

PRELIMINARY

UNEDITED

TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

FOR THE PERIOD

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1982

The House met at 3:00

Mr. Speaker in the Chair

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

DR. J. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker.

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

DR. COLLINS: Mr. Speaker, in my Ministerial Statement to the House on 18 November, 1982, I announced that the Retail Sales Tax exemption for purchases of adult clothing and footwear would be removed.

It is the intention of government to allow all children under the age of fifteen to acquire their clothing and footwear tax-exempt. In this regard, the Department of Finance will implement a system whereby clothing and footwear for a child under fifteen years of age can be purchased tax-exempt regardless of size.

In order to receive this exemption, the purchaser will be required to complete a Certificate of Exemption at the time of purchase. If the certificate cannot be completed at the time of purchase and the tax has been paid, the purchaser may apply to the Department of Finance for a refund.

It should be noted that certificates will only be required if the clothing and footwear is not within the range of sizes previously announced as eligible for exemption.

Exemption certificates will be sent to sellers of clothing as soon as possible. In the meantime, purchasers will be required to pay the applicable tax and apply to the Department of Finance for a refund. In this regard, purchasers should ensure that sales invoices,

DR. J. COLLINS: cash register tapes, etc., are retained to support their refund requests.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this is Bonaparte's retreat. This is just the first in a series of a long list of retreats that we will see by this inconsiderate minister, who brought in tax measures in this Province without putting any thought into them at all and created a severe hardship on the ordinary people of this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the hon. gentleman, what about the commercial heating fuel tax?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: And what about the hot dog tax?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WM. MARSHALL: A point of error and a point of order, Mr. Speaker, both.

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

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, is debating the minister's statement. The minister's statement relates to the imposition of the tax upon clothing and it does not relate to the matters that he is speaking of.

MR. E. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, the only error in what the hon. the minister said was in his own remarks and not in anything that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. S. Neary)

MR. E. ROBERTS:                   said. The minister's statement dealt with the first of what will be a long catalogue of retreats from his dismal budget statement last week. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. S. Neary) is simply making a few brief comments on it and raising a question or two, all of which are perfectly in accord with the rules of this House and the practice and if

MR. ROBERTS: the minister was not trying to confuse the matter, was not trying to stifle debate, and was not trying to cover up his retreat, then he would allow the questions to be asked and would do his level best to answer them.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!  
It may be a difference of opinion between two hon. members. However, if the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) does have some questions pertaining to the Ministerial Statement then maybe they could be better asked in the Question Period.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I believe in my few brief remarks I think that one of the things I am allowed to do under the rules of the House is to ask questions of the minister. I want to ask the minister when he is going to retreat on the one cent increase in sales tax -

MR. ROBERTS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: - on Christmas shopping? The hot dog tax? And the commercial heating fuel tax?

But I also want to ask the minister why he did not include all children going to school -

DR. COLLINS: Is this the Question Period, Mr. Speaker?

MR. NEARY: No. Mr. Speaker, why limit it to fifteen years of age? Why not include all children of school age who are going to the College of Fisheries, the University and the vocational schools? Why stop at fifteen?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I hope that in the days ahead, Mr. Speaker, that we will see a long list of reversals, that the minister will come in tomorrow again and make another announcement -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. NEARY: - about another review, about another second thought that they have had on their poor planning and the poor thinking that they put into that financial statement, and that they will retreat on all these tax increases that they announced last Thursday.

MR. ROBERTS: Well said. Well said.  
Another retreat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. Minister of Transportation.

MR. DAWE: Last year, Mr. Speaker, well before the budget presentation, the Premier announced early tender calls for a number of capital works projects from the Department of Transportation and a number of other Provincial Government Departments.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE: This programme of early tenders for capital projects was well received by the construction industry. The road building segment of that industry has made representation to my department requesting that the same procedure as last year be followed again for the 1983 construction season. In this regard, Mr. Speaker, my department intends to improve upon last year and invite a number of tenders immediately and not wait until the Spring of 1983.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS: Good stuff.

MR. DAWE: I wish to advise, Mr. Speaker, that the Department of Transportation will be inviting tenders on the projects contained in the Canada/Newfoundland Primary Highway Strengthening/Improvement agreement and scheduled for construction in the 1983 season, over the next few weeks. Some of the projects in that 75/25 cost-shared agreement and for which tenders will be invited now are: (1) On the East Coast and in conjunction with the four-laneing proceeding West

MR. DAWE: from St. John's, an overpass for the interchange at Paddy's Pond, two new bridge structures at Manuel's River and the Manuel's River channel.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE: Number two, approximately 5km of reconstruction and paving from Gander towards Glenwood. Number three, paving of the 8 kilometers of TCH which was reconstructed last year from the Exploits River towards Grand Falls.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. DAWE: (4) Two upgrading and paving contracts on 31 kilometers of the Trans-Canada Highway between Carter's Road to Fischels River on the West Coast. These two contracts will complete the upgrading of the remaining oldest sections of the Trans Canada Highway in the Province.

(5) Two upgrading contracts for a total of 22 kilometers on route 432 between Plum Point and the Roddickton - Main Brook intersection on the Great Northern Peninsula.

And early in the 1983 construction season it is intended also to invite tenders for a start on improvements to sections of the Trans Canada Highway between Corner Brook and Pasadena.

Under the Canada-Newfoundland Primary Highway Strengthening/Improvement Agreement during the past construction season ten highway projects were contracted. Six of these were for upgrading; two for paving and two were for bridge repairs. The total contract values were some \$19.8 million of which \$17 million worth of work will be completed by the contractors in 1982 and the remainder will carry over in to the next construction season.

By proceeding to tender at this time and subsequently awarding contracts, the successful contractors can commence work as early in the New Year as weather permits. Also by having contracts in hand early, a contractor is likely to retain staff over the Winter or hire early in the New Year to repair his equipment and have it ready to commence work. In both cases, the early tendering is permitting the contractor to take full advantage of the entire construction season and hence maximize the opportunities for employment.



MR. DAWE: Mr. Speaker, the projects announced for tendering here today are those in our three year \$48 million agreement with Transport Canada. It is government's intention to also tender early in the New Year a number of the totally financed provincial highway projects which will be undertaken next year. Government will be taking these steps to maximize the employment opportunities in this sector of the construction industry for the coming season.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is not very difficult to see what is happening here. We have these ministerial statements, and of course the barrage of housekeeping bills over the past couple of weeks, to deflect away from the mess that this government has placed the Province in.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) talks about pre-tendering last year well before the budget was brought down on the 27th. of May. Actually, if the minister will recall, these pre-tendering announcements were made just before the election was called, and that is what it was, a bit of election bait. That, Mr. Speaker, was evident by the fact that even though the pre-tendering was announced in February and March, the actual work on the widening of the Trans-Canada to the Foxtrap Access got underway in October. So imagine when it would have gotten

MR. CALLAN:

underway, Mr. Speaker, if there had been no pre-tendering and it is easy to see why it is being done now. If it takes government that long and the Department of Transportation that long to get some plans drawn up and work started, then, of course, you would need to tender about two years in advance of expecting work to start.

Mr. Speaker, I intended to ask the minister this tomorrow but perhaps this is the pertinent time to ask the minister. He mentions that it is government's intention to also tender early in the New Year a number of the totally financed provincial highway projects. Well, last year, Mr. Speaker, on the 22nd of June the minister said that he would table the list of highway projects, provincial highway capital works projects in a couple of days. That was five months ago Monday past and the minister still has not tabled that list of capital work projects. I should ask the minister when does he intend to table that and will he be as expeditious with the pre-tendering as he was with tabling the contracts from last year?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Are there any other Ministerial Statements?

The hon. Minister of the Environment.

MR. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, at this time I am pleased to inform the hon. House of new regulations that government has recently proclaimed concerning the storage and handling of gasoline and associated products with a view to preventing or at least minimizing future environmental problems through spillage associated with these activities.

MR. ANDREWS: I should point out to the House that over the past decade a substantial increase in the number of oil and gasoline pollution incidents in the Province has occurred due to leaking storage tank systems and/or accidental spills during the transport or transfer of these products. Such spills have the potential to cause serious damage to the environment through the pollution of soil and our ground and surface waters. Therefore, to ensure that environmental quality is maintained at acceptable levels it was considered necessary to tighten up controls and reduce the number and size of such spills to a minimum.

A primary requirement of these regulations will be the maintenance of inventory control records. This will mean that storage tank system operators will have to monitor their inventory of gasoline and associated products more closely than has been the case in the past. This monitoring will serve to alert operators to the existence of minor tank leaks before they can turn into major pollution problems.

MR. ANDREWS: In addition, in the event of a spill or a leak, up-to-date inventory control records will provide a quick and reasonably reliable estimate of the amount of product lost. This in turn, Mr. Speaker, will provide a basis upon which my department could decide on the appropriate actions to be taken.

Mr. Speaker, by way of example, I would like to remind the hon. House of the spill that occurred some nine months ago in Baie Verte. Initially, the spill was reported to be some 300 to 400 imperial gallons. However, it was some two months later, when I threatened to issue a stopping order on the company involved, that I was finally informed, officially informed by its head office that some 168,000 imperial gallons of diesel oil had actually been spilled into the Baie Verte harbour. Had I known the actual magnitude of this spill at the outset, I would have demanded that more men and equipment be used and that the clean-up proceed much more quickly than was the case.

These new regulations now make it mandatory to immediately report a spill and the amount lost. A further requirement of the regulations is that there be close supervision of product transfer.

MR. CALLAN: Who stole the matacil in Millertown? Do you want to tell us that? Did the minister do it to avoid embarrassment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

MR. ANDREWS: This will mean that a person transferring gasoline or other products from a vehicle or vessel must be in a position and have the capability of stopping the flow immediately, thereby minimizing a leak or spill which might occur.

The regulations make mandatory the obtaining of a certificate of approval from the Department of Environment for undertaking construction,

MR. ANDREWS: installing or altering a storage tank system. This will require that any persons planning to construct a new storage tank system or to alter the existing system must first make application to my department. This will permit the department to be in a position to ensure that the proposed system will have provisions for adequate corrosion protection and/or dyking, as may be appropriate for the system under construction.

Mr. Speaker, the storage and handling of gasoline associated products regulations will apply to bulk storage system operators, service station owners and industrial users. My department is presently in the process of ensuring that all such persons or companies are identified and provided with a copy of these regulations and an explanatory brochure that should facilitate smooth implementation of the procedures.

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, this statement is the biggest admission of guilt I have ever seen come from a minister on that side of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. J. HODDER: Mr. Speaker, the question I have to ask is were there no regulations before? Because the statement is more revealing for what was not in place before than for what was or what is being done now.

MR. G. WARREN: So he was not telling the truth, old man.

MR. HOODER: Mr. Speaker, the minister says in his statement that accidental spills have been increasing over the past years. No wonder, Mr. Speaker, that we have had accidental spills over the past years because it is amazing to me that companies did not monitor their inventories or were not required to monitor their inventories in this province. As well, Mr. Speaker, another statement that the minister made was people who are transferring bulk product from one facility to another must have the means of stopping the flow immediately. Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that that would have been the most elementary regulation that this government could have had and yet the minister again has proclaimed new regulations, after we have had a number of bad spills and, as he admits, after the Province over the past years have had increasing spills. The minister does not mention in this anything about monitoring those great bulk storage tanks that we have scattered across the Province in all sorts of areas. The other thing, Mr. Speaker, that the minister has admitted in his statement is that for the first time people who plan to construct new storage tank systems or alter existing systems must give their engineering plans to the department or else. If that were not so, why would he bring these in in new regulations? Now, Mr. Speaker, does that mean in the past years that anybody who wanted to change a tank or to take over a tank from the American bases in whatever condition they might be

MR. J. HODDER: in, did not have to submit engineering designs to the Province? Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that it is shocking that it is now that we bring in those regulations. These regulations should have been in place for many years and I go back to my opening statement, that it is no wonder that we have an increase in accidental spills in the transport and transfer of petroleum products in this Province.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Are there any other Ministerial Statements?

MR. WM. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Let us see if we can move the Opposition once more to heights of righteous indignation, Mr. Speaker.

It gives me much pleasure to inform this hon. House that the hon. the Premier is currently leading a Canadian delegation to Europe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: I repeat, Mr. Speaker, a Canadian delegation to Europe, whose purpose is to protect our Province's and indeed the nation's interest as regards to the annual seal hunt.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: As hon. members are aware, the European Parliament has passed a resolution, the purpose of which is to ban the importation of seal products into member European countries. However, a resolution of the European Parliament is not binding on member countries.

MR. MARSHALL: The Premier and his delegation are visiting a number of key European capitals and are meeting with the appropriate ministers of the governments concerned. It is hoped that the delegation can persuade the individual governments not to adopt and make law the seal products ban approved by the European Parliament.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about Jim Morgan?

MR. MARSHALL: I said the hon. the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan). By way of background, Mr. Speaker, it should be noted that the Premier took the initiative on this issue in a Telex to the Prime Minister way back on October 12th. last. In that Telex the Premier asked the Prime Minister -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: In that Telex, Mr. Speaker, the Premier asked the Prime Minister to designate a minister from the federal government to join the delegation to Europe on the seal hunt. After receiving no reply from the Prime Minister, the Premier again wired him on October 26th., which was fourteen days later, and finally still having received no answer wired the hon. Allan MacEachen, Minister of External Affairs on September 2nd.

MR. SIMMS: Three times.

MR. MARSHALL: On November 9th., the Premier wired the Prime Minister, who was travelling in Europe, and urged him to raise the matter of the seal hunt with European leaders.

Now, Mr. Speaker, hon. members there opposite will remember, also on November 9th., the hon. Premier led into this House a resolution which still remains on the Order Paper. We wanted to be able to have the benefit, when he wired the Prime Minister, to say it was



MR. MARSHALL: the unanimous resolution of this House that we wanted the Prime Minister to take this matter up. But, of course, we were unable to do that because of the Opposition's stance, which is a matter of record.

But on November 10th., after all of these efforts, the federal government replied to the Province by way of Telex from the hon. Mr. MacEachen, indicating that the Department of External Affairs would help make arrangements for such a visit by a delegation. We were thankful at last for this response.

Yesterday the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) journeyed to Ottawa to urge the fullest possible federal participation. This is what the Premier was mainly interested in, that this be a truly Canadian delegation, Mr. Speaker. And also, incidentally, he was there for a briefing session with officials.

As a result of the Premier's efforts on this matter he will be leading a truly Canadian delegation overseas.

