not going to progress with technology." What stupidity, Mr. Speaker. What stupidity.

AN HON. MEMBER: Now, that is not right.

MR. LUSH: It is time, Mr. Speaker, it is time that we woke up. It is time that we adapted ourselves. It is time that we adapted ourselves to technological advance, to technological developments, and of the rules of the House, and of the custom of the House. And if the regulations of this

MR. LUSH: House do not fit into that kind of development, then we ought to do something about it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, certainly there will be certain regulations, and certain rules necessary which I think the hon. member for Grand Falls mentioned when he was talking about what happened in other parliaments throughout Canada, that there were regulations and rules brought in and certain controls. That is not to say that we would not have the same, and we would hope that this committee would look into all of these things.

So, Mr. Speaker, the resolution really asks for two things. One, it asks to give the electronic media complete and full access to proceedings in this House. And secondly, that a committee be set up to look into the attendant problems.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what can be wrong with that? Hon. members have again raised the idea of cost.



MR. T. LUSH: It is going to cost a lot of money for the government to allow the electronic media full access to this hon. House so that we can give our people, so we can afford them the right, Mr. Speaker, the right of information. They say it is going to be too costly. Now that is a rare thing for his government to be concerned about, this cost. They had no objections to doing renovations to these chambers at some great cost to the people of this Province. I do not know the figure exactly, but there were some large expenditures done in these chambers in the last few months. The changes I am not able to appreciate, Mr. Speaker, I recognize nothing substantially different. As a matter of fact - I am not referring to the green carpet, quite obviously I have seen that, but I am referring to the P.A. system, Mr. Speaker, Indeed it may have brought about some improvements for the Hansard people but certainly not for the House itself. As a matter of fact I find it a little less effective than it was previously. So, I do not know what all the money was spent for, but the point of the matter is that this government is not worried about cost. I am sure when they did it they should have gone the full gamut and spent whatever was necessary to make the provision for the electronic media to be able to cover the proceedings of this House. Mr. Speaker, they spent a pile of money on renovating a room on the eleventh floor as a press room. Again, I do not know the sum of money involved, but I understand that it was a large sum. I was in there the other day for the first time and I like the room, I think it is a nice room but again it proves, Mr. Speaker, that this government is not too much worried about cost. Mr. Speaker, they are doing a big job down at Colonial Building, something that we have



MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, if there ever was a Tory philosophy, if there ever was a Conservative philosophy it can be seen in this particular resolution, that people would try to deny, or that members would try to deny and reject the notion that the people of this Province have the right to know what takes place in this hon. House, to know what takes place in its entirety.

Mr. Speaker, another objection advanced was that you would not be giving access to the majority of Newfoundlanders. Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly we would be advancing towards that goal. How many people have the right now? Just the few people who can come into these galleries. If we can do it, Mr. Speaker, for 10,000 people,

MR. LUSH:                    What kind of a percentage improvement is that over what now takes place? If we can do it to 20,000 people, if we can do it to 30,000 people - Mr. Speaker, to suggest, and I think it was the hon. the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) who said that that would be discrimination in its worst form because we would not be getting to the majority. Now what kind of logic is that, Mr. Speaker?

I suppose maybe in the run of a year there are not 1,000 Newfoundlanders who can come into this House and see what transpires. Now, if we use the electronic media would we triple that figure? Would we make it 3,000? If we did, you know, we would be certainly giving a larger number of people the right of access to what takes place in this place. Mr. Speaker, these numbers are ridiculous but I use them because that is the reason that was advanced, because we would not be giving it to a majority of Newfoundlanders. I would hope that in time every place in this Province would have television. I would hope that in time, within the next four or five years, all of rural Newfoundland would have the same electronic media available to them as we have in the urban areas. But is it, Mr. Speaker, that hon. members are so callous, that they are so unconcerned about rural Newfoundland that they are not going to be working for this, they are not going to be working so that all of Newfoundland will be covered with the electronic media? Have they resigned themselves to the fact that rural Newfoundland is forever doomed, Mr. Speaker, is forever doomed and denied technological advance and technological progress?

So, Mr. Speaker, there is not an argument, there is not a logical reason that hon. members have advanced to justify them in voting against

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MR. LUSH:

this particular resolution.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Order, please! Order!

The hon. member's time has

elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

By leave.

MR. LUSH:

I just want to conclude,

Mr. Speaker. If I could be given ten seconds, I just want to conclude. I have a hope that hon. members will weigh this very seriously and look at what they are doing. If they vote against this,

MR. LUSH: they deny the people of Newfoundland and this House, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity to develop in accordance with technological progress and put us back Mr. Speaker, in the bowels of the 18th and 19th century.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): The hon. Minister of Communications.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. DOYLE: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments with respect to the motion that the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) has placed upon the Order Paper which, if it was passed, would see the introduction of the electronic media into the House of Assembly. Now, Mr. Speaker, I certainly do not intend to vote for this motion and I have a number of reasons, really, for feeling that way. First of all, Your Honour, I feel that the timing of this particular motion is certainly way off to begin with, and it does absolutely nothing, really, to adequately reflect the current economic situation that we are facing in our Province right now.

