

VOL. 2

NO. 21

PRELIMINARY
UNEDITED
TRANSCRIPT

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
FOR THE PERIOD:
10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 1983

The House met at 3:00 P.M.

Mr. Speaker in the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS:

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Health.

MR. HOUSE: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), in his Budget Speech of March 17th., advised the House that a major study of hospital operating costs would be undertaken during this fiscal year. As hon. members will realize, over the past five years hospital operating costs have been increasing beyond the growth in government revenues, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to finance the demands of the system as presently structured. As well, meeting the financing requirements of hospitals is made doubly difficult in the context of declining rate of growth in Established Programme Financing payments from the federal government.

Given the importance and the sensitivity of our health system, government felt that the matter should be studied very carefully and, to that end, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that government is today appointing a Royal Commission to study hospital and nursing home costs. The members of this commission will be: Mr. David Orsborn, LL.B., and David Orsborn -

AN HON. MEMBER: Orsborn?

MR. HOUSE: Orsborn, yes - was a former hospital administrator before becoming a lawyer. He is Chairman. Mr. Garfield Pynn, from the business school at the university, and Dr. Paul Patey, who has had about fifteen years experience throughout the Province in various capacities as a medical doctor. He has also served on a previous royal commission.

MR. HOUSE:

The terms of reference of the commission will include, but not be limited to: (1) To determine why hospital and nursing home costs are increasing at a rate that is higher than the normal rate of inflation, to include and not be limited to: (a) the impact of medical, nursing and other educational programmes;

MR. HOUSE: (b) the impact of increased medical manpower; (2) To recommend what operating efficiencies may be achieved in hospitals and nursing homes, individually and collectively, by streamlining systems, sharing services, and in other areas. (3) To determine the appropriate level of funding required by hospitals and nursing homes to operate current approved services. (4) To project the increases that will occur in hospital and home costs for the next five years for current programs and future planned services as outlined in the Five-Year Plan. (5) To recommend appropriate levels of services and/or appropriate alternatives for program reductions which would have the minimum negative impact on health care for reconsideration by government should it be financially impossible to continue services and programs at existing levels or recommend levels in view of the limited financial resources available to the Province. (6) To recommend appropriate measures for the generation of revenues to meet growing hospital and nursing home costs, taking into account:- (a) current approved services; (b) future planned services; (c) the fiscal capacity of the Province; and (d) projected Federal revenues. (7) And to provide report to government by February 15, 1984.

Hospital and nursing homes services are an extremely important and expensive element of the health care system and one of the most important priorities of government. This year the budget for medical services - and this is an addition in this particular paper, medical services should be inserted there before hospitals - medical services, hospitals and nursing homes will account for more than 25 per cent of the total provincial operating budget.

The matter of increasing hospital costs is of major concern to all provincial governments in

MR. HOUSE: Canada. In other provinces studies similar to this one are being announced today and being undertaken.

There is a need for full public debate and discussion on this important matter, and in announcing the appointment of the Royal Commission today, we feel that the Terms of Reference for the Commission will provide an opportunity for full public debate on hospital and nursing home costs.

Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt about it, there is need for full public debate on the cost of operating the health care programme in this Province. There are some good people, I notice, on this committee, and no doubt they will do a good job, but let nobody be fooled, Mr. Speaker, by what is happening here. When you see a royal commission being set up like the one that was announced just a few moments ago by the minister, it is an admission of failure, that the department under the hon. minister has not been able to carry out its responsibility and its duties the way that it should. There is really no need of this kind of commission if the department, which has escalated over the years, Mr. Speaker, as one of the biggest spenders in government - it is in the top three. They have tremendously increased their staff; they have the expertise. It is too bad they do not have the minister to show some leadership. And it is only because of the lackadaisical way, it is only because of the ineptness and the incompetence of the minister and the administration that we find ourselves today faced with the appointment of a royal commission.

I have a lot of confidence in the people who have been appointed, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure that they will do a good job.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, yesterday I tabled in the House a telegram to Mr. William Hopper, President

PREMIER PECKFORD: of Petro-Canada, concerning the recent announcement by the hon. William Rompkey, which indicated clearly that \$500 million involving ten wells would be spent over the next five years off the Labrador coast by the Labrador group of companies of which Petro-Canada is operator. I had said in that telegram to Mr. Hopper that this

PREMIER PECKFORD: was different from the information that he had provided to me a few weeks earlier.

I have now spoken to Mr. Hopper and he assures me that his original information to me was correct.

Mr. Rompkey's statement left the distinct impression, as The Evening Telegram's headline entitled "\$500 Million to be Spent on Oil Search off Labrador" confirms that \$500 million would be spent over the next five years, no ifs ands or buts. I have learned from Mr. Hopper that some time ago - and he had informed the Petroleum Directorate and the Minister responsible for Energy (Mr. Marshall) and myself - exploration arrangements that were due to expire were renewed and that as a result, the companies may have to spend \$500 million, not that they would have to spend it.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, the companies involved in this announcement have the right under the exploration agreement to drop acreage and therefore reduce their effort. They could, in fact, drop significant acreage that they would not drill at all. They could do that today, tomorrow. In my talks the companies, through Petro Canada, have already said and said again yesterday that the likelihood is that there will be a reduced programme, not an increased programme, in 1984 compared with 1983.

This announcement is similar - and it is the main reason, Mr. Speaker, why I raise it now - is similar to announcements made in Nova Scotia over the past several months which also have purported to spend vast sums of money. Once again, this is potential money - the spending of which will only occur if significant discoveries are found and if over the length of the agreement the companies retain all their existing acreage - two conditions which very rarely occur, hardly ever occur.

PREMIER PECKFORD: It should also be pointed out that another sound reason by the companies for their view that the Labrador exploration is likely to be reduced rather than expanded is because the companies wish to put their money also into Newfoundland and Labrador but into lower risk, more productive areas - such as the area near Hibernia. Expansion of exploration activity from an investor's point of view sees expansion of the Hibernia area and reduction of activity for the next two years off Labrador and Nova Scotia. So where the expansion and exploration activity is not where Mr. Rompkey's announcement says it is going to happen, it is off the Hibernia area and not off the Labrador area.

Mr. Speaker, I wish it were true that \$500 million will be spent on offshore exploration off Labrador. We could all rejoice in that kind of announcement. But, Mr. Speaker, I must point out that such a statement is incorrect. False hopes must not be raised. The facts are that \$500 million could be spent, but the likelihood from what has happened in the past in such agreements and from what the companies told me as late as yesterday afternoon is that less will be spent off Labrador.

In summary, then, Mr. Speaker, there is no commitment by the oil companies that they will spend \$500 million and drill ten wells. There is the potential for such and their best information to date says it will be less.

Thank you very much,

Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure after listening to that statement whether this administration, whether the hon. gentleman welcomes this kind of news or not. We are sorry, Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Rompkey hurt the hon. gentleman's feelings, but the fact of the matter is that somebody has to carry on with that development. Somebody has to get the holes drilled, carry on the exploration and drilling so that the oil companies will be in a position to start the production of oil and gas off our shores. And if the hon. gentleman does not want to participate in that plan, then he should stop throwing obstructions in the way of people who want to get on with the job, of people who want to create employment, to create jobs

MR. NEARY: in this Province, of people who want to make it possible for the suppliers of material in this Province to be able to do so. So the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, if his feelings are hurt, you think he would be too ashamed to come into this House and read that kind of a statement. You would think he would just merely express his views in the secrecy of the Cabinet and say, 'Look, I am disturbed, I am upset and I am not at all pleased with Mr. Rompkey making these positive statements about the development of the resource. We do not have any input into it. That is our own fault. We are just laying back and doing nothing. We are not making any attempt to negotiate an agreement. So therefore the federal government can only go ahead unilaterally on their own and make these decisions.' No mistake, Mr. Speaker, about it that since the Newfoundland Appeals Court made its decision there a few weeks ago, that the Government of Canada obviously - and it must be apparent to everybody - are going ahead full speed with the development of that resource and the Premier and his administration are sitting back, they have no dialogue, they do not know what is going on and everytime somebody makes a positive statement about the development of the resource we can expect the hon. gentleman to express a view that his feelings are hurt: Now it is too bad. We all feel sorry for the hon. gentleman. It is about time he started governing the Province and show some administrative ability rather than just lay back and sulk and twiddle his thumbs everytime somebody does something positive

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): I would like to welcome to the galleries today a delegation from the Town Council of St. Alban's, Bay d'Espoir, headed by Mayor Bert Strickland.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer hon. members to a Ministerial Statement that was read in this House by the Premier on Monday, April 11th, in which he charged that the federal government was trying to transfer its deficits to the provinces. In that statement, and in line with the statement that the Minister of Health (Mr. House) made this morning, I would like to ask a few questions.

MR. NEARY: The Premier said that the provinces would have to consider raising taxes or increase the size of the provincial deficit. Could I ask the hon. gentleman, Mr. Speaker, if his administration is now planning to increase taxes in the wake of that statement that he made here on April 11?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) has not been around this hon. House for the last few weeks, he has not witnessed the budget that was brought down by the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), he has not been a part of the estimates committee, the Committee of the Whole when it is being considered. The Government of Newfoundland has taken a position already, and it is reflected in the budget, that is that we are into deficit financing, a \$28 million deficit on current account where the great costs are in health care. We have agreed, the Government of Newfoundland has made a decision that we will incur a \$28 million current account deficit on a budget of \$2.1 billion. Interesting to note, yesterday the PEI government, which has a \$430 million budget, has an \$18 million deficit. So what we have decided to do is two things, Mr. Speaker, and I am absolutely astounded - and I am sorry if I have to use the word, and I apologize before I use it but I have to use it - at the ignorance of the hon. the Leader of the Opposition. We are, number one, deficit financing this year and, number two, as a second approach, the Minister of Health (Mr. House) announced a few minutes ago a royal commission on health costs. That is what we are doing as it relates to the federal government's cutback on EPF.

PREMIER PECKFORD: The Government of Newfoundland, as one provincial government, has taken initiatives to respond to the federal government's reduction in transfer payments to post-secondary education, and health care costs. One, we have assumed incurred deliberately, a current account deficit and, number two, we have established a royal commission on health costs.

This is the approach that the Government of Newfoundland is taking. We think it is a sane, realistic approach, given the economic times that everybody is under and the economic restraint that everybody is under. And that is the two-pronged approach that we are taking.

We continue with the rest of the provinces. The statement that I made the other day, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), was a statement that was jointly made in Toronto that same day, and a document published proving that the cutback would severely restrict and severely harm the delivery system in post-secondary education and health care all across this nation,

PREMIER PECKFORD: and we are forced to take certain measures. So the two measures we have taken, and I cannot understand for the life of me how the Leader of the Opposition did not know this, are, one, to incur a deficit and, two, to establish a Royal Commission.

MR. NEARY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. gentleman does not understand the way the system works. That is one of the great weaknesses with the hon. gentleman. He is a great little fellow for playing little petty, amateur politics but he cannot administer, he cannot govern. He is a very poor administrator, and I regret to say that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. MARSHALL: A point of order.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this is the Question Period. It is not a period for making speeches, even deficient, defective and bad speeches like the hon. gentleman is making.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! I would remind hon. members that the Question Period is designed to ask as many questions and get as many answers as possible, and, therefore, both the questions and the answers should be very brief.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it is regrettable that the hon. gentleman is such a poor administrator that he does not understand. But let me now ask the hon. gentleman if he is saying this, that there will be no further increases in taxes in this fiscal year and that the deficit as announced in the Budget Speech by the Minister of Finance (Dr.

MR. NEARY: Collins) will not exceed \$27.5 million? Is that what the hon. gentleman is saying?

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Number one, let me just respond to the preliminary comments made by the Leader of the Opposition. Of the provinces of Canada that have been managing their budgets over the last number of years, we are very proud to report, Mr. Speaker, as we have done on a number of occasions, that the two neighbouring provinces, the closest provinces to Newfoundland, I guess, Nova Scotia and the province of Quebec, both have gotten credit downgradings by the credit rating agency of North America and Newfoundland has not. And in the last twenty-four hours we have received information about the PEI budget, Mr. Speaker, a very, very, salient fact, an \$18 million deficit on a \$436 million budget and we have an \$28 million deficit on a \$2.1 billion budget. Now that is not bad management, Mr. Speaker, to answer the Leader of the Opposition's charge that somehow this government does not know how to manage the finances of this Province and our two neighbouring provinces have taken

PREMIER PECKFORD:

credit downgradings. Mr. Speaker, we have outlined our policy, our budget is there for the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to read, the Ministerial Statement by the Minister of Health (Mr. House) just released is there for the Leader of the Opposition to read. What a question to ask a Premier or a leader of any government anywhere in the Western world or anywhere in the world, 'Can you guarantee me that the deficit of \$28 million as predicted the other day in the budget is what it will be this time next March?' Mr. Speaker! What a naive question to ask. Every single government in the world over the last year has seen its revenues fall. Can anybody predict with 100 per cent certainty how many dollars we are going to take in in retail sales tax between now and the end of March 1984? Can anyone predict exactly how many dollars and cents with 100 per cent certainty how much money we are going to take in from the sale of cigarettes or the sale of liquor and all the other revenue generating measures that a government brings in? Of course not, Mr. Speaker, everybody knows that. And to ask the question demonstrates a lack of understanding by the Leader of the Opposition on the realities that governments in Western world face today.

MR. S. NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, just as we suspected the day the budget was read, there was inaccurate estimating by the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) and the hon. gentleman cannot assure us that there will be no increase in taxes this year. The reason Newfoundland's credit rating has not been lowered, Mr. Speaker, is because it is already as low as it can go.

MR. HODDER: The lowest in Canada.

MR. S. NEARY: And as far as Prince Edward Island is concerned the hon. gentlemen should have seen the latest edition of The Atlantic Business Magazine where there is fear in Prince Edward Island that the Canadian Government may have to take them over. So if I were the hon. gentleman I would not worry about what is happening in Prince Edward Island. They have a much lower provincial debt and a much lower deficit than we do in this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the hon. gentleman. Will the Premier assure the House and the people of this Province, will he state categorically that they will not consider putting fees on Medicare in this Province or increase the cost of hospital beds or tamper with anything in the delivery of health care until the royal commission makes its report to this House?