MR. MARSHALL: This is proper insofar as the seal hunt is not only a Newfoundland concern, it is also very much a Canadian concern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: Both are one and the same, Mr. Speaker, despite what the hon. gentlemen there opposite may think.

Joining the Premier and the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) will be the hon. William Rompkey -

MR. SIMMS: Oh, Big Will!

MR. MARSHALL: - Newfoundland's Federal Cabinet representative, the hon. Pierre De Bane, the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Nova Scotia Conservative MP Lloyd Crouse, and a small number of senior government officials. The visit of the delegation is being kept at a low profile to enhance the businesslike nature of the visit and to avoid unnecessary and possible counterproductive media coverage on the European Continent. It is perhaps unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that this delegation's visit which is a classic example of federal/provincial co-operation -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: - a classic example of federal/provincial co-operation has to be kept at such a low key. However, the evidence of co-operation in this case must take a back seat to the protection of the livelihood of our Province's sealers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: The government will give no further details at this time as to where the Premier and the delegation are from time to time because we wish to have the visits to have the greatest degree of success possible. But I am sure the hon. Premier will be reporting in detail on the trip upon his return.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER(Russell): Order, please!  
The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: If the hon. gentlemen ever knew the facts of this trip, they would not be pounding their desks they would hang their heads in shame -

MR. CALLAN: That is right.

MR. NEARY: -that the Premier of this Province -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. NEARY: - that the Premier of this Province would run away from Newfoundland and Labrador when we have the biggest crisis in our whole political and economic history -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: - that he would run away from the Province.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is , is that a week ago-

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - last week it was suggested to the Premier of this Province by the federal government that last week the Ministers of The European Economic Council were meeting in Burssel's, and that the Premier of this Province could have went and accomplished in one day what it will take him now one week to accomplish.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, he could have done it in one day. But obviously the Premier wanted to get away from the heat of this House, from the barrage of criticism -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER(Russell): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - that is being aimed at the Premier and the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and his administration for creating a financial crisis in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, he could have very easily dispatched the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. Morgan) on this trip and accomplished the same thing. Now they have to visit all of the major capitals in Eastern Europe in order to accomplish what they could have done in one day.

And furthermore, if this was to be a bi-partisan committee, as the hon. House Leader (Mr. Marshall) indicated, then

MR. NEARY: why did they not take somebody from this side of the House? Why did it have to be two members from the other side of the House?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Because you were against the resolution.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it was our telegram, by the way, that motivated the Prime Minister into raising this matter while he was in Europe. So, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's efforts are a little bit late. And I would suspect that his main reason for wanting to travel and live in the posh hotels, the luxurious hotels in all the major capitals now of Europe is to get away from the heat of the day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. NEARY: He is down in the dumps, he cannot stand the criticism, and he is running away from the problems of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman can try all he wants to prop up the Premier while he is down, to keep up the morale of his troops on the other side, he can try that all he wants, he can play with words all he wants, but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CALLAN: Who is in Mount Scio House now, you?

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that it could have been done in one day in Brussels last week when the ministers met. Instead, the Premier - and, by the way, this was told to the Premier. When Mr. DeBane visited Newfoundland he said, Are you crazy, man, to go and visit all the major capitals in Europe? That is a waste of time. Why do you not go, he said, to Brussels?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER(Russell): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Why do you not go to Brussels, he was told, and meet them all in one day rather than waste taxpayer money travelling all over Europe which will accomplish nothing?

MR. CARTER: Do not be so foolish.

MR. TOBIN: Your colleagues are ashamed of you, boy.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my colleagues are proud, because they know -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: - my colleagues know, Mr. Speaker -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The Chair is finding it most difficult to hear the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), Plus the fact, as all hon. members know, there is a certain procedure that must be followed on Private Members' Day, that Question Period must commence by 3:30. I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition if he would conclude his remarks.

MR. NEARY: Well, Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are all in favour of saving the seal hunt.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh! Shame! Shame!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, this is merely a smoke screen to try to justify the Premier being out of the Province for a week while Newfoundland is in the midst of the worst financial and economic crisis in our whole history.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education. For years, Sir, Memorial University has been clamouring, and screaming, and yelling for more funds for this and for that, saying that they have not been able to carry on their programmes with the amounts of money they were receiving and thus requesting more,

MR. LUSH:

and now, Sir, this year's university budget has been slashed by \$3.2 million. That, Sir, is an astronomical amount of money, that is not peanuts and, Sir, everyone to whom I speak is puzzled and baffled as to how the university can carry on can operate efficiently having this amount of money slashed from its budget, 5 per cent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. LUSH: In view of this, Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if the minister can explain to the House how it is that Memorial University can carry on, can operate efficiently and effectively after having this astronomical amount of money slashed from this year's budget?

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

MS VERGE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would refer the hon. the member for Terra Nova to the estimates which indicate that the original forecast for the provincial government's grant-in-aid to the university was over \$63 million -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MS VERGE: - so that the base is quite substantial. This year, Mr. Speaker, the academic year started September, 1982, Memorial University saw an increase in total enrolment of over 13 per cent over the previous academic year. That increase in student attendance brought in almost a million dollars extra beyond what had been projected in tuition fees, so that accounts for one million dollars of the discrepancy, Mr. Speaker. Also, Memorial University, like other public sector employers, effected salary settlements with its staff below the increases forecast when the economic outlook was brighter and more in accordance with the government's wage restraint



MS VERGE: programme. That second measure saved something like a million dollars. The other savings realized by the university, Mr. Speaker, as have been announced publicly by the university President, Dr. Leslie Harris, have resulted in a conscientious effort throughout the university to trim discretionary spending. There has been no harmful effect on programme offerings at the university where learning and research are taking place and are flourishing with, as I said in the beginning, an overall student enrolment and participation of 13 per cent more than last year.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, that is the first time that I knew that an increase in enrolment would result in less expenditures. I always thought it was the -

MR. ROBERTS: Why we do not triple the enrolment and then (inaudible) -

MR. LUSH: You know it was to triple the enrollment, Mr. Speaker, and we will not have to give the university any money at all. But, Mr. Speaker, for years we on this side of the House have advocated that the university budget should be scrutinized in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. LUSH: And I suggest the fact that the university can have \$3 million cut from its budget without a word, without a whimper is certainly proof that the university's budget should be scrutinized in this House. Maybe, Mr. Speaker, we could have slashed millions before. But, Mr. Speaker, the question is the minister has identified a couple of areas where the university is going to be able to get by with this cut. She has identified the fact that there was extra enrollment bringing in \$1 million, and I responded to that, and secondly, a cut in salaries. I am wondering if the minister can indicate where else there might be cuts? Are there going to be cuts in the programmes or are there going to be cuts in some of the facilities at the university? Will the swimming pool, for example, be eliminated this year? What are the other areas that will be cut?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I have already answered the hon. member's question about the effect of the budget adjustments on university programmes. There will be and have been no affect on university programmes. The decrease in the operating grant-in-aid has been absorbed by the university through the measures that

MS.VERGE: I have indicated, chiefly, number one, offsetting extra revenues derived from the growth in student enrollment; number two, the discrepancy in salary increases between government's wage restraint programme inspired settlements lower than original forecasts when the economy appeared brighter, and, number three, Mr. Speaker, a variety of measures led by a wise and conscientious administration which is being responsible in managing the university.

SOME HON.MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

MR.LUSH: Mr. Speaker, the minister can use all the lame excuses that the minister wants but,

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that a \$3.2 million cut in any budget is a huge cut and it indicates -

MR. NEARY: 5 per cent.

MR. LUSH: 5 per cent, it is a huge cut to any organization. And if they can carry on, Mr. Speaker, it must indicate that somewhere in their budgetary preparations there was a lot of excess fat in there somewhere.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am wondering -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

MR. LUSH: The fact, Mr. Speaker, that they are able to absorb this this year, I am wondering whether there was a surplus from last year, or from other years? Was there a surplus? Does the univeristy have a surplus last year or the year before and they are able to go to this nest egg now and carry on?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is using the figure of \$3.2 million in a sensational way, creating a misleading impression. He is ommitting comparing that figure with the total government grant - in - aid projected in the Spring budget, which was \$63.6 million. Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite would do some primary school arithmetic and divide the \$3.2 million by the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS. VERGE: - \$63.6 million, the hon. member would realize that the percentage reduction levied on the university is very small indeed and is not out of line with percentage reductions which have been imposed on other sectors of government and government agencies.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, Memorial University by legislation is not allowed to have a surplus on current account and carry forward a surplus from year to year. And, Mr. Speaker, I have made the point that the percentage reduction in the provincial government grant in aid to Memorial is very small, and is consistent with reductions imposed on other government agencies. And I have also explained how the absolute amount of \$3.2 million was calculated.

AN HON. MEMBER: Do it again.

MS. VERGE: One last time. Through offsetting extra revenues from the increased student enrollment, from lower than projected salary increases for the faculty and staff - and, Mr. Speaker, it has to be borne in mind that about 75 per cent of the university's current account is spent on salaries, 75 per cent, so a lower than projected level of salary increases would yield a lot of savings - and, third, Mr. Speaker, the administration has been frugal and wise and responsible in a difficult time.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I am quite aware that it is 5 per cent and we are all aware that it is \$3.2 million and that is a lot of money, Mr. Speaker, that is a lot of money to be cut away from a budget without the university saying a word, without a wimper.

MR. T. LUSH: So, Mr. Speaker, the minister certainly has not cleared up in my mind, and I am sure for a large number of the people of this Province, how it is that the university can cut this \$3.2 million from its budget and still carry on with an effective and efficient programme, to carry on the way they that they have carried on in the past, so I am just wondering. The minister mentions, for example that the enrollment is up. I am just wondering if there is not some sort of an agreement with the university, some sort of a carry over for next year when the enrollment surely has to be down. Next year there will be no first year students entering the university, at least no great amount because people will be doing Grade XII, so next year is going to be a lean year. So is there some sort of an understanding here whereby the monies cut this year will be able to take care of next year when the enrollment is down?

MS. L. VERGE: Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the government is dealing with one fiscal year at a time. Having made the adjustments in the budget for the present fiscal year that were announced last Thursday, we are simultaneously working on the estimates for next year's budget. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite seem to fluctuate between denouncing the government for drawing blood and creating bankruptcies and inflicting deprivation and hardship on the one hand, and if that does not seem to work then the members opposite revert to implying extravagance and luxury. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would submit that the members opposite cannot have it both ways and they have to agree that the government has

MS. L. VERGE: struck a happy medium.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. T. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, talking about drawing blood, I am just wondering what time the minister is going to apologize to the Federation of School Boards because these were the people that mentioned that. These were not my words. We were talking about \$150,000 when the school boards mentioned that it was going to draw blood. But here we are talking about Memorial University and we are going to take \$3.2 million and it is not going to cut a tissue, Mr. Speaker, and that is the puzzling part. That is the puzzling part, that \$3.2 million is not going to cut a tissue in this institution, in an institution that, throughout the years, as I have said before, has been clamouring and yelling and requesting monies left, right and center but now they can cut \$3.2 million.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. WM. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, a point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! The hon. the President of the Council on a point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, I do not know if this is what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. S. Neary) was talking about when he talked about the Premier escaping the heat of the House, but I would indicate, Mr. Speaker, that this is about the fourth or fifth supplementary question of the hon. member and he is making a speech rather than asking the questions. He has already had his preamble. He is making comments.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, Please! As all hon. members know, it is the discretion of the Chair to permit two or three or a number

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): of supplementary questions.

Again, I would remind the hon. the member for Terra Nova (Mr. T. Lush) that he has had several supplementaries and he has been given some flexibility with his preamble and I would ask him to be more precise with his questions.



MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I was simply responding and pointing out that we were talking about two situations, \$150,000 to a school board and \$3.2 million to the university. So, Mr. Speaker, again developing the theory, or working from the theory that \$3.2 million is a large expenditure for an institution like Memorial to carry on without its effecting its programme, can the minister specifically - and a further point, Mr. Speaker, we are half way into the year. So what we are talking about really is a 10 per cent reduction, because we are talking about the next six months.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!  
Does the hon. the member for Terra Nova have a question?

MR. LUSH: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is about to come.

So, Mr. Speaker, the question is will there be any reduction in grants to students? I am talking about graduate students who normally get grants from Memorial University during their academic year. So as a result of this \$3.2 million, will there be any cuts in grants, particularly to graduate students at Memorial University?

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

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. I am glad for the opportunity to elaborate on assistance provided through public funds to students at Memorial University. Apart from grants paid directly by the University, which amount to a small percentage of overall assistance to our university students, the provincial government has one of the most generous schemes of student assistance in all

MS VERGE: Canada. And partly because of the increase in student enrollment at the university this year, Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that the Department of Education will be spending about \$4 million in student aid beyond what was originally predicted.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. HODDER: On a point of order, Mr.

Speaker.

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

MR. HODDER: What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. If the yahoos over there can keep quiet for a second, Mr. Speaker, the question asked by my colleague from Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) was about graduate students and the minister has gotten up and is talking about grants and student loans from the government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we have to obey the rules, then I submit that the minister must obey the rules as well.

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

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

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, Mr. Speaker, there are two points. First of all, the hon. member for Terra Nova asked that specific question about grants to graduate students.

MR. OTTENHEIMER: Whether the grants were going to be reduced.

MR. MARSHALL: - and I think that the -

MR. HODDER: Grants to students.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. MARSHALL: - hon. the Leader - not the leader, the member for Port au Port should not interfere with the hon. member for Terra Nova's desire to get a legitimate

MR. MARSHALL: answer to a question.

That is the first one.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MARSHALL: The second question is, Mr.

Speaker, you have made your ruling on the matter and I know the hon. member for Port au Port (Mr. Hodder) does not wish to challenge your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

Again I would remind hon. members there is a procedure, particularly on Private Members' Day, to be followed, when all the routine business has to be concluded by 4:00 p.m. If hon. members to my right have a number of questions, I would again ask them to be brief and I would certainly ask the hon. members to my left that their answers be relative and brief as well.

MR. SIMMS: A good ruling. A good ruling.

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

MS VERGE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will take advantage of the remaining time to comment on the member for Terra Nova's (Mr. Lush) preamble when he referred to the government reduction in operating grants to school boards.