I do not know if hon. members opposite are aware of the fact or not yet, or if they have heard the news, but over the last couple of weeks the Government of Newfoundland has had to make some very, very tough decisions in trying to grapple with and trying to cope with a \$60 million to \$70 million revenue shortfall. And in the middle of all of that -

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

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I think it is ridiculous that a government with the majority that they have cannot keep a quorum in the House. Two members are coming in now, but the quorum has already been called, Mr. Speaker.

MR. YOUNG: The quorum is here. There is a quorum here. We have a quorum.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please! Members will take their seats so I can count.

I ask the Clerk to count the members to see if we have a quorum.

Yes, we have a quorum.

The hon. the Minister of Communications.

MR. DOYLE: Before I was interrupted, Mr. Speaker, I started to say that I do not know if hon. members opposite are aware of the news yet, or if they have heard the news. The Government of the Province has had to take some pretty tough measures over the last couple of weeks in trying to cope with a \$60 to \$70 million revenue shortfall in the Province.

MR. N. DOYLE: In the middle of all of that the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. E. Roberts) has the tremendous brainstorm of introducing a very inappropriate motion that would get the government involved in spending approximately - well, who knows? - thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars of the government's money in setting up a talent show for the Opposition. So, as you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, in the middle of the stark reality of having to close down hospital beds in the Province, and having to cut government expenditure in area after area, it is really amazing that the Opposition do not have anything better to do than to concentrate on launching their own personal publicity campaign. And that is what it would be, Mr. Speaker, a publicity campaign to be paid for out of the taxpayers' dollars. The hon. members opposite can pay lip service all they want to this motion, but I do not believe that they will ever be able to convince the people of Newfoundland, the people of this Province, that right now the government should have placed on its priority list introducing the electronic media into the House at a cost of who knows what to the taxpayers of the Province. So that is one reason, Your Honour, that I would vote against the motion, but I do have many more reasons that I know hon. members opposite are quite anxious to hear.

Apart from the fact that this would be a very big waste of money, a monumental waste of the taxpayers' money in this period of restraint, I can see, Mr. Speaker, where the presence of the electronic media in the House would go an awful long way really in replacing statesmanship with showmanship. We are here, Mr. Speaker, as every other person in the House of Assembly is without



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MR. N. DOYLE: exception, we are here, elected by our constituents, to represent them in the House of Assembly to do their business, the people's business. We are not here to replace The Edge of Night or Another World or the current soap opera. So I can readily see how the presence of cameras in the House could quite possibly - and I believe this to be true - could possibly stifle debate, with every single member who gets up to speak having to put up with the pressure of the television cameras as a watchdog. Now, some members, of course, could care very little about that type of thing, but there are some of course - and it could be on that side of the House and this side of the House - who would care very, very much about the presence of the electronic media. So no matter really how one felt consciously about the presence of the electronic media, it would be there, I feel, in the subconscious and I do not think that you would have that same kind of useful inter-play, if you will, between one side and the other that usually accompanies debate

MR. DOYLE: and usually accompanies every question period.

I think also that the presence of the camera in this House, or the electronic media, could possibly also go a long way in undermining the role of the Speaker in the House, with every single member who rises to speak falling under the scrutiny of the cameras instead of falling under the very capable scrutiny of Your Honour.

I think also, Mr. Speaker, that if the House of Assembly were portrayed as just possibly one more television show, that the people of the Province could very well get the impression, would ultimately I think possibly get the impression that just like any other television show that there are all kinds of quick solutions that can be attained in the Legislature by simply flicking on a television set. Well that is not the case as Your Honour fully knows. Our problems are very deep-rooted and they require some very, very sensible solutions. They do not require the presence of the electronic media acting as a watch dog and they certainly do not require a whole lot of theatrical performance. And I think if we did get involved in having electronic media that we would get involved in an awful lot of theatrical performance.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe it is very disappointing indeed, very disappointing in this day and age to the man in the street who is faced with an awful lot of problems, who is faced with the fact that coming on Christmas maybe he does not have a job, that his representative, who may be on the Opposition side of the House, wants to become a showman and a television star and thousands and thousands and thousands of dollars of the taxpayers' money, really when you get right down to it, on trivia, on something which will give some fleeting publicity

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MR. DOYLE: to a dying and possibly already dead  
Opposition.

So, Mr. Speaker, I view this motion  
that the hon. member has on the Order Paper as a sham, and  
it is a farce and it is an insult really to the people of  
the Province

MR. DOYLE: who have, really, a whole lot more than their share of the problems that society is faced with today. They have more than their share of problems and what a bitter, bitter disappointment it must be at this point in time to know that with all these current economic problems that we do have, we have an Opposition and a member of the Opposition, a senior member of the Opposition, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) who really does not have anything better to place on the Order Paper than a motion which would see the electronic media introduced into the House.