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker.

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, why do you think that we set up

PREMIER PECKFORD:

the royal commission in the beginning? Why are we going to spend \$200,000 or \$300,000 or however much it is going to take? It is a royal commission, not just an inquiry, not just a task force or a committee. We have established a royal commission, the most that a government can do in appointing committees with status, to get the kind of information we need.

Obviously we are going to depend upon the royal commission's report for the establishment of health policy for the next four, five, six or seven years into the future, otherwise we would not have established it. So the question really does not deserve an answer, Mr. Speaker, because the answer has already been given by the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) in his budget and by the Minister of Health (Mr. House) in his statement today.

We wish to have informed public debate, public hearings around the Province for associations, lobby groups, interest groups, individuals and so on to get involved in a lively public debate with presentations to the royal commission on the future of health care costs in this Province and how they can be realistically managed and handled. Therefore we have established a royal commission which was referred to in the budget and which now has become a reality today by the Minister of Health. That is the way that the government wishes to proceed, Mr. Speaker, and that is the way we are going to proceed. The royal commission's report will form the basis of the direction that this government wishes to take in health care policy for the next five or six years.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. the member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) re her statement yesterday. And, Mr. Speaker, I hardly know how to ask this question today because we do not know what the situation is and we certainly do not want to muddy the waters. We want to remain neutral in this teacher lockout as we have been doing right throughout. We have one concern, Mr. Speaker, namely, to get the school open and to get the students and teachers back there. We want the educational system functioning. So on the basis of the minister's statement yesterday, as I say, I hardly know how to approach it.

I will ask the minister since her statement yesterday respecting the moratorium and requesting that schools open on Monday and the collective bargaining process begin, I am wondering whether the minister has anything new to report. I did hear a news report this morning that the minister was going to make a statement today, and certainly if the minister is going to make a statement today, this ought to be the place to make it.

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

MS. VERGE: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I had hoped to be able to make a Ministerial Statement in the time period allotted for that purpose a few minutes ago. However, I could not do that then because what I had hoped to do was to read to hon. members the text of a letter over my signature sent to the President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association this morning which had not been received by him during the time for Ministerial Statements. A minute or two ago I received word that my letter was in fact received by the NTA President and now, with the permission of all hon. members, I would like to read the text of the letter.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: After the Question Period.

MS. VERGE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be quite happy to wait until after the Question Period -

MR. LUSH: So do. But we do not want you to use Question Period for it.

MS. VERGE: - and then ask for leave of all hon. members to make a Ministerial Statement. That is what I had intended to do.

MR. LUSH: There is a place for it.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, we would like to do that after the Question Period. We do not want to use the Question Period.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Do you want me to answer the question?

MR. LUSH: No, I will sit down and give my colleagues a chance to pursue something else, Mr. Speaker.

MR. HISCOCK: Mr. Speaker.

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

PREMIER PECKFORD: Here comes the stranger.

MR. HISCOCK: With regard to the stranger, there is such a thing as a flu going around the Province and the next time I have the flu I will get a doctor's note and bring it to the Premier.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. HISCOCK: My question is to the Minister of Education. The Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) ended up saying to the university students that they had until May 15, I believe, to get back with a proposal with regard to raising of loans for post-secondary education up to \$900. Has she received any reply from the students at the trade school and the university yet?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I am having a meeting at 2:30 p.m. this afternoon with representatives of the Council of the Students' Union of Memorial University to discuss the changes we proposed in our student aid plan. I have to remind everyone that those changes will not make any difference at all for the approximately one-third of our Province's post-secondary education students in the most needy category who all along had been borrowing the maximum available from the Canada Student Loan Programme and then receiving the maximum grants or free money from our provincial government. Those people will not be affected by the changes we have proposed. But I am looking forward to having the meeting with the CSU representatives this afternoon. I am also expecting to hear back from the student leaders at the College of Trades and Technology and the College of Fisheries before May 9, which is the deadline set at the students' request for their input to government before we finalize our decisions on the changes to the student aid plan, especially the changes in the eligibility criteria, which I have told them maybe subject to some modification after we have the benefit of their advice and input.

The reason the students asked for that much

MS. VERGE:

time to give their input is that some of them, especially those at the University, have to write exams now and the process of writing exams would detract from their effort in formulating recommendations on changes to our student aid plan.

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

MR. HISCOCK: So could the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) inform this House if there is any change with regard to the government changing its policy of having \$900 ceiling loan before students qualify for any grant or bursary?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I just finished saying that I have told the student leaders that I will wait and government will wait until we receive their recommendations, which we want to have before May 9, before we will finalize our decisions about the changes that we will make in our student aid plan to make it fair and equitable, and to direct most of the aid to the most needy students, but at the same time to recognize the fact that the federal government has reduced Established Programmes Financing for post-secondary education beyond a level it had undertaken to provide under the previous arrangement, making it much more difficult for our provincial government, with all our problems, to maintain the programmes that we had formerly.

And Newfoundland and Labrador has had by far the most generous student aid plan in the whole country. By a wide margin students in our Province have gotten a much bigger chunk of their aid in the form of grants than loans, and by a wide margin our students have gotten

MS. VERGE: on average much higher grants, free money from our Province, than their counterparts in the other provinces of Canada which participate in the Canada Student Loan programme.

MR. HISCOCK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. HISCOCK: Could the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) inform this House with regards to the high unemployment among our youth, and now the university and trade schools will soon be finished and those students will be on the job market, can the minister inform this House what plans of action she is undertaking with the Minister of Manpower (Mr. Dinn) and the Minister of Youth (Mr. Simms) to come up with programme for youth employment this Summer?

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I think that question should be fielded by the minister primarily responsible, my colleague, the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn).

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker -

MR. NEARY: A point of order.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MR. NEARY: We had a ruling on that I believe yesterday, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the reason we are so strong on this, if you allow this to happen then the minister would make his statement and he would pass it on to the Premier, and then the Premier would pass it on to the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins), and that would be the end of the Question Period. You just cannot have that, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. President of the Council, to that point of order.

MR. MARSHALL: If I may, Mr. Speaker, it is also a rule in Beauchesne, and it is a rule of common sense as well I should think, that one should address one's questions to the minister responsible. So I would think, for the sake of the orderliness of the Question Period, the hon. gentlemen might like to take a post graduate course over the weekend and find who is responsible for what in the government and address their questions accordingly.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please! To that point of order, certainly if the question should better be fielded and asked of the Minister of Labour and Manpower maybe the Leader of the Opposition, or one of his colleagues, would like the ask the Minister of Labour and Manpower.

MR. NEARY: No, we would not.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), I wonder if the minister can inform the House what the policy of her department is, or the policy of the government, respecting applications being made by school boards, or committees of school boards, sub-committees of school boards, making applications for monies to repair schools, to renovate schools, to repair gyms, and build gyms, and all this sort of thing, under the various federal job creation programmes? Can the minister inform us just what the policy of this government is respecting these applications?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. This provincial government has a policy which recongizes our constitution. Our constitution provides that there is a partnership in education between our provincial government and the recognized churches which had rights in education at the time of our Confederation with Canada in 1949.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the rights of the churches in education is that of allocation of public funds for school construction. Monies voted by this Legislature for school construction across our Province are handed by our administration in block form to the church authorities, to the Denominational Education Committees. The DECS have complete discretion over the use of those funds.

MS. VERGE: The DECs alone, without any reference to any politician, anyone on this side of the House -

MR. LUSH: A lot of nonsense. Trash. Nonsense. Trash.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I would like the member opposite to repeat that to Archbishop Penney and to Bishop Mate and to the other leaders of the recognized churches of our Province, and I think the member opposite would find that what I am saying will be fully borne out by the respected church authorities in our Province.

MR. NEARY: Do not be so silly.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the policy of our administration -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

The policy of our administration respecting the spending of public funds coming from the federal government for school construction for capital projects in education in this Province is consistent with the constitution and with the policy previously articulated about spending of provincial government funds, that is, federal government funds have to be channelled through the provincial government to the Denominational Education Committees who then will direct them to the most urgently needed projects across the Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the procedure that was quite correctly followed by the federal government in times of happier relationships between the federal government and the provincial government when the Department of Regional Economic Expansion was in its heyday and was effectively addressing the need -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS VERGE: - to reduce regional economic disparity across our country, when the federal government through DREE spent a lot of money building schools across our Province, commonly known as DREE schools -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

MS VERGE: - Mr. Speaker, in that instance some years ago of the federal government constructing DREE schools, those federal government funds were correctly channelled through the provincial government to the DECs. The DECs were fully involved and they decided which projects

MS VERGE: were actually made possible with those public funds.

Mr. Speaker, I have tried to answer the member's question. I regret that he has been talking all the time I have been trying to give a good explanation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. LUSH: We just heard nothing but a pile of nonsense, a pile of nonsense! These school boards make applications to get moneys under these federal job creation programmes. It has nothing to do with the constitution, nothing in the world. Can the minister tell how many applications, how many projects were approved by the federal government, and rejected by the Province? Can the minister tell the House how many were approved?

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

MS VERGE: Mr. Speaker, the principle that I just enunciated, one enshrined in our constitution, one accepted by the churches of our Province, applies to capital funding, applies to the use of public funds from the provincial government and the federal government for the construction of new classrooms, for the building of schools. It has no reference to operating funding, which is handled primarily through

MS. VERGE:

provincial government sources, but also it is supplemented through local school taxes and other means available to the local and regional school boards.

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

MR. LUSH: Is the minister aware that one of the applications in to one of these federal job creation programmes, it was under NEED actually, was an application to remove urea formaldehyde from a school in Charlottetown?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, I have heard something about that on the news the last couple of evenings, and I am not aware that there is any problem for that school board accepting that funding for removing the offensive material that is creating a health hazard there.

MR. LUSH: The problem is the minister will not give any money.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, it would appear to us that the minister is being penny-wise and pound-foolish. The Province has an opportunity to get capital works money, to get projects carried out that will not cost the taxpayers of this Province a cent,

MR. LUSH: She is hiding behind the constitution.

MR. NEARY: She is hiding behind the constitution.

It will not cost the provincial treasury a cent. For instance, in the case of Port au Choix where the community wanted to build -

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

The hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is making a speech and perhaps he should ask the question.

MR. NEARY: It was a good speech too,

Mr. Speaker. It is a pity I could not carry on with it.

Is the minister aware that in Port au Choix, where the community wanted to build a gymnasium on to the school down

MR. NEARY: there, and they got their clearance -

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

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

MR. MARSHALL: Your Honour has just drawn to the attention of the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) the fact that he was out of order, but the hon. Leader of the Opposition persists in flouting Your Honour's ruling and continuing on in exactly the same vein he was on when he was called to order by Your Honour. Now you know there are rules in this House and there are procedures that everyone has to comply with, and I suggest that if the hon. gentlemen cannot comply and cannot accept Your Honour's ruling, there is an obvious proceeding that we will have to take.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition, to that point of order.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, obviously the hon. gentleman was not listening to the question. I said, 'Is the minister aware,' and I believe that was in the form of a question. I know, Mr. Speaker, they would like to run this House and this Province like Nazi Germany. We have a couple of Hitlers over there now. But, Mr. Speaker, the question was perfectly in order, it was in keeping with the rules of the House, and if I was the hon. gentleman I would be the one to go out and do the course on the weekend, not only on rules, but I would go down to Mrs. McBride and do a course in self-development, good etiquette and manners.

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Tape 1055

PK - 3

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

Order, please!

The Chair recognized the hon. Leader of the Opposition on a supplementary question. As I mentioned a few days ago, there is a reference in Beauchesne to the fact that a supplementary question should not need any preamble whatsoever .

MR. NEARY:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. S. NEARY: Is the minister aware that in Port au Choix where the community wanted to build a gymnasium on to the school that all the clearances were obtained from the various authorities but it was rejected by the Department of Education? Why did the Department of Education in that case reject an application to get a gymnasium free of charge, a gift to the Province, that would not cost the taxpayers of this Province one penny?

MS. L. VERGE: Mr. Speaker.

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

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) just said is essentially not correct. What I am aware of is that the federal government ignored the provincial government, ignored the Department of Education, ignored the Catholic Education Committee and dealt directly with people in Port au Choix -

MR. J. HODDER: It was the people who put in for the project.

MS. VERGE: - in offering them part only, a fraction of the cost of constructing a gymnasium for an elementary school in that community, a facility considered needed by the people there. Mr. Speaker, if the federal government is sincere in spending some money across our Province to create jobs and at the same time to give us some needed school facilities, all the federal government has to do is approach the provincial government, dedicate a block amount of money for that purpose which we in turn will hand over to the church authorities according to the usual ratio for the church authorities, who are constitutionally charged with the responsibility of determining school construction needs and meeting them in order of priority will then spend the money most wisely. All the federal government has to do is come to us on that basis the way they did a few years ago when they funded the construction of DREE schools. I would call on the Leader of the Opposition and the

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MS. L. VERGE: Opposition Education critic to call on their friends in Ottawa and make that simple request. Tell them to come to us, give us the block amount of money they want to spend to create jobs in constructing schools, and we will gladly turn it over to the church authorities and we know they will spend it where it is most needed.

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

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, we would be very happy to accept the minister's invitation to call on Ottawa if we were sitting on that side of the House, but it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that that is a job for the administration. Mr. Speaker, here is an opportunity to develop projects paid for by the Government of Canada -

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, please!
The hon. the Leader of the Opposition is again attempting to make a speech and there are only a couple of minutes left in the Question Period. Maybe he should pose his question.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, is the hon. minister aware that this is a golden opportunity to get all kinds of projects done, urea formaldehyde taken out of the school down in my colleague's district, and why does the minister not just swallow her pride, why does the Premier not swallow his pride - this is federal money - why does the Province not welcome the opportunity to take advantage of this money and develop these projects? Why does the minister not pick up her phone and try to straighten out the difficulties, if indeed there are difficulties, because I think the hon. the minister is just tilting at windmills, Mr. Speaker?

MS. VERGE: Mr. Speaker.

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

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Tape No. 1056

MJ - 3

MS. L. VERGE: Mr. Speaker, better than my having
picked up the phone, the Premier of the Province has written
the federal government and

MS. VERGE:

called on them to co-operate with us, to respect our Constitution, to turn the money over to the church authorities through the Province

MR. NEARY: Can you table that correspondence?