The other day when I was replying to his question and his inflammatory adjectives, I made the point that the reduction in operating grants to school boards amounted to only a miniscule percentage of the overall grants. Since then, Mr. Speaker, I have gotten the numbers. The \$1 per pupil reduction totalling \$150,000 across the Province for the whole school year is actually 0.4 per cent of the total operating grants of \$35.5 million. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that 0.4 per cent reduction can bring the school boards on the edge of bankruptcy, then, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there is something warped and distorted in the mathematical and accounting calculations of the member opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, or was about to indicate in my preamble to my last question -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. LUSH: - this 5 per cent really represents 10 per cent, because six months of the year are really over. So 5 per cent in one year, over half the year, must be 10 per cent. So, Mr. Speaker, the question is, in view of this cut, will this affect any of the programmes at Memorial,

MR. LUSH: the research and developmental programmes, or will any of the departments be cut, the department of medicine or the department of engineering? Will any of these departments be cut? Will we see a reduction in the number of programmes being offered in any of the departments at Memorial?

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

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, again I have to comment on the inconsistency in the hon. member's questions. In his preamble this time, the member is trying to exaggerate the extent of the reduction in the operating grant to Memorial University by using an inflated percentage. I have already given the hon. member the arithmetic sum and the percentage deduction is about 5 per cent. I have already told the hon. member that there will not have to be any cut or deterioration in the programmes being offered at the university. And, of course, the hon. member, out of the other side of his mouth, seems to express some disappointment in no evidence of tissue being cut, let alone blood flowing.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is, government and the university, which have been consulting with each other throughout the fiscal year, have arrived at an amount and a percentage deduction which is reasonable and in keeping with the need to restrain spending.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a new question but for the same minister. I want to talk about the School Tax Authority for a moment and

MR. LUSH: I want to ask the minister to which department are the School Tax Authorities established throughout the Province responsible? Are they responsible to the Department of Education or are they responsible to the Department of Finance?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, School Tax Authorities which are established under legislation called The Local School Tax Act and which comprise as a majority of their members representatives of school boards and as a minority representatives of municipalities report to the Department of Education.

AN HON. MEMBER: Good answer!

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

MR. LUSH: In the event of an increase in the school tax to the people of this Province, do the School Tax Authorities assign this or levy this tax autonomously or unilaterally or do they have to get approval from the Department of Education or from the Cabinet in the event that they want to increase the levy of school taxes throughout the Province?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the Local School Tax Act governs the operation of School Tax Authorities and their ability to levy taxes, including increasing tax rates. According to the legislation, Mr. Speaker, School Tax Authorities themselves must initiate requests for tax rate increases and then there must be approval from the Minister of Education.

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

MR. LUSH: I want to be clear on this, Mr. Speaker. Is the minister saying that there can be no increase in taxes or no tax levied by the School Tax Authorities without first of all getting permission from the minister?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, that is essentially correct. The procedure followed is that the school boards for which School Tax Authorities exist submit their budget to their School Tax Authority the School Tax Authority then reaches a conclusion about the amount of revenue that has to be raised through school taxation. They further make a conclusion about whether the previous tax rates are sufficient or whether they would like an increase in the rates. If they want an increase in the rates, they must get permission of and approval of the Minister of Education.

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

MR.LUSH: I just want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that we clear up as to who has the final authority in approving a tax increase. Now the minister has said that it is the minister. Does she mean this literally, that it is the minister, or does the minister have to seek approval from the Cabinet?

MR.SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS.VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I have answered the question twice and I would refer the member to the Local School Tax Act. The Act says that it is the Minister of Education (Ms.Verge) who must approve any school tax authority rate increase and it is the minister and perhaps Cabinet - I cannot quite remember, who must give approval to the initial creation of a school tax authority. But with respect to the school tax authorities that now exist and have been operating, approval for a rate increase must be given by the minister according to the legislation.

MR.LUSH: Mr.Speaker.

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

MR.LUSH: In view of the fact, Mr.Speaker, that the school boards now have had \$150,000 of their monies taken away from them, I wonder if the minister has instructed the school tax authorities throughout the Province to increase their school taxes so that the school boards will be able to recoup on the one hand this money which the government is taking from them?

MR.SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS.VERGE: Mr.Speaker, as the member opposite well knows, the Minister of Education, whoever the incumbent might be, does not instruct school tax authorities with regard to the rates of taxation imposed.



MS.VERGE: School tax authorities, acting on advice received from their respective school boards, make decisions about requests forwarded to the Minister of Education for any change in their rates of taxation. And, Mr. Speaker, I have to point out again that the reduction in provincial government operating grants to school boards in the present school year, in the present fiscal year amounted to 0.4 per cent of the amount originally approved. Now, Mr. Speaker, that means that for every dollar taken back from a school board, \$249 was actually paid to the school boards. Mr. Speaker, in the initial Spring budget generous increases in operating grants to school boards were approved, in the basic formula of which the main component is a per pupil allocation and of which our other components relating to special needs of school districts there was an across the board increase of 12 per cent, 12 per cent, Mr. Speaker. But over and above that, Mr. Speaker, in the Spring budget there was a special fund of \$2.5 million which was distributed to the school boards with the greatest need with the payment being directly related to

MS. VERGE: each school board's interest payments with respect to debt incurred on previous school construction.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Vinland Integrated School Board, based in St. Anthony, about which we heard quite a lot last year, got according to the Spring budget about a 40 per cent increase in its operating grant over the previous year. And, Mr. Speaker, \$1 a pupil off those grants is a piddling decrease, and it is not going to hurt any of the school boards' operations. I am sure all school boards will be able to tighten their belts and easily absorb that miniscule reduction.

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

MR. LUSH: In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that boards will have \$150,000 taken from them which they cannot afford, and I remind the minister again of the comments by the Federation of School Boards which said of course it was going to draw blood, that it was really going to hurt - and that is not my phrase, that is what they said - in view of this, Mr. Speaker, I have heard rumblings around the Province that school boards are going to be forced to recoupe this money somewhere along the line and they are going to have to increase taxes. So my question to the minister is has she received any request from the school tax authorities throughout the Province so far for an increase in the school taxes?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I personally have dealt with budget requests for the following fiscal year of school tax authorities, which begin January 1, 1983, of I think three school tax authorities. And for two, no tax rate increase was requested and the budget as submitted

MS. VERGE: was approved and notification was given those authorities. In the case of the third, which was the Conception Bay South School Tax Authority, there was a request which was approved to begin a commercial property tax, and the rate approved is below the rate applied in a number of other school tax districts in the Province, and that has been communicated to the tax authority.

It is possible that some other tax authorities have submitted budget requests to officials of my department but they have not come to my attention yet.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell) I will take one other question from the hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Sir, in view of the fact that the people have now been taxed to death practically with the sales tax increased to 12 per cent and the tax on clothing and footwear, is the minister prepared to indicate to the people of this Province whether or not she intends to put a freeze on further increases in school taxes for the rest of this year? Because it is the people of this Province who are going to have to pay for this \$150,000 reduction to school boards. And the fact that they have been hit, Sir, in the hardest way possible with the retail sales tax, can the minister indicate to this House whether or not she intends to put a freeze on further increases in school taxes for the balance of this Year?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the people of the Province have always paid for the cost of education in the Province. That is really nothing new.

MS VERGE: And, Mr. Speaker, I intend to see that school boards receive enough money with which to maintain their programmes and operate successfully next year, but I also intend to see that school boards restrain their spending and minimize discretionary spending.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!  
The time for Question Period has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: It being Private Members' Day, we shall proceed with Motion No. 9, to be moved by the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: Mr. Speaker, this House over the last few years has had a number of discussions on the subject of radio and television and their relationship to the House.

This resolution which I today move is different in nature and in substance, to the best of my knowledge, from any resolution that has come before the House.

The resolution itself is very brief. Perhaps I could read it and thereby summarize what is in it. In its entirety, Mr. Speaker, the resolution says, "BE IT RESOLVED: a) That the House directs that the electronic media be given full and complete access to the proceedings of both the House and its committees; and b) That a Select Committee of three members be appointed to work out those steps which must be taken to enable the

MR. ROBERTS:                   electronic media to have such full and complete access."

Now, that is all the resolution is about, Mr. Speaker, to record a principle, to affirm a principle of full and complete access to the House by the electronic media, which is a word that, in this context at least, embraces the radio and the television stations in this Province, and, secondly, that a Select Committee of three, one of whom would be chosen from this side of the House and two of whom would be chosen from the other side, be appointed to work out the details.

Now, before I go any further, Mr. Speaker, let me lay once and for all the ghost of cost. When I first drafted this resolution, it was back when the session began after the election, when we came together in the month of May, as I recall it, and the motion, as with most Private Members' motions, was put down on opening day. I was not aware of the drastic

MR. ROBERTS:

restraints which we have now seen the government implement. Even so, I did not need to be a crystal ball gazer to be aware of the fact that we did not have a great deal of money in this Province to waste, although I do not think money spent on this would be a waste. But I drafted a resolution very deliberately and very carefully with the thought that the government of the Province, the people of the Province, will not have to bear any expense in implementing it.

MR. NEARY:

Right on!

MR. ROBERTS:

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, requires no expenditure from the Public Treasury. It will need no expenditure to implement the procedure or the principle which this resolution endorses. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, that any member of the House who votes against this resolution on the grounds of money, on the grounds that it will cost money and we cannot afford it, is either very mistaken in his understanding of the situation or is simply refusing to face honestly and squarely the issue which is raised by this resolution.

I will in a few moments outline in detail why it costs no money, how this resolution can be implemented at no cost to the Treasury of this Province. But let me first say, quite succinctly but quite simply, that this resolution raises an issue of principle and it is a major interest of principle.

The issue is clear cut, Mr.

Speaker. Are we as a House, the fifty-two of us gathered here in this Legislature, are we as a House prepared to do whatever can be properly done to allow the people of Newfoundland and Labrador to know what goes on in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. ROBERTS: -and to know what goes on without let or hinderance , to know what goes on as completely and as openly as can possibly be the case? And I would say, Mr. Speaker, with all diffidence and with all respect, that every member of the House must ask himself or ask herself this question, and I would say , Sir, that if he or she answers yes to that question then a vote in favour of the resolution ought to be cast by that member.

Are we prepared to do what can properly be done to make the proceedings of this House available, accessible to all of the people of this Province? That is what this resolution would do, Sir, and that is why I suggest an affirmative vote is a vote that ought to be cast by any member who genuinely believes, who genuinely accepts that principle. We would declare our support for the right of access by the electronic media and thereby make them equal to the print media. And, secondly, we would provide a mechanism to implement that declaration of principle.

Mr. Speaker, it has to be agreed that the print media and the

MR. ROBERTS:

electronic media are not equal today in their access to the proceedings of this Chamber.

It is true that either of them, either the print media on the one hand or the electronic media on the other, may send a reporter into the gallery and he or she may sit in all public sessions of this House, and that is effectively all sessions. Heavens knows why we have that secret private session at the beginning of each day's proceedings. We do for some absurd reason unknown to me.

MR. NEARY:

Tradition.

MR. ROBERTS:

Tradition! But no, it is not even a very old tradition, I say to my friend from LaPoile (Mr. Neary), it is as old as he and I are in this House. But although we are veterans and gray and wrinkled, it is not old in the parliamentary sense.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Decrepit.

MR. ROBERTS:

No, neither he nor I is decrepit, not compared to the government.

MR. NEARY:

Nor senile.

MR. ROBERTS:

And we are certainly not senile. I agree with him completely there too.

But, Mr. Speaker, while the print media and the electronic media may each send a reporter into that gallery, each does not have the same facility to use its technological ability to report and to convey what goes on in this House. The print media, of course, can because the print media, using the print medium, simply put on to paper, or now on to an electronic tape using the word processing machines, their story and that is then put on to a stereotype and printed and becomes the newspaper that we buy in the morning and in the evening here in St. John's.

The electronic media are



MR. ROBERTS: frustrated, The electronic media are prevented from using the technological abilities which they have to convey to the people of this Province what is going on in this House. They are not equal today.

New technology, Mr. Speaker, has been developed in the last two or three or four years which allows the electronic media to do their job without the traditional disruptions that have been the lot of those who have to suffer from the presence of particularly the television cameras.

Specifically, Mr. Speaker, the television medium, the television stations could cover this House today using existing light sources. We would not have to have the klieg lights, the flood lights that so annoy all of us in this House, on the occasions when we have them, and, also, without the cumbersome cameras that so clutter up the floor of the House on the rare occasions when they are allowed in here.

MR. NEARY: They can do it from up there.

MR. ROBERTS: They could do it, as my friend, the Opposition Leader (Mr. Neary) says, from the gallery, they could do it from any fixed spot in the House, using existing light and using small portable equipment. There would be no disruption to our proceedings, and certainly none to our dignity. We would not have any of the kind of inconveniences which we have all sustained when the Speech from the Throne and the Budget have, from time to time in the past, been televised by unanimous consent. And that is an important point. Because I do not want to see this House made into a flood-lit Chamber with the extraordinarily bright and hot lights which were needed in the past. Opening day was always thoroughly unpleasant because of those lights.

MR. ROBERTS:

And the gentlemen on the other side who sat behind the Premier, and those of us on this side who either sat, as I have on occasion, where the Opposition Leader sits, or sat next to him, were under the bath of these lights, a very uncomfortable, very unpleasant experience. That is not necessary anymore.

MR. ROBERTS:

So that is two reasons why we should allow the electronic media in. First of all, the simple criterion of equality, of treating all the media alike, allowing each of them to do its job. Secondly, the technology is present to allow that job to be done without disruption or inconvenience or in any way affecting the demeanor of what is going on in the House. We will not have cords running around the floor that we must trip over - we have all had to suffer from that in the past - or great huge cameras blocking the gangways, or the lights flooding down on the House. Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, it can be done without any cost because what I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, is that we simply say to the media, Ladies and gentlemen, if you wish to cover the House you may, but any cost involved is yours. If you need to buy a special camera, go buy it. The radios will not even need that. I am told all they need to do is to flick a switch and they can plug into the existing public address system - which has just been improved at whatever it cost and now presumably is a Cadillac system as befits the Cadillac government of this Province - they simply have to plug in and they can record it. They can take an extract, a tape of a minute or an hour of what goes on in this House. So, Mr. Speaker, there is no cost to the Treasury. I do not even think we have to change the lights. I do not profess to be expert in this at least - perhaps in a number of other areas. The Development Minister (Mr. Windsor) thinks we need - I am told that a new technology would allow this Chamber, as it is presently lit, to be used for television. I would say to him that if this motion is passed and the committee is appointed, this would obviously be one of the first questions. And I say to him that if

MR. ROBERTS: I am wrong, if the existing lights are not adequate, then I would rethink my position. So, Mr. Speaker, existing light is adequate, the new film - I may not be using the right word, the new reproduction processes - I am not sure if that is film or videotape, the new types of cameras are such that existing light is adequate. And so I would simply say that we can do it and we will also end the corridor scrums, the process of the long list of people going upstairs into the rooms allotted for the television, and also free up two rooms for use by the overcrowded civil servants or the overcrowded staff of the House, a not incidental advantage. But the great advantage, Mr. Speaker, and this is what I want to underline, is that every citizen of this Province, if this resolution is adopted, would have the ability to enjoy his or her right, to know what is going on in this House, to see and to hear. They do not have that right now, Sir, because the vast proportion of the people of this Province have no chance ever to come into this House and see what is happening.