And, of course, he did not even have the interest today to come in and wind up debate on his motion. He has some time left, he may still be here, but he did not have the interest to come in and sit down and listen to what hon. members had to say on his motion. It is really disappointing, Mr. Speaker, to see the Opposition place at the top of their priority list television and showmanship instead of trying to grapple and deal with the problems that we have.

I can see, Mr. Speaker, if we had the electronic media in the House, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), for instance, every day coming in with his face all smeared up with makeup, and his white hair tinted blue. And the next thing you, of course, would see would be the hon. the Leader of the Opposition coming and asking the government to bring in a makeup subsidy for him. So, Mr. Speaker, it is really of no consequence and it is really of no importance, this motion that the hon. member has placed on the Order Paper.

One more point that I would like to make, Mr. Speaker. If there was some remote chance that government would agree with having the electronic media present in the House, automatically what you would have to do is to set up some kind of a cost analysis, really, of what it would cost in an effort really to

MR. DOYLE:

determine what the pros and cons of such an undertaking would be, and that would in itself cost an awful lot of money, and I wonder and I think, Your Honour, if the people of the Province and if the public good would not be better served if such money were used to introduce or to upgrade the current social service programmes that we have in the Province or if this money could not possibly be used in a much better way on health programmes and the like. I think if there is a priority it would have to be placed in that area, not in the area of bringing in electronic media to the House of Assembly.

So I think it would be much more beneficial to increase social assistance benefits. That is what the people of our Province need right now. They do not need cameras. You cannot eat cameras. Cameras do not provide jobs. Cameras might provide a few jobs to a few people but the money that it would cost to bring in the electronic media, to maintain it over the years would be much better used on health programmes and social service programmes and the like.

Your Honour, these are a few of my arguments, however good or however bad they may be and however weak or however strong they may be perceived by the Opposition.

I think there are a couple of more points that I would like to make. Quite possibly what members opposite are forgetting is the fact that the House of Assembly has a great deal of tradition attached to it and it has, over the years, Your Honour, whether it be rightly or wrongly - and I guess I would say rightly - it has been regarded generally as a place of honour, a place where the people's business is carried

MR. DOYLE: out in a manner that is sometimes almost regal. I would hate to see any steps being taken that would seriously undermine the decorum of the House. And I think that if we had the electronic media here it would seriously undermine the decorum of this House. There is absolutely no way, of course, that we could try this out on an experimental basis because I believe it has been the experience everywhere that it has been introduced that when you introduce electronic media into the House of Assembly it is there for good and really there is no turning back. So that is a couple of the arguments that

MR. DOYLE: I would put forward in voting against this resolution. Of course, Mr. Speaker, the important time really for the House to have gotten involved in having the electronic media present were the days when we did not even have a Question Period in the House of Assembly, during the days when the PC opposition at the time had only three or four members and really did not have the same type of opportunity as opposition members do today to seek out and to obtain information from the government. So I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that it is advantageous at all for the people of the Province to have the electronic media here when their business would be much better served in spending that type of money on health programmes and social assistance programmes.

AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Port au Port.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, if one were to search for a word to describe this debate 'boring' would spring to one's lips. The debate is boring because I have never seen in any Private Member's motion or in any debate in this House arguments such as have been coming from the government side. I do not believe for one moment, Mr. Speaker, that members on that side of the House believe what they are saying. For some reason or other they feel at this particular time that they do not want the television cameras in the House, they do not want to give people access to this House of Assembly. And for whatever reasons, whether it is because they are afraid or if it is because they feel that it would put them in some sort of an unclear advantage, but for whatever reason I do not believe for one moment that the arguments being put forward by member after member on

MR. HODDER: that side of the House come  
from the hearts -

MR. ROBERTS: It does not come from their heads.

MR. HODDER: - or their heads. Mr. Speaker,  
the last speaker talked about a talent show for the  
opposition. Well I would ask the government member, are  
you afraid of television? Are you afraid to let the  
people of this Province see how the business of this  
House of Assembly is conducted?

MR. CALLAN: They are afraid because they cannot stage manage it.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I keep hearing  
from member after member this afternoon that this is  
a terrible thing in this time of restraint. There is  
nothing in this resolution which was put forward by my  
friend and colleague from the Strait of Belle Isle  
(Mr. Roberts) that demands a large expenditure of money.  
Mr. Speaker, the resolution would allow us to proceed  
with caution, it would allow us to deliberate.



MR. HODDER:

it would give the media access to this House of Assembly, but it does not require large expenditures of money. I think the resolution is well worded in that respect.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is not much that can be added from what was said here in this House of Assembly last week. But it really comes down to whether you believe that this is the people's House where our deliberations should be public, or whether we feel that we are a select club who would deny access to this House of Assembly to the people. At one time there was no electronic media in any House of Assembly. And I expect that when the electronic media first came into this House of Assembly that there were debates, there were people who decided that the electronic media would not be allowed in the press galleries because in the beginning there were only the newspapers. I would imagine -

MR. ROBERTS:

There was a time when even newspapers were not allowed in the House.