MS. VERGE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Premier says that he can table that correspondence. However, unfortunately, regrettably, the federal government has made no approach to me, or to my knowledge anyone else in our government. Mr. Speaker, let nobody be under a misimpression. The fact is the provincial government would welcome federal government money to supplement our provincial government funds for new school construction. However, federal government funds have to be channelled through the provincial government to the church authorities according to the Constitution for the church authorities to direct them where they are most needed. That is only common sense, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

Time for the Question Period has expired.

Before I recognize the hon. minister, I would like to welcome to the galleries today a delegation from the Town of Victoria with Mayor Frank Clarke, Deputy Mayor Fred Baldwin and Councillor Harold Priddle.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Minister of Education have leave to make her statement? Is it agreed?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed.

The hon. Minister of Education.

MS. VERGE:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to read to hon.

members the text of a letter over my signature which was delivered just a few minutes ago to the President of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association. This letter replies to one received from the NTA President about 5:45 p.m. yesterday. The letter from me to the NTA President is as follows: 'Dear Mr. Noseworthy: I must express my disappointment that you have rejected the proposal of the Provincial Federation of Home and School and Parent/Teachers Associations, that the NTA declare a moratorium on its strike action. Acceptance of that proposal would have guaranteed the re-opening of the schools on Monday. Government is prepared to return to the negotiating table at any time. It should be understood, however, that if real progress is to be made a basic change is needed in the NTA's outlook and expectations. Given these circumstances, we would welcome a counter-proposal to the offer we made some time ago and which was rejected by your membership on March 30, 1983.

'We appeal to you to reconsider your position on the proposal of the Provincial Federation of Home and School and Parent/Teachers Associations.

Yours sincerely.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, as I have said before, we have two major concerns in this teacher lock-out. One is that the students get back to school, that our schools be opened. Number two, that the teachers of this Province be afforded the full process of their Collective Bargaining Act. These are the

MR. LUSH: major concerns that we have had. And, Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed with the minister, disappointed that the minister in her position as mediator has not been able to resolve this situation. Now what do we do, Mr. Speaker? That is the question. Now what do we do? Is the minister still going to sit back or is she going to use her authority, use her influence to try and get the teacher lockout situation resolved? Are they going to be given the full benefit of their Collective Bargaining Act? In other words, can we now look to other means? Are we going to look at mediation, are we going to look at binding arbitration? Mr. Speaker, this dispute has to be resolved, it has to be resolved, and we cannot sit back. It could be resolved if we had people who could negotiate. It has to be resolved. That is our concern, Mr. Speaker, to get the students back in school, that is our concern, and to ensure that teachers are treated justly and fairly. So, Mr. Speaker, this passing back and forth of letters, this is not going to resolve the situation.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please! Time for the hon. member has expired.

MR. LUSH: By leave. Do I have leave?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member does not have leave.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. AYLWARD: Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member for Kilbride.

MR. AYLWARD: The Government Services Estimates Committee has met and has passed Head IV Finance, V Public Works, XI Transportation, XVI Labour and Manpower, XVII Municipal Affairs, all without amendment.

MR.SPEAKER(Russell): Orders of the Day.

MR.NEARY: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR.NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I move that under Standing Order 23 the regular order of business of this House be suspended today to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely the virtual collapse of the educational system in this Province due to the lockout of teachers by this administration.

MR.MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR.MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, this is similar to another motion that the hon. gentleman presented earlier this week and that Your Honour has ruled upon and the same observations pertain. While the position with respect to the teachers' strike is serious, under the rules it has to be a matter of urgency of debate. There is plenty of opportunity afforded for debate in the ordinary, regular business of the day. On the Order Paper is the Committee of Supply, which will presently be called, and there is also the Address in Reply which will be called, and the Budget Debate.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please!

While the matter raised is of great importance to everybody, as the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) said, it is the urgency of debate that the Chair has to rule on. The Address in Reply and the Committee of Supply and other occasions are on the Order Paper when the matter of the teachers' strike or lockout can be considered, and based upon that I have to rule that the motion made by the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is not in order.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MARSHALL: Committee of the Whole on Supply.

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

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON SUPPLY

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!

Head III, and we are presently on 3.2,1-01, Premier's Office.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. the Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to just have a few words to say on this subhead. I do not think I was here yesterday when the President of the Council introduced it, and I wanted to indicate that I think if you look at the estimates over the last number of years, the estimates for the Premier's Office, I would say the rate of increase of the moneys expended for

PREMIER PECKFORD: Premier's Office has been perhaps one of the least of all subheads in government and, as a matter of fact, I think it might even be falling.

MR. NEARY: There is no reason.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!

MR. WARREN: It is still too much money.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: So we are, Mr. Chairman, through the moneys that are being expended, trying to live within the restraint situation the same as all other ministers and people who are responsible for the expenditure of public moneys. We have been trying to keep our expenses in line and I think we have done a fairly good job on that over the last two or three years and we will continue to ensure that the amount of moneys under this subhead are kept within the wage restraints the same as everybody else and the general expenditure restraints.

Yesterday in the House, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), I think, mentioned something about the question of the space that was vacated by the Department of Justice lawyers and that division is now housed in offices at Mount Scio House. And the Leader of the Opposition was charging here in the House that the space that the lawyers left is now being used by another government department.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And he made that allegation, he either made it based upon wrong information, or he did not have any information and just made the allegation. I do not know which is true. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) can if he would wish to, inform me where he got his information. He made the charge and the allegation yesterday that the space that the lawyers left when their lease expired and then moved to Mount Scio House -

MR. NEARY: Over in the Terpstra Building.

PREMIER PECKFORD: That is the Terpstra Building. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) charged yesterday that that space is going to be used by another department. So I would like to know where the Leader of the Opposition got that information. Did he concoct it out of his own mind? Did he dream it up? Or did he get it from some information? I would like to ask the Leader of the Opposition a question and I would like for him to answer it because he made a charge and an allegation, and no doubt it will be carried by the press and so on, which tries to dilute the important initiative that I took to try to restrain spending that I as Premier was incurring on behalf of the taxpayers of the Province.

So I think the Leader of the Opposition really—that this House deserves from the Leader of the Opposition some explanation. Did he dream it up? Or did he get the information from some source? So when the Leader of the Opposition gets a chance to speak I would like for the Leader of the Opposition to address himself to that. He made an allegation that the savings would not be as great as I had indicated because other government departments were going to move into the Terpstra Building.

MR. NEARY: And that is not true.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And I would like to know where the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) got his information. He always gets up in this House and says he knows more about what is going on in government than ministers and the Premier and all of that.

MR. NEARY: We know all about this hearing too that Mr. Weir is heading.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Now let us stick to one issue at a time now.

MR. NEARY: Well, let us talk about Mr. Weir.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!

MR. NEARY: And the campaign for the leadership. Let us talk about that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. DINN: Let us talk about John Doyle.

MR. NEARY: You do not want to talk about Mr. Weir -

PREMIER PECKFORD: Yes, we will talk about that too but let us talk about one thing at a time. The Leader of the Opposition made a charge and an allegation yesterday, and I am not going to let him away with it, and now he is squirming now, I am going on to another subject. Now squirm all you like now. You squirmed when the Mifflin Enquiry came out and you were left guilty. You squirmed then. You have squirmed when you have lost leadership campaigns. You are squirming over there right now, Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition, and now he wants to go on and try to allege and make another charge now. When he fails on one allegation he moves to another one. Just look at him, Mr. Chairman, look at him squirm over there. Move to another

PREMIER PECKFORD: allegation over there now. We are talking about the subheads now of the Premier's office and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) charged and alleged yesterday that the savings that I had indicated publicly that were going to be accrued to the government because I moved out of Mount Scio House and moved government offices in there, that the Terpstra Building was going to be used again by government so that the savings would not be as great as I had said they were. Now that is either true or that is false. And I am saying to the Leader of the Opposition, when he gets a chance to speak now in this debate, would he please inform the Legislature where he got this information? Did he

PREMIER PECKFORD: make it up or did he get it from somewhere? I would like to know which of the two - it can only be one of the two, and I would like to know.

My first point in getting up, Mr. Chairman, was to indicate that the expenditures in the Premier's Office over the last number of years have been well in line, as a matter of fact, I think even less, they are going down. The expenditures in the Premier's Office are actually going down and that is something to be said. While health costs are going up 23 per cent and education costs are going up and everybody is talking about the 6 and 5 programme, the absolute dollar figure in the Premier's Office is going down. And I think that sort of demonstrates that the Premier, as the leader of the government, as leader of the Province, is trying to do his part in restraining expenditures. I think that is an important point to be made. As from time to time I can become the subject of great criticism by the Leader of the Opposition and by others in the public, about what the Premier is doing or not doing, because a Premier obviously has a fairly high profile in his own Province, then I think it is only fair for me, in my turn when the Estimates come up, to be able to declare with some degree of pride that the absolute dollar figures for the Premier's Office over the last two or three years have been going down. So that while most departments and sectors of the economy are demanding extra money, the Premier for his part is trying to restrain and is seeing the amount of dollars used going down. And the same can be said in the transportation that the Premier uses. Back in other days - and here we are now in a time when, I guess, the demand on the Premier's

PREMIER PECKFORD: time to travel is greater than it was five years ago, greater than it was ten or fifteen years ago yet the amount that I spend of taxpayers' dollars on travelling is going down, Mr. Chairman. It is actually going down. In the last twelve months, for example, the helicopter - how many times did I use the helicopter for government business in the last year? Once or twice I used the helicopter and then when I was absolutely forced to, I have taken my car or rented a car and driven 350 miles and 400 miles so I would not have to take the helicopter.

MR. MORGAN: Right. And drive yourself, without a chauffeur, too.

PREMIER PECKFORD: And drive myself when the other two premiers since Confederation had chauffeurs.

MR. MORGAN: (Inaudible)

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, exactly.

MR. MORGAN: Joey Smallwood did not drive without a chauffeur.

PREMIER PECKFORD: No, sir. The former, former Premier did not drive by himself.

MR. NEARY: He did until his eyes got bad.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Yes, until his eyes got bad.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Now we are touching a sensitive area.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

PREMIER PECKFORD: Mr. Chairman, the number one point I want to make is that the Premier's Office is constraining its expenditures, they are actually going down,

PREMIER PECKFORD: that the Premier himself has restrained his expenses both on transportation and on accommodation and has reduced them on behalf of the taxpayers of Newfoundland. And two, charges and allegations made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) yesterday must be answered, the Leader of the Opposition must come clean with this Legislature. If he is going to debate these expenditures, if he is going to charge and allege that we are going to use that space that the lawyers moved out of, then he must either prove it or whatever. So, you know, we have to see that from the Leader of the Opposition now and just see how truthful he is going to be with this Committee in dealing with these Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, there is not much more I can add, simply to say

PREMIER PECKFORD: that we are trying to keep within our bounds and we are proving that. The numbers prove it and it is easy for the Opposition to see those numbers. You know, we are fairly proud of the job that we are doing there. We try in the Premier's office. There is a lot of mail that comes in, hundreds and hundreds -

MR. NEARY: What about the dining room?

PREMIER PECKFORD: The dining room is there, yes, and the dining room is going to remain there, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

PREMIER PECKFORD: That is the only place now that the Premier has to entertain, to have meetings through lunch unless I book a room at some restaurant, which will cost me more, around town. Most of the meetings that I have with people from out of town who come in here, I can only have during luncy^h or during supper. And I am going to, as Premier Smallwood did, as Premier Moores did, I am going to keep the dining room because it provides a place for meetings for me and the ministers, and I am very proud of that. I know, Mr. Chairman, that the Leader of the Opposition used that dining room when he was a minister in the Cabinet back with the Premier.

MR. NEARY: I certainly did not.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Well, perhaps he did not because he was a junior minister and he was ignored.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. NEARY: I did not.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I am sorry. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MORGAN: Go on boy, you are jealous.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I know. He is jealous that he never had the chance to use it.

Mr. Chairman, let me tell you something else, it is going to be a foggy day in Newfoundland when the Leader of the Opposition ever gets the chance to use that dining room.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. S. NEARY: You are worried about that, are you?

PREMIER PECKFORD: No,

MR. NEARY: You better be worried about that,

PREMIER PECKFORD: No. Because I think the member for Torngat Mountains (Mr. Warren) and a few other members over there who are doing an excellent job in the Opposition are going to challenge the hon. the Leader, and when the Leadership comes up in the next year or so the Leader of the Opposition is going to be gone.

I have heard already, rumours from really reliable sources, of some things that members over there have said about the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary). They want to see him go. There are only eight of them over there and already there are two or three or more over there saying that the Leader of the Opposition has to go if the Liberal Party is going to have a chance to increase the number of seats it has in the House. And every where I go around the Province I hear the same thing, 'Brian boy, you got it made. Your greatest asset is Mr. Neary.' That is the comment I hear more often than anything else, Mr. Chairman, around this Province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. W. CALLAN: Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please! Order, please!
The hon. the member for Bellevue.

MR. CALLAN: Mr. Chairman, the gentleman who just took his seat should be totally ashamed of himself. He is the most expensive Premier in the whole country and I can cite a dozen to one examples of that. But, Mr. Chairman, at a time of restraint when the teachers -

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. CALLAN: - and other public servants are told to settle for 5 per cent and 4 per cent -

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

MR. MORGAN:

(Inaudible).

MR. NEARY:

Why do you not go down to Gaultois
and Ramea and tell the people what you are going to do about them.

MR. MORGAN:

I might go the weekend, boy.

MR. CALLAN:

The mouth from Bonavista South,
could you keep him quiet, Mr. Chairman, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN (AYLWARD):

Order, please!

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Chairman, we have

MR. CALLAN: on that side of the Legislature eighteen or nineteen Cabinet ministers, then we have a half a dozen half Cabinet ministers, and during a time of restraint.

MR. HODDER: No, they are not even half Cabinet ministers, they are just paid flunkies.

MR. CALLAN: Now these are just some examples of the extravagance of the Premier. I mean, if these parliamentary secretaries, in the departments that they work in were doing things, were producing something to help this Province rather than just running the Province deeper and deeper in debt with their unnecessary and high salaries, you know, if they were doing anything, if they were accomplishing anything, but there is nothing happening in this Province, Mr. Chairman. Nothing happening in this Province. I wonder how guilty these gentlemen feel when they reach out their hands to take their cheques whenever they get paid twice a month, I suppose.