Now, Sir, what about the shibboleth of editing. Somebody is bound to say this day or next week, 'Well, we will let them do it if they run it all, Run it all or run it none.'

MR. E. ROBERTS: Now, that is a specious and an illogical and a wrong philosophy. We do not say that to the print media, we do not say that now to the radio or the television. What does CBC, who provide by far the best coverage on a Province-wide basis, what do they use a night? Two minutes? Two and a half minutes to cover the House of Assembly, that kind of time? We say to them, 'Select the two or two and a half minutes. Do what you wish to report.' The print media can use what they want, an inch of column space or an acre of column space, as they wish. We do not restrict them. Why should we be the least bit fearful of allowing the electronic media to select the minute of the Minister of Education's answer that to them conveys the highlight of what she said in the House, or the thirty seconds of my speech that conveys it, or the infinitesimal part of a section that conveys what the gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. L. Simms) really has to say in the House? To me it is a complete shibboleth to reject access to the House by the electronic media on the ground that it will be edited. Of course it will. What kind of cruel and unnatural punishment would it be to inflict upon the people of this Province having to watch everything that goes on in here! No member of the House could stand it. I remember once in my time, of my years in this House, one member who used to come in at three of the clock and sit here until six - a colleague of mine, a fine man, a pillar of rectitude and responsibility, a fine gentleman and a fine Newfoundlander. How he ever managed to do it I will never know, but he would come in at three and he would be here until six. Not even a call of nature took him away. I have never in my life seen the like of it. But no other member of the House could put up with the punishment. Even Your Honour is spelled in the Chair

MR. E. ROBERTS: from time to time. There is a platoon, two or three of you, who come in, like a football game, a change in squads, and 'tis right 'tis so. The new Constitution of Canada prohibits cruel and unnatural punishment. It would be cruel and unnatural punishment indeed to make any person listen to everything that went on here all of the time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to that let me add that editing is the essence of journalism and I would simply say to those who say, 'run it all or run it none' that, aside from it being illogical and specious, are they not prepared to trust the fairness and the professionalism of the press in this Province? I am. I have been in public life now for a long period of time, going on twenty years, and I have certainly had reason, in my view, to complain about some of the things the press have said, and I guess I have reason to be grateful for some of the things they said, but I am quite prepared to trust their fairness and their ethical sense and their sense of professionalism, and that is all we are talking about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as part of the preparation for this, I surveyed the ten other legislatures in the Canada, the House of Commons and the nine other provinces. My time is coming very quickly to an end. I will simply list off what the other Legislatures now do:

MR. ROBERTS: Nova Scotia allows only radio access. It allows the press gallery to plug into the PA system and to record and to use it. Quebec, Saskatchewan and the House of Commons allow complete access at public expense. The former Speaker shakes his head.

MR. SIMMS: You said Saskatchewan.

MR. ROBERTS: I said Saskatchewan. I will table a letter, if the hon. gentleman wants it or I will send it over to him. It is a recent letter, they are allowing it as of this Fall. I said Saskatchewan and I checked. He shakes his head. Well, we will see.

MR. SIMMS: I will explain when I get up.

MR. ROBERTS: Well, he can explain if he wants. Alberta, Ontario and Manitoba do exactly what I suggest we do, allow the media access to the House. Only British Columbia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island lag behind. Only New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and British Columbia restrict, as we do, access to the media. So we are not launching on an untried experiment, we are treading on a well-trod path.

Now, I will table, Mr. Speaker, if one of the Pages could come by for a moment, a number of copies of a letter sent to me by Mr. Stefaniuk, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in Alberta. And since it is only two pages perhaps I could read it.

"Dear Mr. Roberts: I am pleased on behalf of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta to provide you with the information requested in your letter of 7 June. The Alberta House was, to the best of our knowledge, the first in Canada to provide electronic media coverage

MR. ROBERTS: to the people of Alberta.

The programme was initiated in 1972. Some rules were developed in 1973 and I enclose a copy for your information." The tabled copies have copies of it.

"At the present time, we allow one cable company to broadcast the entire proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta live during each day on which the House sits. Providing that there is not an evening sitting, that cable company rebroadcasts the afternoon proceedings for a second time each evening, otherwise evening sittings are broadcast as they occur. The cable company arranges transmittal of its broadcasts to Calgary" - the Legislature, of course, sits in Edmonton - "and to other cable companies covering the province. In addition to broadcasts by the cable company of the entire proceedings, we allow representatives of local television stations to place video taping equipment in designated locations on the floor of the House. The practice of this latter group is to attend the sittings of the Assembly daily for the routine and the Oral Question Period and, unless there is to be, in their estimation, a debate of major significance, they leave the House" - the same as our gallery does now. "The local stations are free to use whatever clips they deem desirable in reporting the House procedures in the course of local newscasts. Both the cable station and the local station representatives have access at any time to meetings of Committees of the Whole House" - Committees of the Whole, Committees of Supply. "Other committees which meet in the Legislative Assembly when the House is not sitting, e.g., the Public Accounts Committee, frequently enjoy electronic media coverage. Some committees, however,





MR. ROBERTS: "The cable station, which has three cameras in the House, is provided with space in the Legislature Building to accommodate its own auxiliary equipment and staff. In accommodating electronic media in our House, we provided only platforms on which the camera equipment could be located, and access to our House sound system. The cost to the taxpayer was therefore absolutely minimal. We did not enhance the normal lighting of the House whatsoever, and, while the various media representatives have expressed some dissatisfaction with the available lighting levels, we have not accommodated them with any type of enhanced lighting. They in turn upgraded their own equipment to deal with the limited lighting levels available to them.

"In the matter of restrictions there are virtually none. Our attitudes - and these are words which ought to commend themselves to any legislator in this Country.- "Our attitude being 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 be able to see and to hear." A good statement of a principle.

"Although," it goes on, "I was not in Alberta when the television in our Legislature came into being, I would suspect that initially there may have been an awareness of the presence of television cameras in the House, today it is an accepted fixture and little attention is paid to it." No grandstanding.

Mr. Speaker, that is a letter from the Clerk in Alberta telling of their experience.

Now, Sir, my time is nearly up. Let me conclude by saying something that I would suggest to

MR. ROBERTS: my friend from Grand Falls  
(Mr. Simms), who I assume is to respond for the government  
on this, and I hope he will be so open-minded as to accept  
the resolution, and then let us see if it can be implemented.  
But whether it is or not, I would say to him, he is a student  
of parliamentary history -

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please! I have to inform  
the hon. member that his time has now elapsed.

MR. ROBERTS: May I have a moment or two by  
leave to conclude?

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member have leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. SPEAKER: By leave.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, Sir, I shall be very  
brief.

This is a reform which will come.  
The only issue is whether it will come in 1982 or '83 or  
whether it will come further down the line. That is the  
only question. Members have it in their power to move  
forward or to hold us back in this House.

Originally in England, and my  
friend the former Speaker will confirm this, there were  
no reporters allowed in the House. Then they moved forward;  
300 or 400 years past only the Hansard reporters were allowed.  
Then they moved to the point where the print media, the  
only media there was, was allowed to report. And now they  
have in the House of Commons in the United Kingdom a system  
comparable to the ones I am suggesting, unlimited access  
by the electronic media.

We are going to see it in this House,  
the only question is whether we see it now or later. We have  
it in our power, Mr. Speaker, to enable every home in

MR. ROBERTS: Newfoundland and Labrador to have a better knowledge of what we do in this House. We have it in our power to take a very important step to make democracy work better in this Province. We have nothing to hide in the House. We have nothing to fear from publicity. Logic and reason both demand, I suggest,

MR. ROBERTS:

Sir, that we let the people whose House this is know what goes on here. This resolution, Sir, will bring that about or help to bring it about materially, and without cost to the Province. I ask, Sir, for the support of all members for it. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): The hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my opinion on this particular resolution and I am sure even the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) would insist that this particular resolution is probably a resolution of opinion more than anything else because we each have our own individual opinions on this particular issue.

We should make no mistake about it that the resolution does call for full coverage by the electronic media of this House. Full coverage, full and complete access, so it is full coverage of the House of Assembly in this particular Legislature.

Now, Mr. Speaker, during my term as Speaker of the House I did have the opportunity on numerous occasions to discuss this very issue with my counterparts from across Canada. It obviously would be a favourite topic of discussion for any Speaker in any Legislature. In addition to that, I had the opportunity to discuss the issue and debate the issue, or hear debate on the issue, as it was discussed and debated at various Parliamentary seminars, and indeed as Speaker, when I was Speaker, I had the opportunity to discuss the issue with members of this House of Assembly and former members, and members of the Press Gallery who were members of

MR. SIMMS: the Press Gallery at least when I happened to be Speaker.

So it is not an issue that I have taken lightly. I have certainly given it a considerable amount of thought over a period of time and tried to weigh the pros and cons of the actual principle which is to provide for full coverage of the Legislative Assembly. And indeed in recent years we would all be aware that a number of democratic countries throughout the world have, with increasing frequency, I suggest, debated this very question of whether or not proceedings of their Legislative House should be recorded live by radio and television. And Canada, of course, is one such country, as we all know, and in the Provinces and the two Territories, and indeed even in the Parliament of Canada, this issue is one that is being constantly debated and probed. I do not think there is any doubt about it.

And today we do have a Private Members' resolution before us which, if passed, would allow television coverage of the House of Assembly.

MR. SIMMS: And at first glance, perhaps, and on the surface, the resolution may appear to be sound and an objective one, but hardly original, Mr. Speaker, I suggest. Undoubtedly there could be many arguments that could be found to allow for live electronic media coverage of any Legislative Assembly, but that, Mr. Speaker, is not to say that there are also a number of sound and objective arguments which could and which should be used against this particular idea.

I want to say at the beginning that my comments, Mr. Speaker, will reflect strongly the opinions of my constituents whom I have discussed this issue with on a number of occasions, and their response I can assure you has been overwhelmingly negative.

All across Canada, and even in this particular House of Assembly, I think we have witnessed the introduction of live television coverage of one type or another. We have also witnessed, I think, a gradual deterioration of parliamentary tradition and protocol as a result of it.

And there are many vivid examples to which we can look when trying to emphasize that particular point. You can look to Australia and New Zealand, the United Kingdom, as my friend for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) mentioned, and you can look to the United States. But that is not really necessary. Because to best illustrate what television has done, in my opinion, to parliamentary tradition and protocol, we only have to look in our own backyard and take a close look at the Canadian House of Commons as a perfect example in point.

Anyone who has watched the live television debates from the House of Commons can surely attest to the fact that television has taken over the operation of that particular House. Members are

MR. SIMMS: constantly playing to the cameras. And while some people might find this to be amusing, and maybe even entertaining, most people tell me that they are losing respect for the great institution of parliament.

To better understand this point, Mr. Speaker, let me review just briefly the history of live television coverage in the House of Commons:

In October of 1977, live cameras were turned on for the first time. This was not, however, the result of an instant decision by the government at the time, but it was rather the end result of a long process, characterized chiefly by indecision and hesitancy. Several Private Members' resolutions, such as the one we have before us today, had been debated throughout the 1960s, and in 1970 the Government of Canada finally gave in and referred the matter to the Standing Committee on Procedures and Organization.

But even then, Mr. Speaker, it was not until January of 1977, seven years later, after many delays, that the House finally passed a government sponsored motion which approved broadcasting in principle. And today, after five full years of operation,



MR. L. SIMMS: Mr. Speaker, and having opened up the system, so to speak, to allow for more direct communication between the member of parliament and the public, a great majority of Canadians still do not have complete and unrestricted access to live television coverage in the House of Commons. This live coverage, as we all know, is picked up by the major networks and the used clips, nightly news reports, weekend round-up reports and the debates, of course, are shown by some cable television companies, if they wish to carry it. So, Canadians living in rural areas are not even given the privilege of watching their members of parliament. In other words, the service is not extended to the great majority of Canadians. And when it is available on a limited basis, I think it is a perfect example of discrimination at its worst. Here in this province the media have access to do live interviews with MHAs and in the opinion of those that I have spoken to, at least, Mr. Speaker, and in my own opinion, I believe that to be sufficient.

What has been the reaction to this live coverage of the House of Commons by those who are able to watch the live debates? It is an interesting response, Mr. Speaker. Most of the reaction, it seems to me, has come mostly from the members of parliament, themselves, or from the journalists who cover the House of Commons. I did a little research, Mr. Speaker, to try to get a better understanding, and I found that the largest percentage of people who have access to live television coverage of the House of Commons, 52 per cent in fact, have never bothered to watch live television debates. This result, incidentally, was released in a January 1978 survey conducted by the School of Journalism, Carlton University, at the height of



MR. SIMMS: their opinion of Parliament remained one of indifference. And somewhat more surprising and even more distressing perhaps, especially for our friends who are in favour of live coverage, was the fact that 33 per cent, a full one-third, had a lower opinion of Parliament after having been exposed to it on television.

These findings obviously must be depressing to those who are in support. But the figures, I would suggest, are quite accurate and have been supported and confirmed, incidentally, by another survey conducted by Gallup, who are people that we are all familiar with, of course. And that was done shortly thereafter. And in that survey 32 per cent again, almost one full third, had a very negative reaction to what they saw. And again the largest percentage, 51 per cent, showed a lack of interest.

Now, Mr. Speaker, based on those figures alone we can only conclude that those who believe that live televised Parliament would produce a stronger more credible Parliament should really re-consider their position, as has a local St. John's City councillor, incidentally, who was fully in favour of allowing the television cameras into City Hall to cover their debates and has now seen a lot of reasons why he does not support the idea of live coverage and is intending, as I understand it, even to introduce a motion to that affect. So he obviously re-considered his position.

So much for viewer participation. There are a number of other arguments, Mr. Speaker, which can and should be used when we consider this resolution. There is not enough interest in the proceedings of any Legislature to justify the expense that could be associated with T.V. equipment.

MR. NEARY: No expense.