MR. HODDER:

Yes, and a time when even newspapers were not allowed in the House of Assembly. And I expect that we always had those voices of doom and gloom, those ultra-conservative voices which we have heard raised on the other side of the House today. I expect that the same arguments were put forward at that time. But, Mr. Speaker, the newspapers did come and the reporters from the various electronic media did come. And I will tell hon. members opposite, hold back the dyke as much as you like but there will be cameras in this House of Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, some of the excuses given by members opposite last Wednesday, that member would play to the cameras, will not wash. If anything the cameras may make us more attentive to the

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MR. HODDER:                    purpose            which we serve  
when we are elected to this House of Assembly. It is  
a shame that the government has decided to vote against  
this resolution. I do not think there was one government  
members, except one in jest, who said that he would support  
the resolution,

MR. HODDER: and I am sure that members opposite do not believe what they are saying.

Perhaps that is why the speeches were of such a low calibre last Wednesday and this Wednesday. And I say shame on the government, shame on the government for not letting the cameras into the House.

It is the democratic right of all people to observe the House of Assembly. One of the members opposite, I believe it was the member for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms), said that it would have a low audience. But he mentioned that a survey done had shown that 48 per cent of people were watching in the particular jurisdiction to which it referred.

But, Mr. Speaker, regardless of the number of people who listen at a given time to the proceedings of the House of Assembly or the proceedings of the Parliament of Canada or the proceedings of any House or jurisdiction in this country or the Commonwealth, regardless of the number the right should be there, the public should be given access. There are relatively few people in the galleries today but, Mr. Speaker, from time to time when something of importance happens in this House of Assembly the people will come when they are interested.

I did read a statistic that the Question Period and the proceedings of the House of Commons was shown on Saturday morning throughout the country and they had 100,000 viewers. That is a significant number of viewers, on a Saturday morning. They then moved it to Sunday to get a better viewing audience. The experience has been that people do watch and people are concerned about what happens.

MR. HODDER: The member for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas) I believe said when he was speaking that he was here to look after his constituents, and his performance - he actually said it - he said, his performance in the House really was not much concern to them. But I would tell that member that we are here first and foremost to debate the problems of the Province, The handling of our districts or jurisdictions, yes, I would agree with members that if we ignore them we do it at our peril, but we are here to legislate for the whole Province not for our own individual districts.

And when a member gets up and says the people of his district are not too concerned about his performance in the House, then I would see why he would not want the cameras in the House because he is obviously a member who does not take part in debate or take part in the deliberations of the House of Assembly.

So, Mr. Speaker, these arguments are infantile, they will not wash. Why can we not show Newfoundlanders and Labradorians that the government and the Opposition can sometimes put aside their political differences, their political considerations and let us get together and bring in the cameras?

MR. HODDER: There is no particular difference; the Opposition will certainly be on camera but so will the government, so will the ministers, so will the backbenchers. The great advantage would be to give every citizen of the Province the opportunity to enjoy his right to know what is going on, to see and to hear what is happening in this House of Assembly. It is their right and we are standing in the path of progress when we deny the cameras.

Are the hon. members opposite afraid that people will find out something about them? Are they insecure? I would certainly tell them that the Alberta Legislature, as was pointed out by the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) last Wednesday, was the first province in Canada to bring in electronic coverage, and that was in 1972. It was the first time in Canada. And certainly it has not hindered proceedings of the House there as members opposite are afraid it will here. It certainly has not affected the Premier of Alberta's ability to win elections, if that is what members are afraid of. If that is what is pushing them back.

MR. CARTER: That defeats the argument. We are not afraid.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, I would think that this Premier - that is why the arguments have been so hollow on the other side - this Premier is afraid that he will be exposed when he is wild-eyed, waving his arms around and going beserk and caving under pressure, he is afraid that that aspect of his personality, the insecurity of his personality will be broadcasted, He cannot tell the CBC what to take and what not to take in that case. The cameras will be on him all the time and they will catch him in his weak moments when the House Leader opposite is not there holding his hand, when he stands up.

MR. STAGG: Oh, come on now! You were doing alright until the hate showed through.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the attitude of the Alberta Legislature is that in a free society, and I quote from Speaker Amerongen of the Alberta Legislature, whom I happen to know very well and whom I have happened to have numerous conversations with on a couple of trips where he and I both travelled to parts of Canada, and he says, "The attitude of the Alberta Legislature is that in a free society, people who view the proceedings of the House on television must be entitled to see virtually what an onlooker who is present in the galleries might see or hear." Now that is the attitude, the philosophy in a nutshell, of the Alberta Legislature.

MR. J. HODDER:

Mr. Speaker, the media scene has changed from what it was twenty years ago, electronics have revolutionized the industry. The screen is in the nations' living rooms and it is natural therefore that the parliament of this Province should let the cameras into the Legislature. Television would be of advantage not to one of our parties but to the House of Assembly itself. It would be an advantage to the institution. I would feel and I would think that the House of Assembly is badly in need of increased public interest and support. I feel that the introductions of cameras into the House might inform people of what is happening in the House of Assembly. There are many people who follow the House of Commons, I know, very religiously, and not only would it give people a chance to see what is happening but it might inspire them to more input back to their members as to how they are conducting themselves in the House and the issues that they cover.