But in addition to these unnecessary and overpaid half, half Cabinet ministers, Mr. Chairman, I wonder how many other people, unnecessary people the Premier has on his staff? For example, the Chief of Staff, a salary of \$50,711, his salary increased over last year 7 per cent. Why was he not forced to stay within the 6 per cent and 5 per cent guidelines?

The Senior Policy Advisor -

MR. HODDER: Five per cent and four per cent.

MR. CALLAN: - \$62,244, in the Premier's Office, \$62,000. That is over a 9 per cent increase over last year. These are just two examples.

Mr. Chairman, in the Premier's Office there are people who are there for one sole purpose and that is to look at the obituary columns and to look at the sports pages and to look in the newspapers to see who they can send out a letter of sympathy to or a congratulatory message to, whether it be in sports or whatever.

AN HON. MEMBER:

That is not true.

MR. NEARY:

It is true.

MR. CALLAN:

Mr. Chairman, let me give you one small example of the unnecessary waste of the taxpayers' dollars. Imagine the Premier of the Province, not even during election time, by the way, it was between elections. It had nothing to do with a by-election in Bellevue or a general election, you would expect the Premier to be pulling every string then, but it was between elections that the Premier sent out a telegram to a little committee out in the town of Bellevue telling them that they were successful in getting their 75 per cent funding for a new fire truck. I mean, you would expect a telegram or a phone call or a letter to come from Leo McCann or some civil servant, you know, in the Department of Municipal Affairs, or perhaps the deputy minister or even the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mrs. Newhook), but the Premier, what silly nonsense and what silly trash. And the propaganda sheets that come out from the Premier's Office on a regular basis about the offshore negotiations and why they have broken down,

MR. CALLAN: nonsense, silly nonsense!
The last one we had there a week or more ago cost
\$23,000. What silly nonsense! The most expensive
Premier in all of Canada, Mr. Chairman. And the staff
that the Premier has in his office - What money could
be saved if the Premier were to cut back on them, and
as I said, get rid of these five or six Parliamentary
Secretaries!

Mr. Chairman, there is nothing
happening in this Province. There is nothing happening.
A month or two ago, we were told by the minister who
is down South now, the minister responsible for Development
and Tourism (Mr. Windsor), that he was going to publish -
in two weeks, he said - the report on the smelter that
would either go in Labrador or in the Bay of Islands area.
In two weeks, he said, and that was a month and a half
ago. Where is that report, Mr. Chairman? Where is it?
I mean, Joey Smallwood was talking about an aluminum
smelter back in 1970 and this government have been talking
about it ever since with no results, no concrete results.
Mr. Chairman, the Premier, you know, is not even running
a caretaker government. There is nothing happening.
If the Premier really cared about this Province as he
pretends to, what he would do is hand in his resignation.
Because I am sure that the member for Mount Scio
(Mr. Barry) is chafing at the bit. And I do not want to
blow his horn but, Mr. Chairman, it is common knowledge
that the only negotiations that ever took place in this
Province since this administration took over in 1979
were carried out by the gentleman from Mount Scio.
It was the member for Mount Scio who was in the Cabinet
at the time, who negotiated, or renegotiated
the ERCO deal, the ERCO contract,

MR. CALLAN: it was not the Premier. The Premier may have tried to take credit in his press conferences and so on, but it is common knowledge that as Minister of Mines and Energy it was the member for Mount Scio (Mr. Barry). And it was the member for Mount Scio who resigned from the Cabinet because he could not carry on the sort of negotiations that the Premier wanted him to carry on with Ottawa. I would say, Mr. Chairman, that if the member for Mount Scio were still in Cabinet, and was allowed to carry on the kind of negotiations that he wanted to carry on with Ottawa, that we would have had an agreement long before now. You see, Mr. Chairman, it is easy for anybody to see who is to blame in this fiasco that we have between this Province and Ottawa. You know, this administration cannot even negotiate a contract with teachers let alone negotiate a contract with Ottawa for the offshore and the jurisdictional dispute. It is easy to see, the Premier is the only player who has not changed. As I said, the member for Mount Scio was one of the players and, of course, he was forced to resign; he could not stay there and not carry on the negotiations as he wanted to, so he resigned. On the federal scene, Mr. Chairman, we had two different players, the Premier is the same player though. What about the ferry services that the Premier took over since 1979?

MR. NEARY: We do not hear anything about that?

MR. CALLAN: What about the ferry services? Right here, Mr. Chairman, quoting from the press:

MR. MORGAN: Any ferry services we took over were forced on us by the feds.

MR. CALLAN: "The Green Bay Transport No. 1". Taxpayers are getting neither equity in the ferry

MR. CALLAN: nor service, for the money they are pouring into it."

MR. WARREN: Where is that? Green Bay.

MR. CALLAN: "Alright," says Dawe the Minister of Transportation, "So we have one bummer on our hands." He admits that the government bungled. We have a b-u-m-m-e-r, we have a bummer on our hands. When we negotiated that deal we did not have the hindsight" - and here is the Premier who talks about other premiers who were supposed to have hindsight. Where was the hindsight of this administration? "Considering the cost of repairs still needed on the Green Bay Transport, an estimated \$500,000, it may end up costing taxpayers \$2 million or three times the purchase price". We are talking about the Premier's friend here. We are talking about the man who helped the Premier become leader of the PC party by raising funds for him and giving generous donations to his campaign back in

MR. CALLAN: the Winter and Spring of 1979.

MR. NEARY: Do you deny that? Stand up and deny that.

MR. TOBIN: Who financed your campaign?

MR. CALLAN: I think, Mr. Chairman, what we need is a public enquiry, what we need is a public enquiry. We need a public enquiry under the Public Enquiries Act. We need a public enquiry to look into the whole ferry system in this Province and the way this administration has bungled it.

MR. HODDER: Did they not give him the money to buy the boat in the first place?

MR. CALLAN: That is right. Here it is. Three nights ago here in committee, Mr. Chairman, discussing the Transportation estimates, I asked the Minister of Transportation (Mr. Dawe) a half dozen questions in connection with Wilbur Weir and the ferry service.

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

MR. CALLAN: And, Mr. Chairman, you cannot get the Hansard for six months, or until at least the House closes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

MR. CALLAN: By leave?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member does not have leave.

The hon. Premier.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I just want to answer a number of charges there. They are hardly worth answering in one sense. I think when I left the House, when the

PREMIER PECKFORD: hon. member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) got up, I just wondered why the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) did not get up, I asked him to answer a question about a charge he made yesterday, He is too cowardly to get up in the House, Mr. Chairman, and answer the question and, therefore, he had to hide behind the member for Bellevue. I never thought I would see the day the Leader of the Opposition would hide behind the member for Bellevue, and get the member for Bellevue to get up. He would not get up himself.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. Leader of the Opposition is a coward. He would not get up and answer the question I asked him. Where did he get his information that the lawyers who moved out of the Terpstra Building into Mount Scio House, that that space was then going to be inhabited by other public servants? Where did he get the information? He made a charge and now he cannot substantiate the charge and so he hides behind another hon. member. So let it be recorded, Mr. Chairman, that the Leader of the Opposition is great on making charges, but he is very weak on substantiating them, validating them, very, very weak. Where did the Leader of the Opposition get his information? Just a hollow, hollow allegation, as are all the allegations by the Leader of the Opposition.

On salary increases, Mr. Chairman, that were raised. The salary increases for the members of the staff, the Premier's Office, take in a two year period. And if you look at the salaries, there were increases before last April and increases after this April so that the increases that the staff have gotten - you can do a bit of mathematics on it - show that the increases given the staff in the Premier's Office are no greater than the increases that were given to other public servants. They are now under five and four

PREMIER PECKFORD: and if you look at the differences, because it is over the two years, it is five and four which would be nine per cent.

So, Mr. Chairman, the allegation, or the charge that the members of the Premier's Office get paid differently than other public servants is totally erroneous, totally without foundation, in fact, and the Opposition cannot prove otherwise. They can make allegations, You know, they talk about research and going to be bed at nine-thirty at night and all the rest of it, well, they can do their research

PREMIER PECKFORD: on the Premier's Office, on the salaries in the Premier's Office and demonstrate to this House and the people of Newfoundland that the people in the Premier's Office get paid differently than other public servants and they will not be able to prove it. The mathematics show that they cannot prove it. I have it here before me now, I think he mentioned the Chief of Staff or whatever - over the two year period a 9 per cent increase-over two years. Salary in the 1982/83 book effective April 1st, 1981, \$46,439; salary in the 1983/84 book effective April 1st, 1983 - two years - April, 1981 - April, 1983, \$57,011. What is the percentage? Nine per cent increase over two years, the Chief of Staff in the Premier's Office. I will go over that again, Mr. Chairman. The salary in the 1982/83 book which was effective for April 1st, 1981, the salary was effective and the salary was \$46,439. And the salary effective April 1st, 1983 - two years, April 1st, 1981 - April 1st, 1983, is \$57,011. So if you take \$46,439, \$57,011, subtract it and work out the increase, it is 9 per cent over two years.

AN HON. MEMBER: Five per cent and four per cent.

PREMIER PECKFORD: Five per cent and four per cent over two years and that is before the wage restraints even came in. So the Chief of Staff of the Premier's Office got a 9 per cent increase from April 1st, 1981 to April 1st, 1983. As a matter of fact, that is a very meager increase over that period of time because everybody else, I would say, got more than that over that period of time - 9 per cent. So there you go, that is the kind of allegations that you have to put up with from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) when he hides behind another member who gets up and makes another allegation.

So on two things now this morning, Mr. Chairman - we have the Leader of the Opposition

PREMIER PECKFORD: destroyed on an allegation he made yesterday about space in the Terpstra Building and now we have the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) destroyed on an allegation of increases in the Premier's staff that are different from the others. So there are two now where they are wrong.

The aluminum smelter that the member for Bellevue mentions, the aluminum smelter. There is a feasibility study underway between the private industry that is interested and government. That is a feasibility study and hundreds of thousands of dollars are being put into it, into that study. Now you are not going to build an aluminum smelter

PREMIER PECKFORD: aluminum smelter anywhere in Newfoundland and Labrador or anywhere else in the world unless a feasibility study is done. Who is going to spend two or three billion dollars without a feasibility study? So, we are doing a feasibility study. We are doing all that we can to examine the potential for industrial development around the Province and, in order to do that, obviously you have to do a feasibility study. That is being done and it will be released within the next couple of months by the Minister of Development (Mr. Windsor).

We have done a Labrador Transportation plan. We have done a whole range of things around the province as it relates to economic activity. The fact that they have not gone ahead is a function of our economic condition in the Western World. It is not a function of this government, solely. Now, if you want to take a different philosophical economic bent and start purchasing industry that is another thing, that is socialism, then you just pump money in and and you get into the state that Mitterand got into in France and what does he have to do now? He has to draw back. The leader in this Western world who had to eat more crow in the last two years, is Francois Mitterand, the President of France, who is a socialist and has three or four communists in his cabinet. He is the one who has had to do the most crawling over the last two years. He got in and he argued that more involvement into the economy by the Government of France would be beneficial to French society and would not lead to any deterioration of their

PREMIER PECKFORD: currency, their balance of payments, inflation, unemployment and all the rest of it and what has happened in the two years that he instituted that new policy? We have seen the French economy go down and down and down and now he has to realize that he went too far in that direction. Now he has to balance it off by kicking out a whole bunch of people from Russia to regain some political popularity and he has had to make significant changes in the economic and financial policies that he had been persuing. We are doing all we can, but it is not just a function of the Provincial Government it is a function of economics within a free market economy which, in Canadian terms, is sort of a hybrid. economic society, we are neither socialists or capitalist, we are somewhere in between, Every country has its own unique economics and you cannot be dogmatic about it to say one is purely one way and one is purely another.

On the whole question of the offshore, I mean, why do I have to - Mr. Chairman, there is really no need to comment on it. You know, no greater insult has ever been perpetrated upon a provincial society than that which has been perpetrated upon the Newfoundland society today. We are expected as a people, as a progressive society, to accept verbal assurances on the largest oil field in Canada's history and not only the largest oil field, the greatest potential, 700 thousand square miles of potential, and we cannot get the federal government to put in writing where it stands on the vital issues necessary to be put together for an agreement. They will not put it in writing. And I find it absolutely astounding that anybody could accuse this

PREMIER PECKFORD: government of being somehow less than eager to get an agreement, than we are. And here you have all the commentators, individual and collective, around Newfoundland especially and in other places, try to be coy about it and blame both governments equally. Well, that does a great disservice to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. We are willing to put our position in writing and we want the federal government to do the same thing. We tried to verbally negotiate so far and then go to writing and it failed. We have tried everything that is possible to try and we just cannot get these people to put in writing what they say verbally. The President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) had an agreement with the present Minister of Energy in Ottawa (Mr. Chretien), verbally, we thought he did, it looked pretty good, and then when we had to put it in writing - obviously, nobody argues that you got to have an agreement in writing on the offshore, surely. So, okay, we did our verbal negotiations and then when we went to put it in writing of course there was no agreement. They started putting positions on the table which were completely inconsistent with the verbal positions that they had put in the verbal negotiations between the two ministers.

Mr. Chairman, on the last point that the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan) made, it really does not deserve it. If the hon. member wants to make an allegation against me or something, let him make it outside this House where he does not have the immunity that he has inside. The situation on the ferry systems in this Province, they are working very, very well. Much better than they have ever worked before. On the question of the particular ferry in question, that has been answered and the information is available on that matter. The ferry

PREMIER PECKFORD: was purchased in good faith at the time on the clear understanding from the federal government that the ferry terminals would be finished and that we could use that kind of a boat. They reneged on their commitments to go ahead with the ferry terminals for over two or three years, making it impossible to use the ferry. The inspection that was done on it was done by technical experts at the time, and we trusted the information that the technical experts brought in, the Department of Transportation did. When the boat was purchased it was found that the technical experts' analysis of the improvements to be made was wrong.