MR. SIMMS: Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, what the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) has said is fine and dandy, but make no mistake about it, that would be the start. There would obviously have to be expense associated with it and the hon. members opposite know it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SIMMS: In any event, another argument can be found in the fact that live televised House of Assembly would, in my opinion, evolve from what it is supposed to be, a work shop to a theatre as MHAs jockey back and forth for prime viewing time, and in the process intentionally or unintentionally become flamboyant, interrupt others in order to get on camera, and generally put on a show for the viewers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SIMMS: Members opposite can shout all they want, but they know full well that those things can and do happen. <sup>Hon</sup>. members know it.

MR. SIMMS: Still another argument, Mr. Speaker, against it is that it is suggested by many broadcasters, themselves members of parliament, that broadcasters sometimes do tend to be biased in selecting and editing their materials -

MR. HODDER: You do not know what you are saying.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order!

MR. SIMMS: - when trying to give account of the day's proceedings.

MR. WARREN: (Inaudible) from the minister.

MR. SIMMS: Hon, members opposite will have their opportunity to express their opinions, and I hope they will give me the same courtesy.

Mr. Speaker, these are not the only arguments that come to mind. We must also ask ourselves other questions. Is the nature of television, for example, as a medium of communications compatible with the nature of this hon. House as an institution in its own right? Whether or not television coverage of this House would help or would hinder the general public in understanding or participating in the Newfoundland political system. These are questions, Mr. Speaker, I suggest, rarely addressed when this particular issue is debated.

The House of Assembly is a forum for debate, and as well it is the centre of a political system which is based on the supremacy of parliament, and as such we cannot ignore the political questions which must be addressed when we consider television coverage of the House.

The first political consideration, Mr. Speaker, must be television's day to day interest in the

MR. SIMMS:

proceedings.

Secondly we must consider the differences between the visual and audio impact of television. And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, we must consider the degree of distortion in T.V. coverage of what is actually happening.

I believe that the political institution is reduced in stature and importance through the very structure of the electronic media. One day this House of Assembly may be all important to the media; the next day it might be the money markets of New York or Toronto, and the next day, of course, it could very well be the crises in the Middle East.

But I suggest, Mr. Speaker, and I know hon. members would agree, that all aspects of debate and procedure in this Legislature are of equal importance; and based on traditions and protocol established in any Legislative Assembly, the business of the House is far too important to be left to the whims of any electronic media.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), quite rightly, went through the stages that most other provinces have set for electronic coverage, or whatever, and he pointed out quite correctly that we are not by any means the only province in Canada which does not presently allow full and unrestricted media coverage of our Legislature. Of the ten provinces and two territories, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta allow television crews to film their proceedings. All other remaining provinces, with the exception of Saskatchewan, by the way, which I will deal with in just a minute, do allow for the live coverage of special events such as the opening of an assembly, the Speech from the Throne, the Budget Speech and those sorts of things. The press, however, are granted privileges subject to certain rules and conditions set out in our House rules, and at the discretion of the

MR. SIMMS:

Speaker, and this, I believe,

Mr. Speaker, is the way it should remain.

MR. SIMMS: With respect to Saskatchewan, what the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) is not aware of, of course, is that they have run into all kinds of technical problems and they have run into problems with respect to the renovations to their Assembly and have now postponed the introduction of their television coverage until next Spring, according to information I received this morning.

MR. ROBERTS: They are going to bring it in. And at their cost.

MR. SIMMS: Oh, yes. They did a substantial survey and visited the United Kingdom and other jurisdictions.

MR. ROBERTS: They are going to bring it in on the Ontario model - not the Ontario model, on the House of Commons model.

MR. SIMMS: That is right. They are paying for the cost. In fact, the cost, as a result of the major renovations that will be done to their Assembly, will be somewhere in the area of \$1.3 million to \$1.4 million and that does not include the salary costs of technicians and producers who are going to -

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible) plus the yearly figure of salary costs.

MR. SIMMS: Yes, but I suggest then if we were to translate that to our own situation here, you are probably talking, if we were to do it on the basis of the way Saskatchewan does it, probably a \$2 million expenditure at the very least, perhaps more.

MR. ROBERTS: Unless we had the committee we would not know, would we?

MR. SIMMS: Well, I am not sure.

MR. ROBERTS: We are flying blind.

MR. SIMMS: Well, everybody has his opinion,



MR. SIMMS: I guess, on that particular matter and I am trying to express mine. Mine is that if we went that route, of course, that that would be a totally unnecessary service which still would not be available to the majority.

MR. ROBERTS: (Inaudible) round to fight on.

MR. SIMMS: You know, this is one argument that I have put forth, but what about the other six or seven arguments that I have put forth?

MR. ROBERTS: I will deal with those when the rebuttal comes.

MR. SIMMS: Good, I hope so.

MR. ROBERTS: The minister can possess his soul in patience, as a granny would tell him.

MR. SIMMS: In any event, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the hon. the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) might very well say that there will be no cost associated with what he is suggesting in his resolution; I suggest that that is fine to say now but realistically, there are going to be all kinds of complaints and there are going to have to be improvements to the Chamber, renovations and everything else. Make no mistake about it, it is going to cost a lot of money, and I do not think that in these times of economic restraint we should even be interested in pursuing this particular idea. We must constantly be aware, Mr. Speaker, of the effects of the technology that surrounds us. The media shapes us and we never know how until they have been replaced themselves by some other man-made marvels. The House, I suggest, is an environment unto itself, and we, as members of this House, must be concerned about the effects of the introduction of any medium into this Chamber. The House of Assembly, equipped with television,

MR. SIMMS: will have an environment beyond this Chamber, in my opinion. The technology that could bring our proceedings to the public would change this House and, as the protectors of Parliamentary tradition and protocol, Mr. Speaker, I submit that we cannot and we must not allow that to happen. I therefore urge all hon. members to allow common sense to prevail and vote against this resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the reaction from the government benches was very weak

MR. NEARY: when the hon. gentleman took his seat, because if we ever heard a Tory speech in this House, Mr. Speaker, we just heard one from the hon. gentleman who had to dig pretty deep, who had to dig down pretty deep and who had to scratch pretty hard to try to get a rebuttal to the speech made by my hon. colleague the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) in asking for support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I have to congratulate the member for the Strait of Belle Isle for doing his homework on this resolution. He made an outstanding presentation to the House today, it was indefensible. The minister who was set up to be the spokesman for the government side of the House failed miserably. He was unable to deliver, he did not have his facts straight and he used very weak and vague arguments. And I do not believe the hon. gentleman believed what he was saying. I do not think his heart was into it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ROBERTS: (inaudible) because if his heart was his head was not.

MR. NEARY: His head certainly was not. But it would appear from observing the hon. gentleman, how nervous and how shaky and how his voice quivered, Mr. Speaker, that he was scratching pretty hard to - you see what the hon. gentleman had to do, Mr. Speaker, he had to try and convince his own side of the House to vote against this resolution.

MR. ROBERTS: He had to convince himself first.

MR. NEARY: First of all he had to convince himself. And he knew that this was a difficult task, probably one of the most difficult tasks that was ever

MR. NEARY: placed on the shoulders of a minister, to get up and try to defend the government side of the House. It was indefensible. And the minister did not answer any of the points that were raised by my hon. colleague. The hon. gentleman made, Mr. Speaker, a Tory speech. And I hate to have to bring partisan politics into debate, but that is the difference between Liberalism and Toryism. That is the difference. We just saw it. If there was ever an example in this House between Toryism and Liberalism here it is, we are seeing it today.

MR. STAGG: They have Liberals in Alberta, have they not?

MR. ROBERTS: No, they have a free spirited government unlike we have here, and they also have one that is successful, unlike the one we have here.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is a shame, because hon. members are doing the people of this Province of Newfoundland and Labrador a grave injustice by not approving of this resolution which does two things: The resolution asks to have a committee established - you cannot be any fairer than that -

MR. NEARY:                   , have a committee established to look into the implications and the ramifications of having live coverage of the House, and at the same time the resolution asks to give the media access to this House with their cameras and their microphones. And, Mr. Speaker, let it go on the record that this government is saying, "No. No." They are turning down the right for the media to have access to this House. That is what they are doing. And in doing so, Mr. Speaker, they are denying the people of this Province the right that they have. It is not a privilege it is a right to see what goes on in the people's House, to listen to the debates, to watch their elected representatives in action, to see what they are doing in the House, to hear what laws are being made, to hear what taxes are being imposed on people, to hear the Budget Speech, to hear the Throne Speech, to hear the government's plans for development or lack of plans for development of this Province, to hear what the Opposition have to say about these matters.

Mr. Speaker, what could be more basic, what could be more useful than for the members of this House to give the media access so that people could see what goes on in their House. And if we followed the logic that was just given to us by the minister who was speaking for the government, who gave us statistics that were four years old, who told us that only 52 per cent of those polled watched the televised broadcast from the House of Commons, if we used his logic - Mr. Speaker, only 1 per cent or less of the people of this Province have ever come in and actually seen this House in action. If we followed the hon. gentleman's logic we would close down the gallery over our heads, close up the House. There would be no need of it.

MR. HODDER: That is what the Premier would like.

MR. NEARY: I know that is what they would like. But, Mr. Speaker, the whole argument put forward by the hon. gentleman was illogical, very weak. There was certainly no logic in it, not 1 per cent of the people have ever bothered to come into this House to watch the House in action. So that does not mean that we close the galleries. Mr. Speaker, we open the galleries every day, do we not? We leave the public galleries open in case people, like the people who are sitting up over the clock here now, in case people have interest enough to come in to hear what is happening in this House. We leave the doors of the public galleries open because this is the people's House. They may not agree with what they hear and see in the House, but at least they have the right to come in if they so desire, and watch the House of Assembly in action.

But, Mr. Speaker, not everyone in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador can afford to come into the galleries

MR. S. NEARY:

as the four gentlemen who are sitting behind the clock today. Not everybody has that opportunity.

MR. G. TOBIN:

Not everybody has the right to see the House of Commons either.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, no, but that is a very poor argument against it. This whole debate is not whether we have 100 per cent television coverage throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. What we are saying is that where we do have the coverage, the people should have the right to turn on the channel and to watch the news and see clips from the House of Assembly on the newscasts, on what actually transpires in this House. They should have that right. This government is denying the people of this Province a basic democratic right.

MR. L. SIMMS:

There are enough soap operas on now.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, if people want to watch the soap operas, that is their right and their privilege. If they do not want to watch the House of Assembly on cable, if they do not want to watch the House of Commons, if they do not want to watch the news -

MR. SIMMS:

On cable? That will cost you \$2 million.

MR. NEARY:

The House of Commons? If they do not want to watch the House of Commons on cable, which is on now -

MR. SIMMS:

You said the House of Assembly.

MR. NEARY:

No, I did not. I said the House of Commons. The hon. gentleman is not listening.

If they do not want to watch the House of Commons on cable, or they do not want to watch Question Period, which is one of the most interesting programmes from the House of Commons on every Sunday, if they do not

MR. S. NEARY: want to watch it they can turn to another channel. Mr. Speaker, there may be some people who want to know what is going on in their House, especially what we have seen in the last week or so. I can see why the hon. gentleman -

MR. SIMMS: This debate brought out a big crowd did it not?

MR. NEARY: - is negative in this matter.

MR. G. TOBIN: Is that your description?

MR. SIMMS: Never mind attacking me now.

MR. NEARY: No. I can see why the hon. gentleman is negative. The hon. gentleman is speaking for the government.

MR. SIMMS: That is your opinion.

MR. NEARY: Yes. The hon. gentleman is speaking for the government. And I can see why he is being negative.

MR. SIMMS: And you are speaking for the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: That is right, I am. And I am drawing the distinction.

MR. L. SIMMS: And you are usually negative.

MR. NEARY: I am drawing the distinction between Liberalism and Toryism.

MR. SIMMS: Oh! Oh! And you are that distinction (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman made one of the -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. gentleman was speaking, I did not interrupt him.

AN HON. MEMBER: No! No!

MR. NEARY: If we had the television cameras



MR. S. NEARY: in the House now, and the microphones, we would find out where the ignoramuses are.

MR. SIMMS: Well, Sir, did you not interrupt me?

MR. NEARY: No, I did not interrupt the hon. gentleman.

MR. SIMMS: Oh my, my!

MR. NEARY: Just to ask a question, that is all.

MR. G. TOBIN: Okay. Can the people in the (inaudible) in the House of Commons?

MR. NEARY: Yes, they can.

MR. TOBIN: (Inaudible) they can.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, and if they want to - but that has nothing to do with the question under debate, has nothing at all to do with it. That is a different subject altogether. The fact of the matter is, that where you have radio and television and the electronic media, people should have the right, there should be a right for them

MR. NEARY: to see the people's House in action, in this day and age of technology.

MR. TOBIN: You want to get your (inaudible)

MR. NEARY: We have not kept up with the times, we have not kept abreast of the times. Mr. Speaker, it does not affect me at all, it affects every member of this House.

And the hon. gentleman can try all he wants in his little buttoned-down, narrow-minded way to say that I am looking for publicity, or the member for Ferryland (Mr. Power) is looking for publicity, that has nothing at all to do with it. There is a very big principle involved here. And hon. gentlemen can try all they like to weasel their way out of it, they know they have got themselves boxed into a corner on this matter.

MR. TOBIN: I did not say you were looking for publicity.

MR. NEARY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SIMMS: What is your position, boy?

MR. NEARY: It has nothing to do with me or individual members of this House, it has to do with a principle. And the principle involved is this; my hon. friend brought in a resolution, a two-pronged resolution, one, asking to give the media access to this House at no expense to the general public, at no expense to the taxpayer.

MR. SIMMS: That is really (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: I was in the Ontario Legislature recently -

MR. \_\_\_\_\_: So was I.

MR. NEARY: - in Queen's Park, and I noticed the television cameras; you could hardly see them, you would not know they were there. There was no acting going on, there is no acting going on in the House of Commons. After the first day or two -

MR. DOYLE: Everybody is playing up to the cameras.

MR. NEARY: Ah, everybody playing up to the cameras. Mr. Speaker, just listen to the weak, weasely, mealy-mouthed arguments that they have. Members playing up to the cameras, playing up to the media.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: The people do not say that.

MR. SIMMS: People do say it.

MR. DOYLE: The people would not want to see that.

MR. NEARY: Oh, the people would not want to see it.

I am sure the hon. gentleman would not want his constituents to see him in action in this House. The hon. gentleman only made one speech since he has been here in the last four or five years and that was the other day when he introduced a bill that could only cause harm and controversy.

MR. DINN: You have just made one, but you have made it fifty times.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, look let us be realistic about this, let us be perfectly frank and honest about it. The reason hon. gentlemen will not give the electronic media access to the House is because they are afraid, they are frightened, they are afraid. They have too much to hide, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I am sure -

MR. TOBIN: Now what do I have to hide?