I guess it was Charles Lynch, I read a comment where, when they were bringing the cameras into the House of Commons, he said, 'What is needed is a greater sense of citizen involvement, and putting the debates on the air would seem a sensible act from the start.'

When the debate was entered into here, I have a number of clippings from across Canada and from the Province about the introduction of the electronic media into other Legislatures, and the response has always been positive. When the House of Commons was first televised it probably had the greatest impact on Newfoundlanders. You know, Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected in 1975 - and this was before the introduction of the electronic coverage, television coverage, in the House of Commons - people had the feeling that you were coming into the House of Assembly almost to sit around a table, that

MR. J. HODDER:                    somehow if you were the Opposition that you could not get your way but there was no feeling for democracy. You know, Mr. Speaker, since I have been a member in this House of Assembly, I truly believe that this is the best system of government on the face of the earth. Where else except in the democratic nations can a group of people, an Opposition, get up with parliamentary immunity and question and ask of the government what their priorities are? The difference between a dictatorship, the difference between a Banana Republic and what we have here is the right to be able to get up, whether we are wrong, we are right, whether the Opposition is wrong or right, whether the government is wrong or right, there is an open forum whereby by the electronic media, the press who are our partners in democracy,



MR. HODDER: where we can question fraud and make the government, who are the people who rule this Province, accountable. And when the House of Commons debates came on the air for the first time, people said, "They are a bunch of crazy people. What are they doing all this clapping for and 'Hear, hear!' and that sort of thing?" But I think that this was the initial reaction. The reaction is not the same now as it was a year ago, and it was not the same a year ago as it was the year before that. Now people are starting to understand how parliament works and how society works. They understand. People are starting to understand that, when the Premier gets power and he forms his Cabinet, that they have all power and the only time they are made accountable is in this House of Assembly. I think that the televising of the House of Commons debates has been a healthy thing. I would commend the federal government for the move, the federal Liberal Party, for the move that they made. It was a bold and courageous move and I would ask the Premier and I would ask the members opposite, would they reconsider because I am sure, as I said earlier in my speech, that the members' hearts are not in it. The stupid, inane comments that have come from members opposite is frightening. It is frightening that the government could be so conservative in a move which is so progressive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): The hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle closes the debate.

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, it is twenty of six and I assume I shall conclude this debate under the provisions of the relevant Standing Order of the House. Mr. Speaker, I will have a word or two to say about my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter). I would invite him to stay because it will be in the same

MR. ROBERTS: good spirit as he and I exchange our running dog and pony show. But the gist of what I have to say will not surprise him but it may surprise those who, unlike we, do not believe that pigs can fly or that the hon. gentleman for St. John's North and I can agree on something from time to time.

Let me first of all, Mr. Speaker, offer to the House a word of explanation for the fact I was late today. I was late. The clothes that I am wearing will explain to many of the members where I was.

MR. CARTER: The late member.

MR. ROBERTS: I would rather be the late member than the former member, which will be the fate of my friend from St. John's North very shortly. I was appearing in one of the courts of this Province in a matter which was set down for trial several months ago. And the Minister of Justice (Mr. Ottenheimer) would be the first to confirm that when counsel has a trial date set for

MR. ROBERTS: a litigation matter in this Province, one does not let it go. This is a matter of some considerable interest because it involves the interpretation of a statute passed by this House, Section 116 of the City of St. John's Act and the matter began today and I was there until His Lordship Mr. Justice Steele rose at five o'clock when I came in here.

MR. CARTER: Were you litigating all over the place?

MR. ROBERTS: Unlike the hon. gentleman, I do litigate properly.

You know, he may remember the story - I think it was told on him many times when he was Education Minister - there was a story told of the appalling ignorance of a gentleman who was being lobbied, he was the Education Minister, as was my friend briefly and gloriously until his career came to an abrupt and untimely end at the request of the then Premier, and the lobby was against the university in the state for which this gentleman was whatever he was, the minister or the secretary for Education, whatever the term was. And the lobby got after this fellow who was, like my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter), a man of the soil, a man who knows all about dirt, a man who is in the dirt most of the time, making his living in the dirt, drags his living from the dirt, and the lobby said to this man, 'You know, up there at the university the boys and girls matriculate together.' And the legislator was impressed, as would my friend from St. John's North have been, and then the lobby saw they were getting to the legislator and they said, 'You know, not only that, up there they share the same curriculum'. And that was obviously winning over, just as the minister was won over on something like a school bus - he will remember the school bus vote - and then finally the clincher of the argument, which would have clinched it with my friend from St. John's North, the clinching argument was, 'Up there at that university, you know, they make the boys and girls matriculate together.' That is exactly of a piece with

MR. ROBERTS: my friend's comment.