PREMIER PECKFORD: I mean, those are the facts of the matter and they will stand under any scrutiny. I mean, that is the long and short of it. There were two main factors: The ferry terminals were not built according to the schedule the federal government had established and, two, the technical analysis which was done by a CSI inspector on it was incorrect. There were a lot more improvements to be done. But the ferry would have been used the same as all the other boats that were purchased if, in fact, the ferry terminals had been finished as they were promised and we would not have had to spend so much money on it if the technical analysis done by a CSI inspector was correct. That was the long and short of it. So, Mr. Chairman, these are the answers to all those questions.

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, you talk about a cowardly way to try to weasel out from underneath the dark cloud that the hon. gentleman is under with regard to the purchase of this ferry, the Green Bay fiasco situation!

My hon. colleague raised some very serious matters in connection with the purchase of this ferry, which was purchased, by the way, before the CN report was made. It was a sweetheart deal, Mr. Chairman, that was made between the hon. the Premier and his pal.

MR. CARTER: Say that outside the House.

MR. NEARY: No, where you make these kinds of statements is in the House, not outside the House. And if the hon. gentleman had any courage he would have

MR. NEARY: a public inquiry made into it.

MR. WARREN: Hear, hear! Hear, hear!

MR. NEARY: He would stand in his place in this House and demand that a public inquiry -

MR. TOBIN: Something like the Mifflin inquiry?

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, does the hon. gentleman have something to say? Does the hon. gentleman have some comment to make on it? If he does not, the hon. gentleman should go and do what I told the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall) to do this morning, to take a course in good manners and etiquette and try to improve himself. His constituents are ashamed of him.

Mr. Chairman, I would submit that the hon. gentleman has lowered the decorum of this House enough now since he came in here and if the hon. gentleman does not take his seat -

MR. CARTER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN (Dr. McNicholas): Order, please! Order, please!

On a point of order, the hon. the member for St. John's North.

MR. CARTER: What the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) is doing now is deliberately misunderstanding and misapplying the rules of this House. While it is true that we do have substantial legal protection for anything we say about anyone in this House, that is designed to protect us from a slip of the tongue, not from a deliberate attack on someone, some person or some agency that does not

MR. CARTER: have the same immunity as we have or the right to reply and, therefore, I would say that the hon. gentleman should not be allowed to say it and , in fact, should apologize for having said it. It was no slip of the tongue , it was done deliberately.

MR. NEARY: Having said it - Mr. Chairman, that is no point of order. The hon. gentleman is just as silly as usual, Mr. Chairman. That is no point of order. All they are doing is trying to use up some of my time.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman - Does Your Honour wish to make a ruling?

MR. CHAIRMAN (McNicholas): To that point of order, it will just take one second.

MR. NEARY: I hope this is not coming out of my time, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we just call a recess for a couple of minutes?

MR. NEARY: What is the problem?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are just looking up the reference.

PREMIER PECKFORD: He has to rule on the point of order.

MR. NEARY: Pardon?

PREMIER PECKFORD: The Chairman has to rule on the point of order.

MR. NEARY: There is no point of order.

PREMIER PECKFORD: That is only according to you.

MR. TOBIN: You are not in the Chair.

MR. NEARY: Why do you not go down and try to explain to your constituents why you misled them.

RECESS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call in the members.

Order, please!

To that point of order, I am checking into it and I will rule on it at a later time.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, the Premier seems to be terribly worried about the Opposition these days. He spends practically every moment that he gets in this House criticizing the Opposition, trying to divide the Opposition, trying to cause dissention in our ranks, Mr. Chairman, I can tell the hon. gentleman he is not going to succeed. We have eight potential leaders over here, we have eight very dedicated men who are working hard on behalf of the people of this Province, and if I was the hon. gentleman I would get eyes in the back of my head with some of the remarks that I hear coming from backbenchers and ministers on the government side of the House these days.

The member for Mount Scio

(Mr. Barry) is putting it mildly in this House and in his letters, what he says about the hon. gentleman outside of this House, Mr. Chairman, and you can go up and down the ranks, I can look across at hon. gentlemen now who grind their teeth, whose blood pressure goes up when they are talking about the Premier,

MR. S. NEARY:

they curse and swear on him. But, Mr. Chairman, we have far too -

MR. TOBIN:

Name names!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please! Order, please!

MR. NEARY: Mr. Chairman, could you get the ignoramus from Burin (Mr. Tobin) back in his seat.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Order, please!

That is an unparliamentary statement.

I would ask the hon. the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw.

MR. NEARY:

Could you quote from Beauchesne,

Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

One quote, I will get the exact

wording for it, is that we are supposed to refer to hon. members in this House by their districts.

MR. NEARY:

Well, if I said the hon. ignoramus from Burin district, would that be in order, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN:

The wording, on page 107 in

Beauchesne, the word 'ignoramus' in debates of May 18, 1961 has been ruled unparliamentary.

MR. NEARY:

Well, I withdraw it, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN:

Thank you.

The hon. the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. NEARY:

Mr. Chairman, we are told, by the

way, and the Premier tries to prop up the morale of his caucus by telling them, 'Look, we are down now, we are in pretty bad shape now, we will make all the unpopular decisions this year and in the next two or three years we will make up for it. We have three years before an election so do not panic.' But what the hon. Premier is not telling the members of his caucus is that he is going to resign before the next provincial election, that he is going to step down, that he does not intend to run in the next election and therein lies their problem.

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MJ - 2

MR. CALLAN: I think that is what he is telling them.

MR. NEARY: That is what he is telling them. He has made that statement publicly.

Mr. Chairman, let me deal with a couple of the statements that were made by the hon. gentleman that were untrue and false. The Chief of Staff in his office

MR. NEARY: got a 19 per cent increase in pay. Since 1981 he has gotten a 19 per cent increase in his salary. That is an average of 7 per cent a year, a little bit above the guideline.

MR. TOBIN: That is not true.

MR. NEARY: It is true. Look at the estimates.

MR. WARREN: A total of 28 per cent.

MR. NEARY: The senior policy advisor this year got a 9.2 per cent increase.

MR. DINN: Over two years.

MR. NEARY: No, over the period of three years - 28 per cent over a three year period. Mr. Chairman, this year, the senior policy advisor to the Premier got a 9.2 per cent increase, and the senior advisor has gotten a 26 per cent increase over the past three years. So there is a falsehood if we ever saw one.

Mr. Chairman, another example of a falsehood. Another falsehood has to do with Mount Scio House, the rental of space in Tiffany Place and the use of the private dining room.

Now, let us see what happened in the days-when the hon. the Premier made reference to the former, former Premier, Mr. Smallwood, what happened in that dining room? Well, here is what happened. It did not cost the taxpayers of this Province one cent, not a cent. When Mr. Moores came in, he said, 'What about the private dining room?' And somebody said, 'Well, the people who eat down there pay for their meals and the wine is given to them, and it does not cost the taxpayers a cent.' 'Well,' he said, 'that is going to change.' 'From now on,' he said, 'we will have the best down there. The best of grub, we will have the best of

MR. NEARY: booze, the best of wine.'

MR. YOUNG: Does the hon. member remember
who used to give him the wine?

MR. NEARY: I do not know, but it was not
paid for by the taxpayers.

MR. YOUNG: Was it Graves?

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman can get up
and make a speech when I am finished but I am only telling
him the facts. The food was paid for. The members who
ate there paid a small fee to the Consolidated Revenue
Fund for their meals and the only cost was the cook.
The cook was seconded part-time from the College of
Fisheries. Now, that was the difference then from what
it is today. Now, what do you have today? What do you
have today, Mr. Chairman?

MR. MARSHALL: Stop raising your voice.

MR. NEARY: I have to raise my voice
because I am being so rudely interrupted by gentlemen
who do not observe the rules of the House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

MR. NEARY: Has my time elapsed?

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, there are only, I think, a couple of moments -

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

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): A point of order, the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

There are two minutes left in the debate.

MR. NEARY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Chairman, there are two minutes left in this long, long debate that has occurred on the Estimates. And the only way I can sum it up is that the hon. the former Reform Liberal, the member for Bellevue (Mr. Callan), got up in this House and started talking about the staff of the Premier's Office being used for the purpose of writing sympathy letters. You know, that is the quality of the debate. If there is any need of sympathy letters, sympathy letters should be sent to the hon. gentlemen there opposite for the way in which they have conducted the debate in the examination of the Estimates in this House. This is the largest budget that has ever been voted by the House. There has not been in the whole seventy-five hours or eighty hours or 100 hours, however much was expended in the Committee of the Whole and in committees themselves, there has not been any more than a half a dozen or a dozen questions on what is this money spent for, what is the purpose of it, why is it higher than it was last year, why is it lower than it was last year, why has not more money been spent here and there? All we get is the type of diatribe that the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) should patent, and which he gave just a few minutes ago.

MR. NEARY: What was it?

MR. MARSHALL:

A diatribe.

MR. NEARY:

His time is up, Mr. Chairman.

MR. MARSHALL:

Yes, time is up. It is unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, that time is up because once again, despite what you do in trying to reform the rules of the House and make the examination of the Estimates more effective, it just goes back to the saying, 'You can bring the horses to the water' - we can drop our h's as we do in Newfoundland - you can bring the arses to the water but you cannot make them drink

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Hear, hear!

MR. CHAIRMAN (Aylward): Order, please!
On motion, 3.1,1-01
through 3.3,2-01, carried.

On motion, Head III, Executive Council, carried.

On motion, that the Committee
rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again, Mr. Speaker
returned to the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): The hon. member for Kilbride.
MR. AYLWARD: Mr. Speaker, the Committee
of Supply has met, and has asked me to report
passing Head III, Executive Council, and ask leave to sit again.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. MARSHALL: Motion 3, Concurrence on
Social Services Committee, Just before we start, Mr. Speaker,
I would just like to say it has been the practice, since this
great reform has been brought in, in the concurrence debates
to have the same rules with respect to speaking, time rules
that is, as in Committee. So I assume that the Opposition
would concur with that. It seems to have worked out fairly
effectively, which would mean fifteen minutes for the opener,
fifteen minutes for the responder, and ten minutes for each
person.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what
point the hon. gentleman is making, because all we can do is
make speeches. We cannot ask questions, we cannot get answers
to questions.

MR. MARSHALL: Yes you can.

MR. NEARY:

We cannot.

MR. MARSHALL:

That is because you do not know how to ask the questions.

MR. NEARY:

Well, Mr. Speaker, before we start let us get the ground rules straightened out. Can we ask questions under each item, each subhead and expect to get answers from ministers as we should have the right to do in this House? Can we do that?

MR. MARSHALL:

Well, I mean, if you want to stop bullying me, sit down and let me stand up, I will tell you.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL:

Mr. Speaker, what we can do, we can do the same thing that the hon. gentlemen had the opportunity to do in the committee but they did not take it. They can speak for ten minutes, ask questions. I am quite sure that the ministers and the committee chairmen would be prepared to answer questions. The purpose of the concurrence debate is mainly for the committee members, and for the members of the House to make comments on the proceedings of the committee that occurred, and here we are considering Social Services, and the departments considered therein. Once we are within the realm of that I am quite sure that the ministry will be quite happy to answer any intelligent questions. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, we have been waiting with bated breath since 1979 for an intelligent question.

SOME HON.MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR.SPEAKER (Russell): Now that we have the rules sorted out I recognize the Chairman of the Social Services Committee, the hon. member for St. John's North (Mr.Carter).

SOME HON.MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR.CARTER: Thank you, Mr.Speaker. The six government departments that we considered were logically assembled as being the Social Services Departments, that is to say the departments that confer a social service as opposed to a material service or a material benefit on any member of the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Each of the departments considered had at least one whole session devoted to them, and the Department of Education had two whole sessions devoted to it. And that is only reasonable because that is the largest department. We found that the system worked, again this year, very well with some exceptions, and these exceptions have nothing to do with us or the Opposition necessarily or the Committee system itself. It was disappointing - well, we were disappointed that members of the general public did not see fit to come in and observe these proceedings. Now, it is true that there could not be very much advance notice given of what department's estimates would be heard, because you cannot presume a committee. We could not presume, for instance, that the Department of Health was only going to take one session. As it turned out it did but we could not presume that, therefore, I was not able to advise the press that on the following day or the following slot that we had allotted to us, that we would be considering the estimates of such and such a department. But to become more specific, Mr. Speaker, in the Department of Health the questions were quite

MR. CARTER: wide-ranging but they seemed to focus on the tremendous increase in the Department of Health's budget in recent years. And quoting from the 1977 budget I note that the Department of Health estimates called for \$206 million current and capital and in the 1983 budget they called for \$455 million. And naturally this gave rise to some questions and it turns out that it is not that we are getting less healthy but that the kind of service that is being provided by the Department of Health involves complex heart surgery and very complex cancer therapy and very complex treatments that are not only complex but extremely costly. In fact, the alarming figure of \$1,000 a day for a bed in some treatment areas was revealed and this comes as a great surprise to many people. It has been suggested a number of times that

MR. CARTER: although the services that are provided by some of these departments to the general public are free, that upon receipt of this service it might be a good idea to give the recipients a receipted bill. In other words, someone who has come out of hospital with a heart operation and probably had to pay the maximum \$4.00 a day for a private room, and let us say he stayed there for ten days, his bill might be of the order of \$40 or \$50. He should also get a bill for probably \$20,000, but receipted by the Department of Health or by the government, the Province of Newfoundland illustrating just what the total cost was. Because the costs of some of these services are enormous. And all you have to do is take the number of people served and divide it into the total budget and you can get some idea of what the cost is.

This is not to suggest that these services should not be provided practically free. But it would not hurt if the general public were able to realize just how much these services cost. Again, still staying with the Department of Health, I made the observation that - I wondered aloud what the cost of the Department of Health's budget would be if no one in Newfoundland had smoked for the last twenty years. And it was pointed out the bill would be something like \$100 million less, that the diseases applied-

AN HON. MEMBER: How much would we have lost in taxes?

MR. CARTER: A member who refrains from identifying himself says, How much would we have lost in taxes? I was going to get to that. The amount that is raised in taxes annually, by taxes on liquor and cigarettes, does not come anywhere near to defraying the health costs associated with those.

MR. YOUNG: (Inaudible).