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman has a lot to hide. If his constituents could only see the hon. gentleman's behaviour since he came into this House, I would suggest that the hon. gentleman would not only crawl into a hole but he would take the hole in with him.

MR. TOBIN: Do you know what the people of LaPoile would say? I wish (inaudible).

MR. NEARY:                   The hon. gentleman who was  
trying to prop up the members on the other side, who is  
using very weak -

MR. YOUNG:                   You will never make a leader.

MR. NEARY:                   - Mr. Speaker, can you imagine  
the people of Harbour Grace -

MR. NEARY:

if they ever saw our friendly undertaker in action in this House? What would they say and what would they think, Mr. Speaker? What would they think?

MR. TOBIN:

He would be elected for life.

MR. SIMMS:

Get back to the resolution now.

MR. NEARY:

Well, if they keep interrupting, I will keep responding,

I would suspect that is the real reason why the hon. gentleman asked his side of the House to vote against this resolution. The resolution is fair in every respect. It was well presented, there is no argument against it, it is indefensible. Hon. gentlemen are scared and frightened and afraid to give the media access to the people's House so that the people can see what goes on. They are denying the people that right. They are keeping that right away from the people.

MR. SIMMS:

That has got a heart in it.

MR. NEARY:

I have certainly got my heart in it! Mr. Speaker, they are keeping it away, and all the hon. gentleman did in his argument that was put forward to support the government side was insult the intelligence of the Newfoundland people. The hon. gentleman said there is not enough interest and then he asked the question would it help or hinder the House. Would it help or hinder the people to understand?

MR. SIMMS:

Did you consider that?

MR. NEARY:

I certainly did consider it and I think the hon. gentleman's remarks in that regard were an insult to the intelligence of the people of this Province.

MR. SIMMS:

You just told me you considered it.

MR. NEARY:

I considered it, sure.

MR. SIMMS: Well, that is what I did and what I said.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it would only help, I cannot see how it could hinder. The hon. gentleman said it would hinder the progress of this House.

MR. SIMMS: I did not.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman certainly did.

MR. SIMMS: I did not.

MR. NEARY: "Would it help or hinder?" he said, and then he went on to try to -

MR. SIMMS: I simply asked would it help or would it hinder.

MR. NEARY: Yes, and then he went on to say that it would hinder. He said, "There is not enough interest." Well, there is not enough interest for people to come into the galleries. Do we close down the public galleries because -

MR. SIMMS: That is what the people said, there was not enough interest.

MR. NEARY: The people said?

MR. SIMMS: In a survey.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman - I would like to see his survey, how many people he surveyed in his district.

AN HON. MEMBER: Forty-eight per cent of the people is far more than we have sitting around here.

MR. NEARY: That is right.

MR. HODDER: Hang your head in shame, boy! Go and crawl away under a rock!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I think it is a gross insult to the intelligence of the people of this Province. Not all the people would look at the House of Assembly or look at the House of Commons all at one time,

MR. NEARY: but they should have the right to do it if they want to.

Mr. Speaker, it is too bad that the hon. gentleman drew the battle lines on this issue. It is the kind of an issue, I think, that requires a Committee of the House.

MR. SIMMS: Another committee.

MR. NEARY: Of course, another committee.

MR. NEARY: What better service could we provide for the people of this Province than to give them a day to day, play by play, blow by blow account of what goes on in this House? What better service could we do the people of this Province?

And now, Mr. Speaker, we probably know the real reason why we could not get it before. Here we have a former Speaker - we were dealing through the Speaker before, we were dealing through that Speaker, to try to get the -

MR. SIMMS: You have never spoken to me about it.

MR. NEARY: Oh, I beg your pardon. We wrote the hon. gentleman letters about it. And we wrote the Premier about it. I wrote the Premier last year. We wrote the hon. gentleman letters.

MR. SIMMS: You did?

MR. NEARY: Yes, well -

MR. MORGAN: Your party did.

MR. NEARY: My party did. My caucus did. Mr. Speaker, we are now finding out that the dice were loaded, the cards were stacked against us, because even the Speaker of that day was against giving the media access to the Legislature.

MR. SIMMS: You did not listen to me.

MR. NEARY: Oh, I certainly did listen to it. The statistics the hon. gentleman gave were four years old.

MR. SIMMS: At the height of the construction of the coverage in the House of Commons (inaudible).

MR. NEARY: And, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman by the way is not quite correct about what is happening in Saskatchewan. In Saskatchewan it says, "With regard to media access to the legislative system, cablecastors, and



MR. NEARY:                   broadcasters may run live  
or delayed broadcasts of all portions of the daily  
proceedings, and they can do it at their own expense. And  
I believe that the cost that the hon. gentleman was  
talking about.

MR. SIMMS:                   That is why they are bringing in -

MR. NEARY:                   They are bringing it in this  
Fall, according to a letter that was written to my colleague.  
On June 15, 1982, they said that "the decision had been taken  
to bring in television into the House of Assembly, radio  
and television, this Fall..

MR. SIMMS:                   \$1.5 million.

MR. NEARY:                   That is to change the Hansard  
system and the recording system and to bring up the  
systems in the House.

MR. SIMMS:                   I say it is not coming in this  
Fall.

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is confused.  
He should read this letter.

MR. SIMMS: They are not bringing it in  
until the Spring, by the way, 'Steve'!

MR. NEARY: Well, maybe they are not bringing  
it in until the Spring, but the main thing is they are  
bringing it in. Now, why should Newfoundland be the  
last? Do we always have to be the last in everything?  
Are we going to be the last again, Mr. Speaker, to update  
this House? Are we going to be the last? Well, I can  
tell you this, Mr. Speaker, they can make all the Tory  
speeches they want, and they can articulate all the  
Tory philosophy they want, but I can guarantee you this,  
just as true as I am standing on the floor of this  
House, that if we get a Liberal government in this Province  
tomorrow, next month, next year or two or three years  
from now, we will give the people of this Province access  
to this House through the electronic media. That is a  
part of the Liberal platform, that is a part of the  
Liberal philosophy.

MR. TOBIN: Why did you not bring it in before?

MR. NEARY: As a matter of fact we allowed it to  
come into the Public Accounts Committee and then the Tories  
voted it out, the Deputy Speaker.

MR. TOBIN: You threw it out during the budget.

MR. NEARY: We allowed the cameras and the microphones  
to do the Public Accounts and then the Tories voted it out.

MR. TOBIN: When you were a part of the  
government why did you not bring it in the House?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I wish that the  
ignoramus from the Burin Peninsula would just restrain

MR. NEARY: himself for a moment and allow me to finish. Just imagine if the television cameras were here and could see the hon. gentleman.

MR. WARREN: That is why.

MR. HODDER: That is why they will not allow the cameras in?

MR. NEARY: The fact of the matter is the main reason why cameras and microphones are not allowed in this House is because hon. gentlemen are too scared, they are afraid, they have too much to hide. And, the Premier especially wants to manage the media. The Premier does not actually want the people to see what is happening. He wants to play with words, he wants to get his propaganda machine down on the eight floor, as we saw happen today when the Government House Leader (Mr. Marshall) got up and made a Ministerial Statement that the Premier was leading a delegation to Europe. That is an outright lie, that is a lie published, printed by the propaganda people down in the Premier's office.

MR. SPEAKER (Dr. McNicholas): Order, please! The hon. member's time is up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave. By leave.

MR. NEARY: By leave. So obviously, Mr. Speaker, this crowd do not want the people to see what goes on in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT: First of all, I would like to compliment the member for Grand Falls, the Minister of Culture Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms),

MR. BUTT: on putting forward what I believe to be an excellent argument against having electronic coverage in the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BUTT: Now, I can hardly believe my ears, because if this is the same Leader of the Opposition who last year refused to have the Budget Debate televised in this House - is it not a fact that the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) last year -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: OH, oh!

MR. BUTT: No, the hon. Leader of the Opposition last year refused to -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (AYLWARD): Order, please!

MR. BUTT: - have television coverage in this House.

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

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would hate to see the hon. gentleman either deliberately or out of ignorance mislead the House. The hon. gentleman is now in the process of misleading the House which is unparliamentary. Last Spring, when the matter arose about televising the Budget and the Throne Speech, we were quite willing to give the government our approval - as a matter of fact, the Premier has it in writing - to televise this House provided that the daily proceedings of the House would be broadcast, there would be live coverage. The government said, "No". Now, that is the truth of the matter. So just in case the hon. gentleman is going to dig a hole for himself, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that you ask the hon. gentleman to withdraw. If he is making

MR. NEARY: remarks that are untrue, Mr. Speaker, and unparliamentary, the hon. gentleman should withdraw.

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

MR. SPEAKER (AYLWARD): To the point of order, the hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. SIMMS: I would submit to Your Honour that that is not a point of order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is well aware that it is not a point of order. A point of order has to do with a breach of the parliamentary procedures. And what he had to say had nothing to do with parliamentary procedures. All he did was confirm the fact that he did not permit television coverage of the Budget Speech last year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I rule there is no point of order, merely a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

MR. NEARY: Just to set the record straight and show how wrong the hon. gentleman was, I would like to lay on the Table of the House all the correspondence in connection with that matter between myself and the Premier. And then the press will be able to look at the correspondence and see who denied access to the House during the Budget Debate and the Throne Speech.

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

MR. SPEAKER: To the point of order, the hon. Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth.

MR. SIMMS: I would submit again that this is not a point of order. And Your Honour will obviously rule that it is not a point of order. Again the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has confirmed for us that he did not permit television cameras to cover the Budget Speech and he knows that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (AYLWARD): To that point of order, I rule there is no point of order.

The hon. Leader of the Opposition used the opportunity to table some letters.

The hon. member for Conception Bay South.

MR. BUTT: I repeat it was the hon. Leader of the Opposition who prevented the television cameras from coming into the House last year to televise the Budget Debate. Now, Mr. Speaker, the biggest problem I see with bringing the electronic media into this House, the greatest danger is that I see the House business being

MR. J. BUTT:

turned into show business. House biz, show biz, and here we have eight hon. actors on the other side.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would have thought that the member who would move such a motion would at least be photogenic or, as the Prime Minister thought when he appointed James Jerome to head up a Committee to look into televising the debates in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister of the day, or at least that is the reports that I read, he really thought he had some sex appeal. So, maybe the hon. member in dire straits from the Strait of Belle Isle feels that he has some sex appeal.

AN HON. MEMBER: If he does he (inaudible).

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BUTT: Just let me work on the scenario; that if we were to have television come into this House, I could certainly see a lot of grandstanding, particularly from members on the opposite side. I can see the hon. the member from Fogo (Mr. B. Tulk), the Opposition critic on fisheries, coming in in his oilskins and Cape-Ann and a codfish in his hand to put a pointed question to the Minister of Fisheries (Mr. J. Morgan), to ask him how to take the vitals out of it; and the member for Terra Nova (Mr. T. Lush) sitting there in his cap and gown looking very astutely there, and when he is about to rise to be struck in the face with a fish being presented to the Minister of Fisheries by the hon. the member for Fogo. Then, of course, we go -

MR. WARREN: You are not even funny.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. BUTT: Oh, we will get to the World According to Garf after, okay?

MR. J. BUTT: Then we go to the colourful member from Eagle River (Mr. E. Hiscock), who is all set for a well pointed question to the hon. the Minister of Education (Ms. L. Verge). He is about to launch an attack on the ministry and he jumps to his feet, he starts off in broken English only to wind in fluent French. We would have to call a recess to get the hon. the Minister of Justice (Mr. G. Ottenheimer) to do the translation. So, I could see the House being turned into chaos. On the other hand, we have a dynamic speaker in the Leader of the Opposition. You know, he is always on his feet and he dominates Question Period. Obviously, the member from Port au Port (Mr. J. Hodder) who sits next to him, the Opposition House Leader, being short in stature like myself, I can see him now bringing in a bucket or picking up the Orders of the Day and piling them up on the floor so he could get up behind the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. S. Neary) to get his time on television.



MR. BUTT: Then, of course, we come to the world according to Garf. The hon. member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) would once again be grandstanding and asking questions to the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) in InnuIt, Naskaupi and Montagnais, getting totally confused, and once again the House would have to recess so the hon. member for Naskaupi (Mr. Goudie) could translate what he was saying, you see.

Now, of course, we come to the rather photogenic gentleman from Bellevue (Mr. Callan), you know, a fine looking chap and he takes on the appearance of, perhaps a Sam Slade, or something like that, and he walks in the House and so the cameras focus on him. He would probably wear six guns to put some pointed questions to the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe), you know.

MR. CALLAN: I would wait until the Late Show.

MR. BUTT: I see television - if television is brought into this House it can create an awful lot of problems. I cannot inflict that kind of thing on the population of Newfoundland.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there was a poll taken when this whole business of television debates got underway in Ottawa back four or five years ago, and at that time it was pointed out that across this country the gallop poll that was taken at that time showed that of the 55 per cent of Canadians who watched the proceedings in the House of Commons, 32 per cent had a very negative reaction to it. I could certainly see that same thing happening here in this Province. You would get, television has served its purpose for some members who are very flamboyant and, as I said before, they are photogenic or they have sex appeal,

MR. BUTT: something that goes out to the public. But let us make a fair comparison, You can have a flamboyant member who would come across well on TV for that few minutes that he is on television, but it does not necessarily say that he is any better, or perhaps not as good, as another member who goes about his work very quietly. And I can see that happening with the fifty-two members who make up this House.

I could also see a terrible amount of time wasted by members getting face lifts and so on, and perhaps causing all kinds of traffic problems in trying to tear home in the evening to watch themselves on television,

MR. BUTT: because they are going to use some clips on the news in the nighttime. I mean, I can see it being an utter nuisance. I cannot really see many advantages in having it. And the mover of the motion, the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), said that it would not cost anything.

Indeed, just to make some revisions to the setup in the House of Commons, I was reading here that it cost some \$5 million just to make some revisions. So, indeed, in times of economic restraint, I certainly feel we could not justify spending money on something that would not be watched anyway by the public of Newfoundland.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have no intentions of supporting this motion. We certainly feel, I certainly feel that it would only give the eight members there opposite an opportunity to grandstand, and I really think that there is enough of that going on right now. So I think we should get back to the serious business of governing this Province and to bring in good legislation, debate it among ourselves, have an open and wide-ranging debate. We have the media covering the House now, the printed media and so on, and when ministers or Opposition critics make a statement or respond to a statement in the House, they always have the news media waiting right at the door for them when they go out. So I really do not see it fulfilling any great purpose. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, after just hearing that speech from the hon. member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Butt) I can understand why he does not want the T.V. cameras in the House.