Mr. Speaker, let me also thank my colleagues who have spoken in this debate. And I thank also gentlemen and ladies, if any in fact there have been, on the opposite side who have spoken. I do not know who has spoken today. But I do want to say a particular word of thanks, and let this be recorded and let this be struck in letters of bronze, I want to say a particular word of thanks and commendation to my friend from St. John's North (Mr. Carter) who, as always, has spoken his mind, as always is somewhat idiosyncratic and, as always, is going to do what he believes best. It is not often that he and I agree on what is best for this Province, and that is probably why I am here and why he is there. It may also be why he is considerably closer to the bar of the House than I am. It may also be why the Premier has not invited him to join the Cabinet even though my friend from St. John's North would bring a wealth of experience and knowledge and learning to the Cabinet.

MR. CARTER: I tried it once and did not like it.

MR. ROBERTS: What more could I say!

MR. ROBERTS: I need only say that down in the Education Department they still have the desk with the fingernail marks on it where my hon. friend was taken out by the Premier of the day. Anyway, I do want to thank him and I do want to say to him that we may ask for a recorded vote on this simply to record his position. So he may want to leave the House when the vote is taken so he is not forced into the embarrassment of having to vote in a manner different to that which I suspect most of his colleagues will do.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this debate has been a disappointment to me. It has been a great disappointment that it was even needed, that it was even necessary to put such a motion before the House. And, secondly, it has been a disappointment that the gentlemen and ladies, as the case may be, opposite have taken the tack that they have. As I understand it, they have essentially given two reasons as to why they do not favour this move of opening up the House, of giving access to the House to the electronic media. I thought my friend from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder), who made his usual excellent speech, spoke very well when he said that members opposite did not seem to have their hearts in it or their heads. Their speeches were the remarks of men and women who were not saying something which they believed with any fervour, who were, I think it is fair to say, adhering to the line to which more and more they must adhere, which is 'my party right or wrong!' Gentlemen opposite and ladies opposite are going to find life increasingly so in the next few years. They will have to defend their party even when they know it is wrong. Now that is the way the system works. But I will simply tell them that coming events are casting their shadows before them. And this debate is but an example of where they must defend their party against what is right and

MR. ROBERTS: defend their party against what the people of this Province wish to do.

MR. STAGG: Defend their party against the (inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, they may have to defend their party. I know nothing, Sir, of the internal dynamics of the Tory Party in this Province or even whether there are any. I know nothing about it and I really could not care less. What I care about is what that party does as a government. I do not even care about the hon. gentleman from Stephenville (Mr. Stagg) and what political views, if any, he may have or what political philosophy, if any, he may choose to adhere to. He has adhered to many in his time and he may doubtless adhere to many others before his time is over.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have said it was a disappointment and I have said that hon. gentlemen opposite have cited two groups of reasons, two broad bundles of reasons. They have embroidered on those as best they could. Pretty poor efforts! The best fist of it was made by my friend from Grand Falls (Mr. Simms). It is one of the few -

MR. TULK: No, no.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, he made the best fist of any of those opposite, I would say to my friend from Fogo (Mr. Tulk). He did not do a very good job but he did the best he could with what he had. He was shot into the breach, he was told to get up and try to put something together and he did the very best he could. An admirable man.

MR. ROBERTS: Without any disrespect to Your Honour at all it is too bad he left the Chair. On the other hand, his leaving the Chair and going to the government strengthened the government immeasurably. And, of course, we are in the best of hands in the House now, I would be the very first, particularly with Your Honour sitting there, listening to what I am saying. I hope. I assume.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me talk briefly of the two reasons and expose them for the specious

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible).

MR. TULK: A lot closer than the member for Stephenville (Mr. Stagg).

MR. STAGG: A cynical brand of humour.

MR. TULK: It is a lot better than yours.

MR. ROBERTS: Expose them for the - when my hon. friend here and there permit.

MR. TULK: I have to keep him down.

MR. ROBERTS: There is no point keeping him down. How can you keep down something that is gossamer light and without substance?

Mr. Speaker, let me expose the two groups of reasons for this -

MR. YOUNG: (Inaudible).

MR. ROBERTS: Now we have got the gentleman for Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) humping into it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, there are two groups of reasons. Let me expose each of them for the specious falacies they are. First of all we heard a great deal of talk about costs. I think my friend for Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) came up with \$2 million. He has obviously been imbibing moose milk instead of trying to stop moose poaching. It would cost nothing to allow the type of reform which this resolution advocates. That has been the experience in Alberta and there was a letter tabled from the Clerk of the Alberta Legislature which says so specifically.

MR. ROBERTS: Now we want to talk about cost. I wonder if the former Speaker of the House (Mr. Simms) could tell us what it cost to put the new carpet here. I do not begrudge the new carpet. But in all of the reforms of this Province I will bet the cost of this new carpet is substantially more than anything that could possible be spent to allow the people of this Province access to this House through radio and television. We heard about the wall downstairs and we figured out it took \$50,000 worth of Winter boots, the tax on \$50,000 worth of Winter boots to pay for the wall that was moved downstairs. Well how about the Minister of Communications (Mr. Doyle)? We are paying him whatever we are paying any of the ministers, \$29,000 or \$30,000 a year. An esteemable gentleman and worth every penny of it, I do not doubt. In fact, if I had my way he would get \$80,000 or \$90,000 a year. He is worth every penny of it, Sir. But how much better would we be in communications if we laid him off for a month or two? Like all of us here he has had two salaries the year anyway. What if we laid him off for a day or two a month or two?