MR. CARTER: Nothing near! Nothing near! Of course there have to be some guesstimates made. But if the Department of Health officials are able to say categorically

MR. CARTER: that at least \$100 million a year is required to treat the diseases caused and associated with smoking particularly, and perhaps to a lesser extent the consumption of alcohol, then what springs to my mind is not that these practices be more severely taxed or that they be prohibited, because I think freedom is more important even than health, but that a greater proportion of the provincial budget be directed towards education into the hazards, particularly into the hazards of smoking. Now as a reformed smoker myself, I naturally have an axe to grind. I do feel stopping smoking is very beneficial not only in terms of health -

MR. PATTERSON: How many pounds did you put on?

MR. CARTER: One can put on a few

MR. J. CARTER: pounds but one can also carry those pounds a little more effectively if one does not smoke.

It has been something like twelve years for me and I find the benefits to be quite demonstrable.

Again, to get into the Department of Education, the reorganized high school programme came in for quite a bit of discussion and debate and, of course, the student allowances. Because it was just after the Budget Speech that we got into the Department of Education, and the student allowances were discussed at great length. And the minister, I thought, made a very good presentation. She pointed out that the burden on the most needy students would not be any greater than it always was.

MR. HODDER: What about school books?

MR. CARTER: The school books: This point was raised, too, and it has been drawn to my attention, I forget whether it was pointed out in the Committee or not, that although the school book subsidy has been lessened, nevertheless school books still are quite cheap. And, by the way, anyone who cares to look in the ditches of this City with the commencement of the Summer holidays will see a great many torn and battered school books. And I suggest that when the school books are given free, or practically free, there is very little regard given to them, and rather than being looked after and passed on to other grades, they end up in the ditches and garbage cans of this City and I think that is a great pity. And it is too bad that such a benefit is treated in that manner.

On the Department of Justice there was some criticism that sentencing can be uneven, that two people for an identical crime may get widely different sentences. Well, one really cannot comment on that, that is part of our justice system. The judges look at all the surrounding

MR. J. CARTER: circumstances and, of course, act accordingly. However, it was pointed out in the next department, the Department of the Environment, that perhaps people who break the hunting laws receive more severe sentences than those who break - in other words, a person can get more for killing a moose on purpose than they can for killing a person accidentally. It would make for a very interesting debate, because it was pointed out that the sentences for breaches of the hunting laws carried Draconian penalties, whereas certainly the hit and run drivers, and those who cause accidental death and injury, seem to get off relatively lightly.

MR. CARTER: It is a point that will always be debated, I suppose, but I think it should be debated and considered at great length. In the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth-

MR. HODDER: (Inaudible) the Department of Consumer Affairs is responsible for all that.

MR. CARTER: Well, I obviously cannot, in the fifteen minutes allotted to me, touch on everything but I will gladly respond to any questions opposite. I have always made it a point by the way Mr. Speaker, if an hon. member wishes to interrupt and make a comment I will gladly give way and I still stand by that.

In the Department of Culture, Recreation and Youth, the quadricentennial celebrations received some attention and quite a few questions were asked about it, and it is with some pleasure that we note that the Prince and Princess of Wales will be coming to visit this Province in June.

The Department of Social Services - the discussion of rates; The minister advised us that the rates were being raised marginally this year in recognition of the inflationary tendencies for everything, and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary), himself, saw fit to come and act as Acting Vice-Chairman for those estimates and he was naturally given the floor for as long as he wanted it and he made great use of it. In fact, during the entire evening his was the principal voice heard and I do not think that he can complain that he did not have all the opportunity in the world to ask all the questions he wanted to. And I would say that in our Committee the Vice-Chairman or Acting Vice-Chairman, whatever the case may be, who is a spokesman for the

MR. CARTER: . Opposition on that particular department, was given absolutely free reign and was always recognized first and could speak with some reasonable limitation for as long as he wanted to; recognized as often as he wanted to be recognized and with complete concurrence at the end of the session the estimates were passed. If the Opposition had wanted another session, well, I certainly would not have and could not have denied it to them, so I reject any criticism of that aspect of the committee system. I think, not only does it work well for the estimates, I think it will work well, extremely well, especially for complicated legislation and there is some complicated legislation that will come before this House in the not too-distant future and any large complicated bills, I think, could be handled not entirely in the committee stage but partially in the committee stage by going into not Committee of the Whole but a special committee on that aspect of legislation, where it could be chewed over and worked through and thought through and I think everyone would benefit from it.

So there are a lot of points that could be made and I think hon. gentlemen will continue to make them. Just because I sit down it does not mean to say I will not be able to have another 'kick at the cat' as they say, but I will sit down now and let other members comment on these six departments.

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

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, I believe I was the Vice-Chairman of that particular committee. I say I believe because the way the committees are structured, and I have been trying to go to as many as possible -

MR. STAGG: (Inaudible)

MR. LUSH: I challenge any member, I think I got to a fair number of the committees.

AN HON. MEMBER: I was there (inaudible).

MR. LUSH: Circumstances took me out of town on that one.

But, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to say that the hon. gentleman talked about again how the system worked well. Now, I am going to say something unusual. I have to say that I find the hon. gentleman a surprisingly good Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

MR. LUSH: He is very flexible, I must say. It seems as though he becomes a different individual in the committees. In the committees he is an excellent man, I served with him on the PAC and I find the hon. gentleman a good man there, too. I think I have served with him now on several of the Estimate Committees and I have to say he is a good Chairman, a surprisingly good Chairman, a different man altogether from when he leaves the House. As a matter of fact, I sometimes wonder why the hon. gentleman, when I look at him in committee, I sometimes wonder why he is not a Cabinet Minister. I am sure he wants to be one, but I suppose he must have a flaw somewhere. There must be a flaw, because I believe he would like to be a Cabinet Minister. I suppose it is because in the House he becomes so vindictive and so malicious and mischievous that they figure that he cannot carry out the role as Cabinet Minister. But in the committee, enough said,

MR. LUSH: he is a good Chairman, very flexible and allows a lot of discussion and it is a pretty free and open discussion. I certainly compliment the hon. gentleman on the way that he has handled or carried out his responsibility as Chairman of the Committee. That does not say, of course, that I do not have the same reservations about the committee system that I made yesterday in the House. And again, just to repeat, I think, number one, the way that they are structured now, particularly with the numbers that we have, is that they are too crowded, they do not give members on this side the time to give them the thorough analysis that we should, to do the preparation and study. There seems to be a rush to get it all over with and there is no necessity for that. Having two committee meetings a day along with the opening of the House, it is really not necessary. The government is in a rush to get it all over with and get the House closed down. That seems to be the impression, to get these committees all through. And, of course, the less scrutiny they can get, the happier they are. I have said, also, that it makes it difficult for the press when we have all of these meetings scheduled morning and evening and then the House in the afternoon. It certainly makes it difficult for the press to attend all of these meetings. They only have so much manpower, particularly in these times of restraints. They are not hiring

MR. LUSH: extra people so it makes it very, very difficult for the press to cover and, of course, that is a sad situation because the people of our Province have no way to be informed of what is taking place, what is happening with the fiscal and the public policy of this Province and they have a right to know. So it certainly makes it difficult. We have had some committees done, I think, without any reference at all in the media. I know one meeting I attended where there was not one single person from the Press. Now, we carried on a second time, because I hung the thing up on two issues; one was, of course, transportation, where the minister would not provide us with the list of areas that are going to receive capital expenditures this year for road construction and paving. I wanted to see that list, so I delayed it as long as I could. And the other reason, of course, was that the press were not present and I wanted to see if the next night the press would attend to get some coverage on that big Department of Transportation. Another reason, of course, was I wanted to make the point clear about the needs of the Terra Nova district with respect to road construction and paving. Mr. Speaker, that was all I could do, because with the government majority and the time restrictions, I could not hold up the Committee any longer. I said I would hold it up almost until Christmas if I could, but I did not have that power, I did not have that right and I could not do it.

So, Mr. Speaker, these are the reservations I would like to make and the concerns that I have about the committee system. As I say, there are some hon. members on this side who think that it should be ruled out and that we should do all of the

MR. LUSH: debate, all of the estimates on the floor of the House. There are some members who believe that and that is their right. I think it can work the way it is working if the government would be a little more flexible, a little more understanding and would not be in such a rush to get it all over with, would consider the numbers on this side and would consider the difficulties that the press have in getting to these meetings. With a little bit of flexibility, with a little bit of understanding on the part of the government, if they really wanted this system to work they could get it to work, there is no question about that. But, as I say, there seems to be an inclination by the government - not an inclination, that is not strong enough, an effort, a determined effort, a blatant effort by the government to get it all over with, to get the discussion all over with as quickly as possible, if no press shows they are happy, and to get the thing out of the way so that they can close down the House because, Mr. Speaker, they cannot take the heat. They know that there are a lot of problems in this Province today and they want to get outside of the House, of course, where they can carry on their propaganda campaign behind the mikes and this sort of thing, where they do not have the Opposition coming at them, where they do not have to answer. They can get out and get behind cameras and get behind mikes and in their offices and just squirt out their poison without, as I say, having the Opposition there to come at them. This is what they want to do, get out, Mr. Speaker.

If we can get out of here - I expect we will be out of here by the middle of May, if not sooner. Now, they have May, June, July, August, September, October and November, all of that time when the ministers can get out and get behind the mikes, call their press conferences

MR. LUSH: and start squirting their venom and their poison at the federal government or anybody else who comes their way, the teachers or whoever it is, and, as I say, without having the Opposition there to give it another perspective, without the Opposition there on their backs and telling the people the truth about this government. That is what they want to do, Mr. Speaker.

If the government, as I say, wanted to get these committees to work they could, by being a little bit more flexible, by being a little bit more understanding

MR. LUSH: of the circumstances that we are now faced with. So I hope, Mr. Speaker, that they heed my words. I hope that the press will report our concerns about this committee system so that people will know that they are not getting the analysis that they should be getting because of the time constraints and because of the lack of the number of people in the Opposition and because the press cannot attend all of the meetings. We cannot blame the press, there is only a certain amount of manpower they have and they cannot be here all day long.

AN HON. MEMBER: Manpower and womanpower.

MR. LUSH: Well, I use manpower in the universal sense. And that is the way our government recognizes it, because they call it the Department of Labour and Manpower, right? So I use that term in the universal, I do not know if that is the right adjective or not, but all encompassing sense that includes males and females.

MR. MARSHALL: You are a master at speaking words -

MR. LUSH: Pardon?

MR. MARSHALL: You are a master at speaking words without making sense. You are paraphrasing your words now.

MR. LUSH: Well, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is not bad at that himself. When he does come up with any content it is always malicious and vicious, when he does come up with any content.

But, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a few observations on Education. Again in the Committee we came at the government for their taking away the student aid from the students of this Province, making it rough for our students to get an education, to get a post-secondary education by raising the ceiling loan. And it is amazing how the minister squirmed, Mr. Speaker, and tried to defend that move, tried to defend the indefensible, tried to suggest that the students of

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MR. LUSH: this Province were not going to
be deprived of an education because they raised the loan ceiling.
Now, what a ridiculous

MR. LUSH: to force a student to borrow more money and say that was not going to hurt - that was not going to hurt, to force a student to borrow more money. And again, as so often happens in this hon. House, we found out that the Minister of Finance (Dr. Collins) agreed that the students had to borrow more money, that they were going to put themselves more in the hole, that their education was going to be more costly, that it was going to put them in a deficit position, that it was going to be more burdensome to the student, that it was going to be harder now for many students to get an education.

The Minister of Finance agreed with that. The Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) did not, she did not think it was going to hurt anybody. And that is what has gone on in the House so often, with the Minister of Education not in accordance with the facts as given by other ministers.

So, Mr. Speaker, we still maintain that the programme announced by the government is going to have a very serious and detrimental effect on many students in this Province. There are many students who are not going to be able to take this extra burden, because they are not economically equipped to be able to do it, and it is unfortunate. And as I have said before, what we should be doing in this Province is making our student-aid programme more attractive and not less attractive, making it more flexible, and not less flexible. So, Mr. Speaker, our student-aid must continue to be a programme that recognizes the economic problems in this Province. What we should be doing is trying to improve that programme so we can encourage young people from all walks of life, and from all parts of this Province to further their education. Be it a university education, or be it in our trade schools, or Fisheries College,

MR. T. LUSH: we have never wanted to do anything to muddy the waters, Mr. Speaker, we wanted to maintain a neutral position all the way through. We had a couple of major concerns, and I keep repeating that, Mr. Speaker, we had a couple of major concerns; we were concerned that the students get back into the schools, that our educational system operate, that it function, that the students get back to complete their education this year. That was our major concern. We saw no reason for our schools to be closed and, of course, we wanted to ensure that the teachers, as we would any unionized group of workers in this Province, were afforded the full benefits of their Collective Bargaining Act, that they were given the full process. And, Mr. Speaker, that was what we were trying.

MR. CARTER: The member will not put any blame on the teachers at all?

MR. LUSH: Pardon?

MR. CARTER: The member will not put any blame on the teachers at all?

MR. LUSH: The member was not looking to blame anybody. I was not looking to blame anybody. My concern was to get both groups back to the negotiating table or to solve this problem some way or other, either at the bargaining table or through the processes available to us under the Collective Bargaining Act. This is what we wanted, Mr. Speaker, and we were not blaming anybody. But there were times when the minister through her own answers demonstrated, obviously, she was not to be given much credit in this situation. But, Mr. Speaker, we were not out to blame anybody but obviously this dispute has to be resolved, and if there is anything we can do to help we are going to do it. But we are not going to do anything to hinder the process. I wish the minister would assign me as the

MR. T. LUSH: mediator to see if I could not get both groups back to the table, Mr. Speaker. I would have this problem solved, I would have this dispute solved not in ninety days like the Premier, but in ninety minutes. I wish I were the Minister of Education.

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

MR. LUSH: We would not have this bitter feeling throughout the Province we have today.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please!

The hon. the members time has elapsed.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: By leave.

MR. LUSH: By leave.