MR. NEARY: He just gave the best argument for bringing it in.

MR. WARREN: Yes. Mr. Speaker, when a member can get up and go on for about ten minutes on pure nonsense in voting against this resolution, I would think that the member should probably realize that he has been elected by the people in Conception Bay South not just by himself, and I think the people in Conception Bay South should have the opportunity of seeing the member performing the way he performed this evening.

Mr. Speaker, just to set the record straight, in the member getting up just now and saying it was the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) who refused to have the Throne Speech debated in the House, the hon. Leader has placed on the table a copy of the correspondence between himself and the Premier. And just to set the record straight, and seeing it is public knowledge in this House, I am going to read a couple of the lines that are in both of those letters that were addressed to the Premier and the response to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, -

MR. SIMMS: Table the letter.

MR. CALLAN: It is tabled.

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, it is tabled in the House, and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) said, "As you know, we, the official Opposition, withheld consent for the televising of the recent Throne Speech." This was on May 17, 1982, and the Leader of the Opposition has said, "As you know, we, the official Opposition, withheld consent for the televising of the recent Throne Speech". Now, Mr. Speaker, fine and dandy. Let us keep on going. "We did not feel it proper that government allow only the broadcasting of one singular statement by the administration".

The Premier wrote and said, "Look, we want to broadcast the Throne Speech". And the hon. Leader of the Opposition literally said, "No, if you broadcast the Throne Speech, let us broadcast everything". So, therefore, the Leader said, 'Look, we are not just concerned for the people in St. John's who can get aboard their car and in five minutes they are into the Galleries and can watch us, we are concerned about the people out around the bays and the people in Coastal Labrador who do not, in fact, some of them, in some places even today, have access to television.'

Now, Mr. Speaker, here is what our Leader proposed on May 17, 1982. It is, in fact, the same thing that is in the resolution today. "We propose that a select committee of the Legislature be struck to look into all aspects of the feasibility of broadcasting the daily proceedings of the House of Assembly." Now, all he asked for was a select committee to be struck to look into the feasibility. He did not say, 'Look, we should have it right away. Look into the possibility.' And my hon. colleague for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) has practically said the same thing.

MR. WARREN: He has said the same thing in his resolution. He said that, in fact, in the (b) part, 'That a select committee of three members be appointed to work on those steps which must be taken to enable the electronic media to have such full and complete access'.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us go a little bit further on into the letter: "In the meantime, we also propose that the House of Assembly give us unanimous permission to allow present members of the media to broadcast or pre-record the Question Period and any other aspects of the House." Now, to pre-record the Question Period or any other part of the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us go on and see what the Premier says. Now, this is where the former Deputy Speaker (Mr. Butt) and, in fact, the former Speaker (Mr. Simms) also - but it is interesting to note, the two speakers so far speaking against this resolution were the former Speaker and the former Deputy Speaker. I wonder why? Here is what the Premier said. I am sure everybody would like to know what the Premier said in this letter. Anyway the Premier wrote back. In fact he was not too long in writing back, which is really unusual. It only took him ten days to respond to that letter. So, he wrote back and he said, "I reply to your

MR. WARREN: letter of May 17th.", and here is the shocking news. "I have consulted with caucus on this matter and we have decided that we wish to continue with the current practice." That means, we have decided that when there is a Throne Speech, when there is a Budget Speech, we want the broadcast media in here, we want the TV media in here, but anything else, you are not allowed in here. Because I am sure, Mr. Speaker, I am sure if the media were in here since the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) brought down the hatchet on the people of Newfoundland in the last ten days, then they would have seen how somber most of the members on that side were looking. Because they were ashamed of the action of the Minister of Finance and the Premier. That is why this government does not want the media in this House, because they have made fools of most Newfoundlanders, and they are afraid they will see their faces on the television making a fool of them in this House.

MR. CALLAN: Is the Minister of Communications (Mr. Doyle) next?

MR. WARREN: Now, Mr. Speaker, what is the reason we cannot have the TV media in this House? I understand in the House of Commons the TV cameras are poised, showing just the person who is asking the question, or anyone else in close proximity to that person, and it shows the person that the question is being asked to.

So the TV cameras are not going around taking pictures of everybody fixing their ties, or someone else combing his hair, which I have no problem with.

AN HON. MEMBER: You would have no problem with that.

MR. WARREN: I have no problems with that, none whatsoever. So the TV cameras will only just show the action of the individual person participating, and I do not see anything wrong with that at all. In fact I am surprised that our Premier - he goes galavanting around, now he is gone away to Europe - I am surprised that the Premier -

MR. CALLAN: re-Christmas holiday.

MR. WARREN: - and a person who has come out and said time and time again, 'We are an open government. We are an open government. We are not going to leave anything uncovered. However, we will cover it up for St. John's only. We will cover it up for St. John's only, anyone who can get aboard their cars between here and Holyrood, who have a half day off or something like that and wanted to come in, 'Oh yes, there is no problem. The Gallery is up there and there are 210 seats. Let us fill them up.' But he does not realize that there are, outside the overpass, an awful lot of people who would like to know what the members are doing. And I am sure, Mr. Speaker, with the media coverage - with what is going on down on the



MR. WARREN:

Burin Peninsula now , I think the people are fortunate, the people are so fortunate that they cannot see the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) performing. Because I do not think - I cannot remember now, maybe he did. I apologize if he did. But since this House opened about three weeks ago, I doubt that the member, other than presenting a petition for rabbit hunters, has done anything else in the House since his election.

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

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): A point of order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, my hon. colleague is wrong. The member for Burin did read Mr. Hudson's speech in the House a couple of days ago about the fishery on the Burin Peninsula, so my colleague should apologize.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you, I would like to thank the hon. -

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A point of order. The hon. House Leader.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, it is contrary to the rules of this House to indicate, and the hon. member knows it, to indicate that a speech by an hon. member is a speech other than given by the hon. member himself. The members in this House heard the speech that the hon. member gave. It was one of the finest speeches that has been given on the fishery in this House in a long time and I think it is incumbent - it is contrary to

MR. MARSHALL: the rules of the House as the hon. member knows, and I invite, Mr. Speaker - I know he will not apologize because that stuff is not in him, but he is not allowed to abuse the rules of this House and I invite him to withdraw that accusation against the hon. member.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward): To that point of order. The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman did not quote any sections of Beauchesne or anything else. The hon. gentleman does not own this House. The hon. gentleman did not buy the House. The hon. gentleman cannot dictate to the Speaker and I would submit, Your Honour, that the hon. gentleman is just getting up being mischievous again and trying to cause trouble.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order, I will reserve ruling on that point of order for the present.

MR. MARSHALL: To that point of order again.

MR. SPEAKER: To that point of order again, the hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, 101 in Beauchesne, it is there if the hon. gentleman wants it.

MR. NEARY: Read it. What does it say?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Torngat Mountains.

MR. WARREN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Again, Mr. Speaker, we just saw another example of why that side does not want television cameras in the House, because they do not want to see the Minister of Energy getting up and making a fool of himself.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us look at why the television cameras are not in this House. Here

MR. WARREN: is another reason, Mr. Speaker, that we are afraid that the television cameras would wander around and would only see eleven members out of forty-four sitting in their seats. That is the reason, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: And two Opposition.

MR. WARREN: And only two over here, yes. That is right, Mr. Speaker. Maybe this is another reason. The television cameras would make sure that the members would be in their seats where they should be, mind you, when the House is in session.

MR. TOBIN: What about the Opposition? Where are the members? Where is the Leader?

MR. WARREN: Before you talk too loud, I said the members on this side too. Do not be afraid, okay? So what I am saying is, look, this is another reason why the members on that side do not want the television cameras in the House, because it would look shameful to the people of the Province to see the member for Burin-Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) in his seat who talks about rabbits, and see only about another ten people there, about eleven out of forty-four members. This is one of the reasons why that side over there does not want the television cameras in the House.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is one reason.

MR. WARREN:

Now, here is another reason, Mr. Speaker. Another reason is because the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) has been shouting continuously since the House opened. And another thing the media will pick up is his loud voice shouting back and forth across the House of Assembly. That is the second reason, Mr. Speaker, why they do not want T.V. cameras and the media in the House. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) for the two or three years that he was in the Speaker's Chair must have gone through hell, because he was in the Speaker's Chair and he could not talk, he could not say too much. But since he became minister, since he got back there and sat down with what we call 'the boys', he has not stopped talking whenever anyone else is speaking on this side of the House. So, Mr. Speaker, this is another reason, that the members on that side could not shout back and forth. The Premier would have to say, 'Look, the T.V. camera is here now, be quiet. The media is here, be quiet.' This is the reason, because with no T.V. camera, with no media, most of you people can make fools of yourselves as you are doing, but with that you cannot do it.

Now, let us look at something else, Mr. Speaker. I would think that television, the media in this House, is just as important as any rabbits on the Burin Peninsula.

The member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Butt) in his few brief remarks, I tried listen to him as much as I could, but to see a fifteen thousand dollar secretary - I should say useless secretary - get up and make those kinds of comments and say it would

MR. WARREN: put the House into complete chaos, now, Mr. Speaker, I am sure now if the T.V. cameras were here at the present time, following the proceedings of this House now at the present time, it would be very, very embarrassing for the member for Burin - Placentia West (Mr. Tobin) to be shouting back and forth about my former teacher. I would like to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the best teachers that I ever had during my school years was the member for Bonavista North. Mr. Speaker, he was a fantastic teacher. In fact, Mr. Speaker, he was a much better teacher than he is a member, I would think. The reason I say that, Mr. Speaker, is that again here is another

MR. WARREN: backbencher over there that has not spoken no more than two occasions since the House resumed in early November.

MR. TOBIN: What about your former leader?

MR. WARREN: Mr. Speaker, this is why I am saying he was a real good teacher, no doubt about that.

MR. TOBIN: Ask your former leader about what kind of member he is.

MR. WARREN: So therefore, Mr. Speaker, this is why television is not in here, you can name on one hand, Mr. Speaker, how many members over on that side participate in the proceedings of the House of Assembly. Mr. Speaker, take the Minister of Energy (Mr. Marshall), who is up and down like a jack-rabbit half the time, and that is when he takes the most part is when he is up on points of order or points of procedure and so on, Mr. Speaker. Then we get the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) laying the law down on tax increases. Then we will get probably the Minister of Forest Resources and Lands (Mr. Power) talking about the budworm and some other beetle that is on the go now. And other than that, Mr. Speaker, I have not heard the member for Trinity-Bay de Verde (Mr. R. Collins) say anything since the House came in session. I have not heard the member for Trinity North (Mr. Brett) say anything since the House came in session, I have not heard the member for Fortune-Hermitage (Mr. Stewart) say anything since the House came in session.

MR. TOBIN: He spoke on the fisheries.

MR. WARREN: He spoke on the fisheries, did he? Okay, I will apologize to him. My hon. friend for St. John's Centre (Dr. McNicholas), who is Assistant Deputy Speaker -

DR. MCNICHOLAS: I will speak next week.

MR. WARREN: Okay, so there we go. I have a commitment from one of the backbenchers - I should not call him a backbencher; he is sort of Assistant Deputy Speaker, whatever title is bestowed upon him. But I am glad to know at least one of the members who has been silent because of no T.V. cameras in the House is going to get up and is going to support this resolution. I would think the hon. member for St. John's Centre is going to support this resolution because the hon. member knows that all of his constituents are in St. John's Centre, all of his constituents can turn on their television and they can get the different televisions and they can see the hon. member performing. So therefore the member is definitely going to get up and support this resolution put forth by such an able gentleman. I am sure that when the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) brought forth this resolution, you know, before he brought in this resolution we discussed it almost a day and talked whether we should bring it in or not. And we discussed its full contents, you know, what ramifications would it have on any political party by bringing in such a controversial resolution.

And we decided to bring it in whether we are in power or whether we are not in power. Unfortunately for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador today we are not in power, but the day is coming when, as the old saying goes, "When man shall weep no more". The day is coming when we will see all the blue turning red.

MR. CALLAN: Alleluia!

MR. WARREN: As sure as the red turned blue there in 1970 and 1971, I would say before the 1980s have gone the blue will be changing back to red again. Because it is coming, Mr. Speaker, and it is only just a matter of time. And those kinds of statements that we just heard from the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) and from the member for Conception Bay South (Mr. Butt), I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that it will not take very much longer before the people out in the byroads and the bypasses of this Province will say, "Look, that government does not want anybody to know what is going on". In fact, Mr. Speaker, we are going to make sure through the media that you, the government of the day, is saying no to the television cameras in the House of Assembly and not the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary). The Leader of the Opposition said no to one particular item, the Throne Speech. But the government of the day is saying no. Yes to the Throne Speech, yes to the Budget Speech but no to everything else. And, Mr. Speaker, if that is all we sit in this House for, is to hear the Throne Speech and to hear the Budget Speech, the people want to hear more than that.

MR. CALLAN: Who is peaking next? Hall Andrews, is it not?

MR. WARREN: No, I would say Jerry Dinn.  
I would say, Mr. Speaker, that if the people realized, if the people could only see us today, even today and next Wednesday, if the people could hear the comments that the Leader of the Opposition made and the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), and the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth and the member for Conception Bay South, if the people of Newfoundland and Labrador could have heard the arguments for and against it today, then I would think, Mr. Speaker, they would have learned a lesson and say, 'Look, the government still does not want to reveal their open government policy.' Mr. Speaker,



MR. WARREN: as far as I am concerned the House of Assembly is for the people of St. John's and the people close by who can come in here. Let us make it available to everybody in Newfoundland, not just to the people to whom it does not cost that much money to get here. Let us make it available to everybody because we were elected by the people from

MR. WARREN: from Nain and Northern Labrador, from an 82 per cent majority in Labrador to 41 votes somewhere else in the Province.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those few remarks I have to say that I support this resolution that has been put forward by the hon. member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts). I think, Mr. Speaker, maybe I would make a suggestion and maybe this might put some of the member's minds at ease. Maybe we should come back and look at the (b) part of the resolution. Okay, let us say that we -

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!  
The time for the hon. member has expired.

MR. WARREN: Thirty seconds, Mr. Speaker. Okay, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. Thirty seconds. Maybe we should look at the (b) part of this resolution. Let us say if we do vote against the resolution, if the members on that side do vote against the resolution, why do we not seriously consider the (b) portion of setting up a select committee and looking into the possibilities? Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Environment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. CALLAN: Tell us about the matacil out in Millertown first what happend to that?