AN HON. MEMBER: Not everybody.

MR. ROBERTS: Those who only crept in lately and who will creep out soon have only had the one, the rest have had two.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we were to take some of the money devoted to communications and put it on whatever may be done, we might have to provide a plug or two. You know, the cost argument is absolutely fallacious. And, of course, the final proof of that is in the fact that this government in this time of austerity, of the whole Province economically crashing in ruins about their ears,



MR. ROBERTS: are going to spend a couple of million dollars to build a new House of Assembly. The extravagance that is being built out on the North Western side of this building, this extravagance, this over-expenditure! We are not going to get into the Premier's arithmetic but it is pathetically bad. He was an English teacher, I hope. He certainly was not a mathematics teacher. To think that he is going to save money. The businessmen in his caucus could tell him, my friend from St. John's West (Mr. Barrett) who runs a business could tell him about the fallacy of spending \$37 million or \$38 million - and that is only their estimate, heavens knows what it will be - to build a building to replace rentals of \$3.5 million, is it not?

AN HON. MEMBER: Yes.

MR. ROBERTS: But as part of that - I will get on, there will be other times for that. All the people, the widows whose allowances are being cut or the people who are paying the sales tax on their clothing or the sales tax on their Big Macs will have the pleasure of knowing they are paying for that building. We will see to that.

But, Mr. Speaker, as part and parcel of that plan they are going to move the House of Assembly. I seen no earthly need to move it. It is as convenient a chamber as we are going to find. It is not historic.

MR. NEARY: We will have three then; the old Colonial Building and the two others.

MR. ROBERTS: That is right. My friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), the Opposition Leader, quite rightly says we will then have three Chambers. No need to move. And I will say to Your Honour, without any fear of successful contradiction, that what is left

MR. ROBERTS: out of \$2 million by the time they refinish and refurbish the area downstairs for the House will be nothing. It is going to cost a couple of million dollars to move all of this and our staffs and our assistants and what have you, and the rooms that will be done and the furniture that will be bought. We will have the interior decorators in now, this new thing. It is bad enough we had them at Mount Scio house, now we have them apparently in the building here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so much for cost. There would be no cost, but even if it cost \$100 or \$200 this government has shown by their profligate expenditure, their uncaring, profligate expenditure that they have money for far less important things.

Now, what about decorum? We have heard a great deal about decorum, and heavens knows the decorum in this House leaves a great deal to be deserved. I am the first to say that I am not standing here casting stones because I am without sin.

MR. YOUNG: No, you are not.

MR. ROBERTS: Let me say to my friend from Harbour Grace (Mr. Young), I may not be here as much as he is but I do more than he does either here or outside. You know, he is the perfect example of the bump on the log.

MR. NEARY: He is the last one to let you down.

MR. ROBERTS: He is the last one to let us down, as he has said on many occasions. He is the bump on the log. He is there and it makes no difference whether he is or not. Mr. Speaker, the point is that the decorum of this House at times is bad. And so, Your

MR. ROBERTS: Honour, is the decorum of every legislature in this country. I am told that we have the Speaker of the Nova Scotia Legislature here with us today, and I am sure he would be the very first to testify that his House at times has exhibited decorum less than that which is of the highest standard. Ottawa, Quebec, Westminster - sure, somebody once threw an Order Book at Winston Churchill across the Westminster. Our own House, fifty or sixty years ago,

MR. ROBERTS: somebody took up a bottle of ink, an inkwell full of ink and threw it across the House thereby splattering himself. I can recall once having occasion to look up precedents to what happens when a member is struck. I have been struck in the House, one of the two occasions -

MR. YOUNG: Too bad they missed.

MR. ROBERTS: Ah, the hon. gentleman believes in striking from behind, but he was not the one who did it. Mr. Speaker, to show you what happens elsewhere, I found a case where a member had been suspended from a Legislature, of one of the Indian states because he had thrown an Order Book at the Speaker and killed him. He struck him on the head and the man died.

But lack of decorum, Mr. Speaker, is something of which we all are guilty.

But what is wrong with letting the people of Newfoundland and Labrador see what happens in this House. What have we got to hide? I would be delighted to have my friend from Harbour Grace (Mr. Young) front and center on the television set in my home every night. I would be delighted, and I know that in Bryants Cove and in Riverhead and in every part of his constituency they would be lining up. The people who did not have sets would be going down the road to see him and they would say, "Can we come in and see", naming my friend. And I know that in St. John's Center the ladies and gentlemen living there and their children, they would be bringing them in from the Goulds and Kilbride and from Blackhead and from Cape Spear to see the hon. gentleman for St. John's Center (Mr. McNicholas) come on the screen.

Mr. Speaker, it is sheer nonsense -

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Tape No. 2980

IB-2

MR. MCNICHOLAS:

They do that now.