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

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

MR. J. DINN: Mr. Speaker,

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

MR. DINN: Mr. Speaker, first of all let me say that I would not normally get into the debate on the Social Services Estimates Committee but the hon. member did make reference yesterday to the collective Bargaining process with respect to the teacher situation which legislation comes directly under the Department of Labour and Manpower. He asked the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) the questions knowing that, of course, obviously knowing, the legislation does come under the Department of Labour and Manpower. He apparently either did not want the information or did not want the information at the time that he asked the question. Just to go through the collective bargaining process, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that everything that is possible under the Newfoundland Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act to this point in time has been done. It started out last June 9th

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MR. J. DINN: when the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, which is their right, requested of the Department of Labour and Manpower a conciliation officer to assist them in their negotiations. That was provided almost immediately.

MR. DINN: This is one item under the Act that really - if the member were to read the different labour legislation in the Province, whether it be fisheries legislation for collective bargaining, or the Labour Relations Act, or the Newfoundland Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act, there is one little change in the Newfoundland Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act with respect to the appointment of a conciliation officer in that the request does not go to the minister it goes to the Chairman of the Labour Relations Board. The fact that all the conciliation officers are in my department and one or the other may or may not be available, they always do it through the Labour Relations Board. And in all cases there has never been a case in the last four years and more that I have been in the department that a -

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

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

MR. NEARY: The hon. gentleman is making such an important speech that I believe his colleagues should be in the House to hear what he has to say.

There has not been a quorum in this House, Mr. Speaker, for the last half hour.

MR. DINN: Oh, that is a waste of time. Who wants the information?

MR. NEARY: The Premier gave us a lecture yesterday on members being in their place in this House and it is up to the government to maintain a quorum in the House. We are discussing six departments and there is only one minister representing these departments in the House at the present time. I think that is shameful, Mr. Speaker. There is no quorum.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the Opposition has called a quorum.

MR. SPEAKER (Aylward):

Call in the members.

Order, please!

There is a quorum present.

The hon. Minister of Labour

and Manpower.

MR. DINN:

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

That gives an example of

what the Opposition in this House really wants. The Premier is worried about the Opposition. He is worried about the ineffectiveness, the foolishness that the Opposition gets on with in this House. Yes, he is worried and he has every right to be worried about that situation.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) stood up in this House today after Question Period and asked this House to have an emergency debate on the education system in this Province.

MR. DINN: When somebody gets up to speak about education, what does the hon. member do? He asks questions during the week, questions that relate to my department, asks the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge), and when she refers them to me, the rightful minister who administers the Labour Relations Act and The Newfoundland Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act, they do not want the answers. Obviously the answers would embarrass hon. members.

They have made allegations in this House this week as to whether the Newfoundland Teachers' Association have been provided every service under the act for the current negotiations. And I was going through that process and the hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) wasted several minutes of my time. He obviously does not want the answer. He does not care.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am going to attempt to get through, but I do not think I will have enough time now, so they have been relatively successful in their quest to silence me.

MR. NEARY: By leave.

MR. DINN: By leave? Well, I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for that.

The fact of the matter is that the Opposition asked the questions, nobody on this side asked the questions, and I was providing the answer and the hon. Leader of the Opposition did not want it.

MR. TOBIN: He walked out of the House.

MR. DINN: He walked out of the House.

MR. NEARY: When?

MR. DINN: When you called your quorum.

MR. NEARY: You have to have fourteen members in the House to have a quorum.

MR. DINN:

So, Mr. Speaker, on June 9, 1982 the Newfoundland Teachers' Association requested a conciliation officer. I explained that there is one difference in the collective bargaining process with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association in that the request does not go to the Minister of Labour and Manpower (Mr. Dinn), it goes to the Labour Relations Board. When the Newfoundland Teachers' Association Collective Bargaining Act was drafted and made up by this administration, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association wanted the right to go to the Labour Relations Board for their request for conciliation services. Even though the conciliation services are provided by my department, they wanted that to be done.

As I say, in no circumstances in the past four years and more that I have been Minister of Labour and Manpower have conciliation services or a conciliation officer not been provided to a set of negotiations when requested. So in this case, obviously, a conciliation officer was provided. So on June 15, the Labour Relations Board notified the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, Treasury Board and the school boards that a gentleman in my department was appointed as conciliation officer to help resolve the dispute. The officer

MR. DINN: met with the NTA on June 21st, the officer met with Treasury Board and the School Committee on June 22nd, June 23rd officer met, and, as you can see, the officer was going back and forth between the parties to attempt to get resolution to some of the points. So this continued on and on June 24th the Newfoundland Teachers' Association requested the appointment of a conciliation board. On June 25th, one day, no delay - arrives in my office on June 24th, written, dated June 24th, they requested a conciliation board - I notified the parties, on June 25th, a conciliation board was appointed and who the members of that conciliation board were. Everyone was happy with the conciliation board. There was no problem with that and the conciliation board did its normal routine job. On September 21st, 1982 the board filed a majority report with the minister and a minority report on September 23rd was filed with the minister.

At that point in time as happens
in all situations -

MR. NEARY: Which representative filed the minority report?

MR. DINN: I do not have the gentleman's name here.

MR. NEARY: Was it representing the NTA or the Treasury Board?

MR. DINN: Representing, I believe, the Newfoundland Teachers' Association but I am not 100 per cent sure. Okay? But there was, in other words, a conciliation board made up of three people, two, and the chairman. And the representative of the Treasury Board and the Newfoundland School Boards presented a majority report, which is the report, and a minority report was also presented. Just to keep everybody on record as to exactly what

MR. DINN: transpired in this situation.

So that brings us up to June 24th. Treasury Board notified the minister, that is one day later, Treasury Board notified the minister of Board recommendations which were unacceptable. On October 7th the Newfoundland Teachers' Association notified the minister of board recommendation which were unacceptable. October 13th the conciliation officer, and at that point in time I felt it necessary to appoint the Director of Labour Relations, because I saw it was getting to a serious point, was appointed to convene post conciliation meetings. Now some people get confused with respect to post conciliation meetings and mediation. There is very little difference in post conciliation and mediation. Post conciliation, basically, is to try to iron out the differences as a result of a report of a conciliation board. Mediation is just a half step above that in the process as to whether you appoint a mediator. It is a point at which the Director of Labour Relations, in this case, and the conciliation officer get to a point, cannot get any further, and generally at that point in time negotiations break off again.

MR. DINN: When it gets to that point, if there is a situation arises where one side or the other approaches the department to get back to the table, generally you keep it at that post conciliation stage. And that is what happened in this case.

On November 10th. the Newfoundland Teachers' Association announced that fifty-six per cent of the teachers had rejected the latest government offer. On November 15th., and from there to the 19th., I felt it necessary at that point to appoint the deputy minister of the department. So at this point in time now we are up to November 15th., to the 19th., the Deputy Minister, the Director of Labour Relations, and of course, as always, the conciliation officer who was involved through the whole bit and piece, were appointed to see if there could be a resolution to the dispute. Every possible step then to this point in time was taken with respect then to what the Department of Labour and Manpower could do to get resolution to this dispute, and there was very little outside of what has been done, nothing, as a matter of fact, outside of what has been done could have been done. So we are up to November 14th. Meetings were adjourned, no settlement reached. I was up to the 15th. and the 19th. when the deputy was appointed.

December 9th., and 10th., the Deputy Minister, Director of Labour Relations, the conciliation officer met again with the NTA. In other words, at that point in time there was a kind of a cooling off, if you will, and then we went back at it again on December 9th., and 10th.

MR. DINN: December 20th., the NTA tabled to the Deputy, the Director of Labour Relations, their latest package for settlement. On January 27th. the Department of Labour convened further meetings between the parties where Treasury Board responded to the NTA's position. At that point in time, still no resolution to the dispute. What happens then? Now, you are talking about January 27th. What happens then is that since the Deputy Minister is involved now, the Director of Labour Relations is involved now, and the conciliation officer is involved now, what happens then is in all cases, in this case no different than any other case, in all cases what happens is the Deputy Minister or the Director of Labour Relations will call periodically to find out from either party if there is any change in the position. That might happen

MR. J. DINN: by telephone call, it might be the Deputy Minister going to the NTA people in the NTA building and sitting down, it might be at a meeting, it might be at a social function, 'Listen, is there anything possible we can do to assist you in resolution? Is there any change in your position?' As a matter of fact, several weeks ago the Director of Labour Relations and the deputy minister, having talked to the President of the NTA at a social function, were over to the Department of Education to find out if there was any way, any change, anything with respect to services that could be provided under the Labour Relations Act to the parties to get resolution of the dispute. Now, you have to remember that from January 27 up to a week or so ago a process was being carried out by the Newfoundland Teachers' Association with respect to, and everything above-board and legal and right and proper, with respect to what actions they were going to take. So, all of that process was being gone through. And at that point in time, when you are going for a vote or when you are doing certain things with respect to your association, there is not much that a conciliation officer or the Deputy Minister of Labour and Manpower can do. Generally you wait until these things are carried out and they have a mandate to do one thing or the other and then he calls again to see what if anything can happen. So having talked, say around the March 15th, to the President of the Teachers' Association to find out if there was anything different with his position, they then went to the Department of Education to find out any difference in their position and made them aware that at any point in time he is available twenty-four hours a day to sit down with them to discuss any point, or any change, or anything that can possibly be done by the Department of Labour and Manpower. Now, hon. members also go to a point of saying,

MR. J. DINN:

'Well, what about arbitration?

I cannot attribute motives, but basically what the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) said was that the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) said one thing and the Premier said another thing. Based on what he transmitted across this House, what they basically said was one and the same thing. Arbitration is available only if both sides agree. Now, both sides sometimes agree and both sides sometimes do not agree, in these cases no arbitration. I will give you two examples: I believe in 1979 the Newfoundland Teachers' Association during an election campaign, were having a dispute with the provincial government, with Treasury Board.

MR. F. STAGG:

I remember it well.

MR. DINN:

At that point in time, or shortly after the election, there was a request for arbitration and was granted by both sides. Two years later when the Newfoundland Teachers' Association were negotiating with Treasury Board, and the Newfoundland Hospital Association, there was a demand for arbitration again. At that point in time the Newfoundland Teachers' Association turned down arbitration. So, it is not necessarily the employer or the employee who turns down arbitration.

MR. DINN: And not only that, but it is an extra or extraordinary step that people take in negotiations when no resolution can be made to a dispute, and in my experience it has been either the employers or the employees' representatives who turn down the option for arbitration. Arbitration generally is applied to people who do not have the right to strike. The Newfoundland constabulary is an example where contained in their legislation is a point at which, when negotiations can no longer be carried out, they have an option of arbitration. They do not have an option of striking. So there are two situations - you have an option of negotiation and conciliation and arbitration, you have an option of negotiation, conciliation board, strike or lockout. These are normally the two systems under which we operate and negotiate and conclude collective agreements.

In the case of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, or the Newfoundland Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act, you go through the process of conciliation services, conciliation board, post-conciliation talks, possibly the appointment of mediation which is not binding on either party, which is about the same as post-conciliation and then you get to strike, lockout. Rarely, on rare occasions, very rare occasions, it happened in my experience over the past two years one time, where arbitration was agreed to by both sides. More times than not, it has been my experience, unions do not want arbitration, also employers do not want arbitration because they want resolution to the dispute. To give the hon. gentleman an example, in 1979 when the

MR. DINN: Arbitration Board awarded, the Nurses Union was totally disappointed with the arbitration award because the arbitration award was less than, in some cases, what they had concluded agreement on between the parties. So, when arbitration came up the next time, obviously the union got gun-shy. And, as a matter of fact, most unions, if you talk to most unions they will say to you, 'We do not want arbitration; We do not want somebody outside deciding what we should have over the next period of time', whatever that is generally. And it is the same with employers. They do not want to give the power of the purse or anything else, the operation of their facility, to outside third parties. And that is why you will find there are rare occasions; in the past four years one with the Nurses Union, the other occasions were those occasions where it was in the Act as it applied to negotiations, for example, with the Newfoundland Constabulary, and the Newfoundland fire fighters

MR. DINN: who do not have the right to strike. For all hon. members, the process that has been gone through with the Newfoundland Teachers' Association up to this point in time, and it could conclude at this point in time -

MR. LUSH: He has been up a long time.

MR. RIDEOUT: He has been given leave.

MR. DINN: I have been given leave by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) to go on because he called a quorum, you know.

MR. LUSH: Oh. Okay.

MR. DINN: Yes. Okay.

So everything that is possible under the Newfoundland Teachers' Association Collective Bargaining Act in this Province has been carried out by the Department of Labour and Manpower. So I think, Mr. Speaker, I have that cleared up. I think it is interesting, just to conclude my remarks, it is interesting that whilst the Leader of the Opposition stood up and wanted an emergency debate on the current dispute, we have spent about two hours now in the House and there have been about two minutes of comment on the current dispute between the Newfoundland Teachers' Association and the employer.

So I think I have answered most of the questions the hon. members asked during the week, and some of the points that the hon. member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush) brought up during his few words to the House of Assembly. If there is anything else that the hon. member would like to know about the negotiations, then I would be only too pleased to inform him through the hon. House.

Thank you.

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker.

April 15, 1983

Tape No. 109/

SD - 2

MR. SPEAKER (Russell):

The hon. member for Terra Nova.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I want to stress again our role in this situation because it is very important. There is a poisoning of neutrality but one with concern, concern for the students, that our schools get opened and, of course, the concern that any unionized group be afforded the full process of their Collective Bargaining Act.

MR. LUSH: Now, the hon. minister knows that I have been spokesman on Labour and Manpower for a number of years and never have I used a labour dispute for political points. I never, ever have done that. And the hon. the minister knows that we have had some big disputes, some big disputes since I have been the spokesman on Labour and Manpower. Many times during a strike situation, more times than not, as a matter of fact, I never make a comment, because if I cannot do something to solve the situation or to help the situation, I am not going to do anything to hinder the process or to muddy the waters. Mr. Speaker, that has been my approach. As I say, there have been strike after strike and I have never made a comment.

MR. TOBIN: (Inaudible).

MR. LUSH: Now, number one, we have this situation of schools closed, Mr. Speaker, and nobody can tolerate that situation with our students out of school. And when it appears that a certain group, a certain unionized group are not being granted the full process, then certainly one has to ask questions. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of sniping back and forth in this particular set of negotiations and there has been evidence given by the government that their approaches have been questionable. For example, Mr. Speaker, at one stage the President of Treasury Board - who should be here dealing with this problem - the President of Treasury Board and his negotiating team had been saying they would not negotiate with the teachers because they did not have a strike vote. Now, since when were negotiations contingent upon a strike vote?