MR. ANDREWS: You know all about it. Do you know who stole it? You could speak on it.

Mr. Speaker, I think from the debate the other side is losing its enthusiasm for this, particularly the last comments from the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), Mr. Speaker, when he concedes pretty well that we should be debating the (b) part of this resolution, in that we should set up a select committee. He was not all that enthusiastic about the (a) part of the

MR. ANDREWS: resolution throughout his speech and I think that is the general tenor of the Opposition regarding this motion, Mr. Speaker. I, personally, will not support (a) or (b). And I am glad to see that the member for Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), whose resolution this is, has just returned to the House to hear my few words of wisdom.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that bothers me about this whole concept of electronic coverage of the House of Assembly is that, number one, who is going to watch it? We have now the televised proceedings of the House of Commons, which is probably on television at this very time, on Cable television, number one, which is only available in certain areas of the Province, the larger communities. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it will be a long, long time yet before every individual community in Newfoundland will have access to the proceedings of the House of Commons.

MR. SIMMS: Forty per cent of the people get it now.

MR. ANDREWS: It is 40 per cent of the people now, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) informs me.

MR. ANDREWS: The economics, just the economics of getting the technical facilities in place in the Coastal areas and the smaller communities in Newfoundland, I would say, is beyond our lifetime. So, if you want fairness for all Newfoundlanders this is not one way to do it.

MR. SIMMS: And more money for a select committee.

MR. ANDREWS: And, of course, more money for a select committee.

Mr. Speaker, the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) talked about the cost of this thing and I do not think that there is any way that the taxpayers of Newfoundland and Labrador can get away without paying a considerable amount of money for this. Because I do not think that it would be fair for any members of the House of Assembly to have independent broadcast control over the proceedings of the House. The House of Commons procedure is that there is a House of Commons broadcast team which takes the camera shots, and they are very discreet about those camera shots and I am sure most of our news media would be too. But there is a danger in permitting the news media to install and, at their own discretion, shoot camera angles in the House. And, as the member who just spoke said, the members on the other side of the House are just as guilty as we are for not being in our seats all the time. As he spoke there were only two sitting on the Opposition side of the House. And there was good reason, I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that there were only two there. The members of the House have to be about their business twenty-four hours a day and sometimes they just cannot be here sitting in the House for a full three hours in the afternoon. And I hope that the member for the Strait of Belle Isle was about the business of the people.

MR. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, if we were going to have control of this media, the members of the House have this control, we would have to pay the cost. I am told that lights would have to be put in, that a new sound system might be needed, there would be installation of cameras and equipment and recording equipment and so on. This is not cheap today. And the figure of \$2 million has been tossed around. Be that as it may \$2 million is a lot of money today. But besides that I am really worried about how this thing is controlled. It would have to be done as the House of Commons system is set up.

I do not think that with what I hear about what is going on in some of the news media, electronic media in the Province today and across Canada that they would be willing to spend that money. I feel pretty sure that they would not at this point in time. And once again the number of viewers really concerns me.

Talking about the news media, I would suspect that some of my dear friends of a few years ago and still friends of mine in the news media, the reporters would be losing their jobs if this was installed, because I could envisage a day when the CBC would take it live to their studios from here and just have one person doing the editing and setting it up for the evening news with very little editorial comment. I am inclined to believe that

MR. ANDREWS: the news interview with a commentary on the head or on the tail is a lot better form of news coverage than straight broadcasting of sometimes very boaring speeches.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of things are said in the House of Assembly, a lot of innuendo dropped by various members probably on both sides. We are all guilty of it at times. I find that particularly during Question Period from the Opposition side and particularly from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) yards and yards and yards of innuendo aimed at this government, half truths, half facts, silly statements and stupidly or non-researched questions altogether. An example of that today is in reply to a statement by the hon. House Leader (Mr. Marshall) that the Premier (Mr. Peckford) will be leading the delegation to Europe to try to save our seal fishery. Immediately the Leader of the Opposition replied that that was not true, that the House Leader was telling a lie, he was misleading the House, that the federal Cabinet minister was leading the delegation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from a telegram. This is an example of how the people of the Province could be misled, if this sort of thing is permitted to be broadcast over the airwaves.

This is a telegram to the Premier from Charles Lapointe, Minister of State for External Relations, and he wires the Premier, "I would like to confirm that the hon. William Rompkey, Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism, will be joining you on your trip to European capitals." So, the hon. William Rompkey, the Minister of State for Small Business and Tourism, will be joining our Premier. And for the information of those on the other side of the House, the protocol for foreign trips, outside of our Nation of Canada is the following: First of all the most important gentleman

MR. ANDREWS: to go overseas or the most important person will be the Governor General, followed by the Prime Minister of the Nation, followed by the Premier of any individual province, followed -

MR. SIMMS: They know that.

MR. ANDREWS: Are you sure?

MR. SIMMS: Yes.

MR. ANDREWS: Well, why did they say these things an hour or so ago? Followed then by a Cabinet minister and then -

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

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

The hon. member for Port au Port on a point of order.

MR. HODDER: We are debating television in the House, and, Mr. Speaker, however the member tries to bring protocol and the seal hunt into this debate, he is certainly irrelevant and is not speaking to the motion which concerns television cameras in the House.

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: The hon. member is being perfectly relevant. He is giving an example of coverage of television, how somebody could turn on at one particular time to see the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary)-and the Leader of the Opposition, I suppose, ninety per cent of the time, you know, colours things and distorts things - and he is giving an example of how by bringing in television there can be a distortion. That is certainly relevant to the matter. It is just that the minister is touching a very tender spot

MR. MARSHALL: and the hon. gentleman is trying to protect his leader. There it is.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): Order, please!

It is really not a point of order but a difference of opinion between two hon. members.

MR. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, and it is just an example. And that is not a very serious example of some of the accusations made from the other side of the House aimed towards various people in this House and particularly at our Premier on occasions. Of course, Mr. Speaker, to repeat, for the benefit of the members opposite again, the protocol is the Governor General, the Prime Minister, a Premier, then a federal Cabinet minister behind the Premier. I quote that again, the federal Cabinet minister is behind the Premier, and then a provincial Cabinet minister behind him. So, Mr. Speaker, I hope to have that in perspective.

Mr. Speaker, I want to come back again to the matter of cost, because the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) did suggest that if money was going to be a factor in the installation of the electronic media in the House of Assembly that he would reconsider this motion. So I would suggest to him that money is going to be a factor.

MR. ROBERTS: That is not what I said, by the way.

MR. ANDREWS: You said -

MR. ROBERTS: If the hon. gentleman would yield for a second.

MR. ANDREWS: Yes, indeed I would.

MR. ROBERTS: What I said was if the committee were set up, which could only happen if the motion were adopted, and the committee were then to report that it would cost money to implement this principle at this time, then I, for one, would say the principle ought not to be implemented at this time.



MR. SIMMS: Ah ha!

MR. ROBERTS: Oh, that is what I said, no ah ha. The gentleman from Grand Falls (Mr. Simms) may not have understood it. But, you know, the gentleman for Burgeo-Bay d'Espoir (Mr. Andrews) did. It is certainly not saying we should not set up the committee. We should set up the committee and let us get a handle on this thing because until then, as I know the minister would be the first to agree, we are flying blind on both sides.

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): The hon. Minister of Environment.

MR. ANDREWS: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts) that this is going to cost money. I think the cost of setting up a committee is ridiculous at this point in time.

Mr. Speaker, one final comment. We saw what television could do to politicians and for politicians and kill politicians and elect politicians only a few months ago during the last provincial election. And if the Opposition believe that this is going to enhance our image, Mr. Speaker, I fear for democracy in Newfoundland. Because I am sure if we install this, within a period of a year or six months there will be not one man elected on the other side of the House. That will be bad for democracy, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: Is the House ready for the question?

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, it seems passing strange, I believe, that

MR. CALLAN: except for the lead off speaker, the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms), the other gentlemen who stood to speak on the other side took five, ten minutes. I believe that gives credence to our argument, because these hon. gentlemen who stood to speak against the resolution could not even find enough arguments to use up ten or fifteen or their full twenty minutes. So that in itself, you know, is passing strange. I anticipate that I will speak for twenty minutes.

MR. NEARY: By leave you could speak longer than that.

MR. CALLAN: That is right. But, Mr. Speaker, I took some notes as I went down through listening to the lead off speaker, the former Speaker and, of course, naturally he spoke against it. It took a little while before he got around to telling us that. And we heard such phrases as, you know, 'Money is going to be a factor' and we heard that people will lose respect for the House and, you know, another reason was that the media will not reach all of the people and these sorts of arguments.

MR. NEARY: Lame excuses.

MR. CALLAN: Very lame arguments, Mr. Speaker.

Let me deal with some of these arguments that the minister put forward. As the member for the Strait of Belle Isle (Mr. Roberts), who just got up here on a point of clarification, as he pointed out, the best possible way that we can find out for sure and certain whether or not it will cost the taxpayers of this Province money is to set up a select committee. But the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren), you know, said 'Well, if we cannot do (a) and (b), let us do one'. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, if the resolution did pass (b) would have to come before (a) anyway. You know, you would have to set up your select committee. And if that

MR. CALLAN: select committee representing both sides of the House came back and said, 'Our findings indicate that, you know, in consultation with CBC and NTV and the radio stations and so on, our findings indicate that it will cost the taxpayers of this Province \$500,000 or \$1 million and therefore we do not think it is advisable during this time of restraint to go forward with it', then, of course, we can cross that bridge when we come to it.

MR. CALLAN: But every speaker, Mr. Speaker, on the opposite side of the House, on the government side of the House, had their minds made up. And, Mr. Speaker, I can venture to say that they did not make up their own minds. I venture to say that the Premier made up their minds for them.

MR. SIMMS: Who made up yours?

MR. CALLAN: Well I have not even got a speech made up let alone my mind, Mr. Speaker. I would say that the Premier put his foot down and laid down the law in their last caucus, whenever that was, when they discussed Private Members' Day for today.

Now, Mr. Speaker, somebody over there was telling me to read the resolution. The resolution says: (a) That the House directs that the electronic media be given full and complete access to the proceedings of both the House and its committees; and (b) That a select committee of three members be appointed to work out those steps which must be taken, you see. And we have been told before, as most hon. members on that side of the House know who have been around here for several years, that this resolution, the wording and the shortness of it may be new, but we I remember the former member for the district of Lewisporte putting this resolution on the Order Paper year after year.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, let me get on to some of the arguments against this resolution that the Minister of Culture, Recreation and Youth (Mr. Simms) made. The money factor we do not know. We cannot argue that because we do not know. The member who introduced it did some research and nobody on that side contradicted the point that he made, that the existing lights are adequate and that today's sophisticated electronic cameras and microphones and all the other things are capable of doing an adequate job, as he said, of course, by placing the

MR. CALLAN: cameras at strategic points around the Galleries or around the Legislature-I am sure that any member opposite or any member on this side who has visited the Legislature in Nova Scotia, as an example, which I had the privilege of doing several months ago with my colleague friend from Windsor-Buchans (Mr. McLennon) and, of course, the Deputy Speaker (Mr. Aylward), you know, the Legislative Assembly in Nova Scotia as compared with this Legislative Assembly, they are forty years behind the times. I mean, a little room about one-third the size of this Chamber here now. We have lots of room here, especially those of us on this side, we have lots of room here for

MR. CALLAN:

cameras and so on. Anyway, I think, Mr. Speaker, that is a phony argument, that the money bit is a phony argument because we are just guessing and talking in the dark when we say that it is going to cost an awful lot of money.

Now, another point, another phony argument that the minister used was he said that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, people generally, will lose respect for the House of Assembly as they have lost respect for the House of Commons. Well, Mr. Speaker, in my humble opinion as far as the general public are concerned the respect that they have for the Legislature and for legislators generally, I do not think it can drop any lower. It can only improve. And, of course, the respect for the members who sit on the government side dropped by about 900 feet last week and, of course, is still dropping. We hope that they do not peak too early. We hope that they continue to drop and in about three years time they hit rock bottom somewhere. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, there again it is a phony argument.

The minister also said that the media will not reach a lot of the people because they do not have television and so on in remote parts of Newfoundland and in remote parts of Labrador and that sort of thing. But, you know, again, Mr. Speaker, a very weak argument. I am sure that every member in this Legislature has been made aware of the fact that cable television is offering some time to each of us, the gallant fifty-two or whatever we are supposed to be called. Again I am satisfied to appear on the programme knowing full well that not one of my constituents will see it. It will not do me any good. So that is another phony argument, the fact that it will not reach an awful lot of the people. You know, it is like saying, for example, that the federal government should

MR. CALLAN: not have offered the \$3,000 grant to new homeowners because the people like myself who built homes ten or fifteen years ago cannot avail of it. You know, it is silly. Another phony argument, Mr. Speaker.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the minister also used some figures and percentages, you know, of the percentage of people who view programmes and who do not view these programmes that we have now coming from the House of Commons in Ottawa. Again I do not know if we can use figures indiscretionately.

MR. CALLAN: I am sure that CBC and the NTV will tell you that there are certain programmes that they have on the air which only a small fraction of the population watches and so on, but they still carry them. And, of course, the percentage that the minister used was not a low percentage. He talked about 52 per cent and 48 per cent. Let us face it. The minister is just as aware as I am that when you get into numbers, what percentage of the population of this Province voted this government into office?

MR. SIMMS: Sixty-odd per cent.

MR. CALLAN: No, no. You are talking about the people who actually went and cast votes, 65 per cent of the people cast votes. But the Premier in Corner Brook said that if we do not win our case in the Supreme Court of Canada, he said, "560,000 Newfoundlanders will be heard from". What is he going to do, pinch the babies and make them talk as well or bawl or whatever? I mean, if the Premier can bandy around figures like 560,000 Newfoundlanders will not sit idly by when there is an important issue, then of course, why does he not also say, 'We have a good mandate. However, you know, here only a small fraction - what was it? - 21 per cent of the population voted?

AN HON. MEMBER: No way.

MR. CALLAN: Of the population. I am not talking about the voting population. I am talking about the same people that the Premier has talked about, the 560,000, you see. So you can play around with percentages and figures and try to win arguments, but it does not wash, Mr. Speaker.

As far as the other point -

MR. SIMMS: Call it six o'clock.

MR. CALLAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I want to get into the meat of this next day. I will call it six o'clock, Mr. Speaker. I adjourn the debate.



November 24, 1982

Tape No. 2693

IB-2

MR. SPEAKER (RUSSELL): This being Private Members' Day the House will now adjourn until three of the clock tomorrow, Thursday.