MR. ROBERTS:

I am sorry?

MR. MCNICHOLAS:

They do that now.

MR. ROBERTS:

The hon. gentleman says they do it now. I believe him. The only thing I do not understand - I am a fervent believer in the hon. gentleman. He works beneath me every day, and I see him come in to work and I see him go from work and I know how much good he does - the only thing I do not understand is his political delusion that keeps him sitting over there. But other than that I am a fervent admirer of my friend from St. John's Center. I can recall vividly how anxious he was to get in the House. I am not sure he is concerned about what party he wanted to be in the House for, but now that he is here we know exactly how much he does and that is a great deal. The hon. gentleman will not lack an admirer while I am around. Not like the Premier. The Premier will never lack one as long as the Premier is around.

But I say to my friend from St. John's Center, as long as I am in this House there will be one voice at least - there may be thousands - but there will be one at least raised in his defense.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the real reason that my friends opposite do not want television in the House is that for some reason they are afraid to let the people of Newfoundland see what goes on. They feel now

MR. ROBERTS: that it has to be filtered through the medium of the electronic press, the medium of the interview rooms or the statement into the microphone. They are not prepared to allow the electronic media to use the means at their disposal. We know, we have the evidence of other Provinces, that it can be done technically. In Nova Scotia, I believe, the media are allowed to use the radio feed. They will not even allow that here. They are allowed to use the radio feed in Nova Scotia. They do not do that here. They do not want it. They do not want people to know what is going on.

My friend from St. John's Center (Mr. McNicholas) may not think his constituents care what he does. But I would think if he was speaking from the heart and the head and not just from the lips he knows better than that. He knows they care deeply what he does for them. That is why they come to him to ask for help and to ask for guidance and ask for assistance. And they care what he does in here too.

Mr. Speaker, my friend from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) made an excellent speech. He put his finger on it. He said, 'This is the peoples' House. It does not belong to the Premier.' The Premier thinks it does but it does not. It does not belong to the government. It does not belong to any of us. We are only temporary, we are passing through, some more quickly than others. We are passing through. Some have stayed here longer than others. Some will be here long after others have gone. But all of us will go, Mr. Speaker. In my few years in the House I have seen, I do not know, 100, 150 men and women go through this House. Only my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary) and my friend from St. John's East Extern (Mr. Hickey)

MR. ROBERTS: have not passed from this  
vale during my limited time in this House.

Mr. Speaker, it is not  
our House, it belongs to the people of this Province.  
And it is our duty in my view to allow all of us,  
to allow all of the people the greatest possible  
access, and that is what this motion is designed to  
do and that is what it would do.

So it is on that basis, Sir,  
I would ask for support. Let me simply say, in closing,  
two things. It is nearly six of the clock. And I  
think we will ask for a vote. Seventy-five per cent  
of our caucus is here. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me  
just say two things. First of all, as my friend  
from Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) said,

MR. ROBERTS: "This is an idea which will come". I do not know how quickly it will come, but I say now, without any hesitation or any fear that history will prove me wrong, that the electronic media will be given access to this House. It will be more quickly if hon. gentlemen and ladies opposite make it happen now. But it does not matter whether they make it happen or not. Whether they make it happen or not it will happen. They are in the position of King Canute ordering the sea to stay back.

And secondly, Mr. Speaker, I say to my hon. friends on both sides - those on this side agree with it, those on the other side may ponder it in their souls - the saying that the truth shall make ye free. The whole purpose of this resolution is to enable the people of this Province better to see the truth about what goes on in this House of Assembly. That, Sir, is why I am going to vote for it. That is why I ask all hon. members to do the same. Thank you, Sir.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Is the House ready for the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: All those in favour "Aye", those against "Nay". In my opinion the "Nays" have it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Divide.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members.



DIVISION

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Is it agreed to put the question?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Agreed.

MR. SPEAKER: Those in favour of the motion please rise:

The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), Mr. Callan, Mr. Warren, Mr. Hodder, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Tulk, Mr. Hiscock.

MR. SPEAKER: Those against the resolution please rise:

The hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall), the hon. the Minister of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development (Mr. Goulic), Mr. Reid, Mr. Brett.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Hon. members should remain in their seats while the vote is being taken.

Dr. McNicholas, Mr. Aylward, the hon. the Minister responsible for Communications (Mr. Doyle); the hon. Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn), the hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms), the hon. Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe), the hon. Minister of Social Services (Mr. Hickey), the hon. Minister of Public Works and Services (Mr. Young), the hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook), the hon. the Minister of Health (Mr. House), Mr. Carter, Mr. Peach, Mr. Tobin, Mr. Cross, Mr. Barrett,

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DIVISION

Dr. Twomey, Mr. Walsh,  
Mr. Patterson, Mr. Matthews, Mr. Collins, Mr. Stagg,  
Mr. Hearn, Mr. Osmond.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

I declare the motion lost.

It now being six of the  
clock I leave the Chair until three o'clock tomorrow,  
Thursday.