MR. TOBIN: Do you believe that?

MR. LUSH: Well, I can only believe what I have heard. I can only believe what I have seen in the

MR. LUSH: press and what I have heard, and I have seen it quoted dozens of times that Treasury Board or the government negotiating team would not negotiate because the NTA did not have a strike vote.

MR. DINN: Who said that?

MR. LUSH: Well, it is coming from the government negotiating team. You are asking the source. Well, I do not know where the source came from, I am just going on what we heard. Now they have a vote and they are still not negotiating with them.

MR. TOBIN: How did you vote?

MR. LUSH: They have a vote. They have the support of their teachers.

MR. LUSH: How did I vote what?

MR. TOBIN: Are you a substitute teacher?

MR. LUSH: Mr. Speaker, that is something else. It is ridiculous for the hon. member to be bringing that up. The news media quoted the other day that I was a former substitute teacher. Now, what a title! A former substitute teacher! What a title! I mean, what nonsense! A former substitute teacher! Mr. Speaker, I mean, it is too silly to talk about. I was a supervisor, I was a principal, I was a vice-principal, I was a teacher and for a couple of years after I got into politics, to cushion the tremendous loss in salary, I did substitute for a little while, but, Mr. Speaker, I have not been substituting for years. I am no longer a substitute teacher.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

Why? Why?

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, I have not substituted, the records are down there, you can check in the department and see when I received the last cheque as a substitute teacher. I am a fool, I should be there, I should be there every day.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:

How did you vote?

MR. LUSH:

I should be there, Mr. Speaker, with all the money I could be getting, but I have not been there. But I am getting off that issue, Mr. Speaker, they are just trying to detract me.

So, Mr. Speaker, the President of Treasury Board (Dr. Collins) has not helped the situation. He has not helped the situation at all and he is not here dealing with this situation now, today. And, as I said before, our concern is that this dispute be resolved. There must be a resolution to this dispute be resolved to be done, Mr. Speaker, so why not now as opposed to two weeks down the road, three weeks down the road? Let us get it solved now. It has to be resolved, And let us stop this snooping back and forth, writing of letters, let the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) take up the phone or go down to the N.T.A., talk to the president and see if we cannot get together. That is what has to be done, or either that, as I say, use some measure within the collective bargaining process to bring them back.

Mr. Speaker, I have been asked many times about whether we are going to legislate the teachers back? Now, obviously, none of us want to do that, none of us want to do it. And let us not let it come to that situation, let us get down and resolve it.

AN HON. MEMBER:

Tell us how you voted.

MR. LUSH:

Mr. Speaker, tell us how.

If I were over there, as I said, I would have the teams back to the negotiating table in ninety minutes, if I were in a position of power, and I wish the minister would delegate to me that responsibility. I do not know if it is unprecedented, but if the minister were to give me that power I would have them back to the bargaining table in ninety minutes, in ninety minutes I would have both sides back.

MR. STAGG:

Would you go as mediator?

MR. LUSH:

Yes, I would go as mediator,

free, too, free! And I would not charge any money for it, Mr. Speaker. So this situation has to be resolved, Mr. Speaker. We cannot punish the students of this Province, we cannot deprive them of completing their education and this nonsense of the programme that the minister got up, I mean, it is too silly to talk about, and all hon. members know it. It is too silly to talk about.

So, Mr. Speaker, let us try to start afresh as the Premier said. Let us start afresh. Let bygones be bygones, and for the sake of the students of this Province let us get our schools open and let us stop this bitterness and stop this bantering, Mr. Speaker, and try to get the situation resolved. It has to be resolved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I have said,

I have tried

MR. LUSH: desperately not to take sides in this particular situation, to try and point out some of the facts as I understood them, what I was hearing, That is all I tried to do, and ask questions of the government and in asking the questions we found out that the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) was not always informed on what was going on. She did not always know what the situation was. As a matter of fact, more often she did not know what the situation was. So, Mr. Speaker, as I said this situation has to be resolved, it has to be resolved. Now, I raised a point this morning, and I am talking about education, I am going to leave that point for the moment, as I said, let it be known that we are concerned about this situation and we would like to see an early resolution, either back at the bargaining table or through some other process within the Collective Bargaining Act. We would like to see it resolved for the sake of the students of this Province and their parents, Mr. Speaker, who are paying the shot for education. That is what we are concerned about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my time is up and I wanted to raise another matter. I have one minute, Mr. Speaker, and I cannot get into that other topic so I will leave it for another time. I do not know if I will be able to get into it today, but let me conclude by saying that our students do not deserve to be out on the streets today. They should be back in their schools and I hope that the government will do everything they can to try to get them back and to try and get this dispute resolved by Monday. It is terrible, absolutely ridiculous that education should be in the mess that it is in today, that the system should be closed down on the backs of the students, Mr. Speaker, and the taxpayers of the Province. I do not think the situation ever should have come to a dispute.

MR.LUSH: Hon. members know what I am talking about. There are a lot of honourable member over there who agree with me , that this situation should never have been, that if the government were negotiators, if they were good negotiators this would never have come to this situation. The problem is that this government, again, cannot negotiate, they cannot negotiate. And, Mr. Speaker, it is down to a matter now of somebody getting egg on their face, this is what they are afraid of. They are afraid about their pride and this sort of thing. Well, Mr. Speaker, our pride and concern right now should be wrapped up in the students of this Province. That is what we should be thinking about, and getting these students back to school as quickly as possible. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like, as I say, to get on to another topic, but my time is up and I will just hold that back for antoher time.

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

MR.MARSHALL: I listened to the hon. gentleman with the usual attentiveness that the hon. gentleman commands when he speaks , Mr. Speaker, and I heard him say that he did nothing and he would do nothing to incite the situation. Well, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to talk about this, particularly in relation to education, which is a matter under Social Services, to point out that although he may not have intended to the hon. gentleman-I will not go into whether he tried to help incite the situation at all. but he certainly was not very helpful in some of his remarks yesterday with respect to his supposed concern for the students. The Minister of Education (Ms.Verge) who has handled this very, very difficult situation in a most admirable manner came up

MR. MARSHALL: in this House with a very constructive programme, Mr. Speaker, to help the young people who are out of school and to assist them in their studies. She came up with a programme whereby there was a toll free number that the students could ring in, that the post would be manned by qualified people who could respond to questions from the students. Now what more imaginative programme could have been brought up to help the students? What did the hon. gentleman do? I was going to call him an hon. person but I do not think I will accord him that. What did the hon. gentleman do? The hon. gentleman proceeds to make fun of it. He writes the CBC because the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge) says that she is going to try to re-arrange the school broadcasts so that they would be more relevant for the younger people. And what does the hon. gentleman do? He savagely attacks the CBC because CBC was going to help the students - calls them strike breakers, scabs, calls them every kind of pejorative term that he could possibly come to. So that is the way the hon. gentleman and the members of the Opposition were trying to help the situation. They say they want the pupils back in the schools. Because of circumstances not within the control of the government, they are not in the schools - because of the strike. So the government tries to do the things to help as best, the young people in the schools, as they possibly can and the official critic for Education on the Opposition attacks this plan, mocks it and also voices a complaint to the CBC because the CBC were going to go along with it. So that is really what the Opposition has done, particularly the Opposition critic.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, in this particular concurrence debate that we have now we are considering Social Services. And I would draw to the attention of the House the fact that here again, particularly the hon. gentlemen there opposite who do not seem to - you will notice when they stand up and they speak either in Committee or in the House, Mr. Speaker, if they are speaking on the Estimates or speaking on the Minister of Finance's (Dr. Collins) Budget Speech, has anyone in this House seen them take up a copy of the Budget Speech or a copy of anything and make a reference to it?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, never.

MR. MARSHALL: Not a single reference to it, all just foolish little -

MR. TOBIN: They do not understand it, that is why they do not do it.

MR. MARSHALL: - inanities and little bits of gossip. Now, I draw to the hon. members' attention the Budget Speech in 1983, Statement 6, on the page to the right of that, the general government sector and it shows the expenditures by groupings of departments: Social Services - \$1,376-odd million has been spent this year on Social Services which involves the Health Department, and the Education Department, the Justice Department as the main spenders. There it is right there, Mr. Speaker, for you to see. Here it is, all the details with respect of it are contained, as I say, in the paper filed by the minister when he gave his Budget Speech and there has not been a single reference to the document that we are considering. But here we go, 65 per cent - \$65 out of every \$100 that is expended by government is expended in Social Services in this Province, and that is mainly towards Education and mainly towards Health.

MR. W. MARSHALL: And Social Services as well is a big spender. That I say, Mr. Speaker, is an indication of the commitment of this government to the social needs of the people of this Province. Now, we have heard a lot of talk about these particular departments; particularly Health and Education have been the departments and the areas that have come in line for criticism and debate and reference since the budget has been brought in - the Department of Health and the Department of Education understandably so, because they are the biggest spenders in the government.

MR. S. NEARY: We are not allowed to criticize now.

MR. MARSHALL: No, I am not saying that, I am inviting you to criticize. I am inviting the hon. gentlemen there opposite to debate the estimates, to debate the financial affairs of the Province in a reasonable way. And what I am trying to do is lead the hon. gentlemen into areas where they can ask appropriate questions rather than get up with their silly little arcane bits of gossip and they do from time to time.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the Department of Health, for instance, the criticism was made - we have increased the expenditure in health services this year by 12 per cent and yet the popular - not the popular opinion, I think generally the public realize what the situation is now, but as a result of the way in which certain people received this it was billed that the Health Department in health services received some 20 per cent or 30 per cent less, or \$20 million less than they needed. Mr. Speaker, they received a certain amount less than they requested, but every single department makes requests of higher amounts than they can ultimately expect. And, as a matter of fact, the Department of Health has a 12 per cent increase which

MR. W. MARSHALL: is substantially more proportionately than the total increases in other departments itself. Now, that happens to be a fact of life, it also happens to be a fact of life that the deficit under the budget is \$28 millions a year, it also happens to be a fact that our taxes in this Province are as high as they can possibly ever be with the sales tax which is there, the highest sales tax in Canada, the highest personal income tax that we have and there is just no further -

MR. NEARY: What have you got to show for it?

MR. MARSHALL: We have a lot to show for it. We have a province that despite its miniscule revenues and despite its great resources that it is not getting its fair return for, but we have a province that is managed better than any other province in Canada and probably better than any state in the United States when you consider it in relation to the total amount of monies that are available to us in relation to the demands that are available there, in relation to the geographical distribution of the population and in relation to many, many other factors that require and have legitimate demands on the public purse. We have a lot to show for it, Mr. Speaker, and we make no apologies. As a matter of fact, we present budgets of this nature with a great deal of pride. The fact of the

MR. MARSHALL: matter is, we would be able to tend a little bit more, we would be able to pump a little bit more into the various demands, the various departments in this Province, as I have told the hon. gentlemen there opposite, if we were able to get an appropriate return from the resources which we have. And that is the only area that is available and that is left to the people of this Province, is to obtain adequate revenues from the resources. It has been said before, and it needs to be said and it must be said again and again and again, because, Mr. Speaker, this Province is threatened, the provision of social services is threatened, the provision of adequate health care, adequate educational services and social services is threatened, unless we can increase the base of our revenue. And the only way we can increase the base of our revenue is through our resources. And, Mr. Speaker, in this particular heading that we are considering now, as I say, Social Services takes some 65 per cent of the total revenue. You take Consolidated Fund Services which takes another 16 per cent and you can see there is very, very little else for the resource areas and the government services such as roads and what have you. And our aim is to increase the revenue base of the Province, to continue to manage the affairs of the Province in such a way that the amount that is necessary to expend on non-revenue producing areas is less so that we have more to go into the resource sections.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): Order, please! Order, please!
The time for the hon.

President of the Council has expired.

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

MR. NEARY: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman must have taken his nasty pills before he came in this morning. Some of the remarks that he made there concerning my colleague about the very excellent presentation and the statement of our position regarding the lockout of teachers in this Province. It was very well and very ably presented by my colleague, the member for Terra Nova (Mr. Lush), and I commend him for it, Sir. He has a handle on it. He is very knowledgeable of the situation and rightly stated our position. Our priority is to get the schools open, to get the children back into the classrooms, to get the teachers back on the job. And, Mr. Speaker, that is the responsibility of the Minister of Education (Ms. Verge). The Minister of Education is shirking her responsibility, is being derelict in her responsibility in not stepping into that dispute and getting the matter straightened out before Monday.

There is an opportunity here now to have another go at negotiations between now and Monday. And that is what the minister should do. Instead of writing provocative letters

MR. NEARY: like the one the minister read in this House this morning, what the minister should be doing is sitting down at the negotiating table with the NTA and trying to resolve any differences they might have between now and Monday. That is the responsible thing to do. That is the decent thing to do, Mr. Speaker. But, as we know, with the track record of this administration, one of the great weaknesses is that the administration cannot negotiate. The Premier is a very poor administrator, he cannot administer the affairs of the Province. He can only play small, narrow political games. That is what he is good at. It is regrettable for me to have to say it and it is too bad, Mr. Speaker, for the Province. The Province is suffering, the people are suffering. The parents are suffering. the students are going to be hurt, they are the innocent victims of the minister's dereliction of duty.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Education (Ms Verge) a question or two while the minister is in her seat. I would like to talk about vocational schools for a moment. There is an awful lot of concern throughout the Province in the eighteen or so vocational schools that we have that some of these schools are going to be phased into the expanded education system, that there are going to be layoffs in the vocational schools. It is even rumoured, Mr. Speaker, that some of the schools may be closed down altogether. I give notice to the hon. the minister that she does not have time to answer the questions today - we only have a couple of minutes left. Mr. Speaker, certainly I give her notice that I will expect to get the answers when we are into the Social Services Concurrence Debate on Monday. I would like for the minister to have some information on

MR. NEARY: the future of the vocational schools, what changes are going to be made. Will there be any layoffs? Will any of the schools close altogether? How many schools are going to be phased into the expanded school system and what role will they play in Grade XII in the future? - that sort of information, Mr. Speaker.

Having said that, Sir, I move the adjournment of the debate.

MR. SPEAKER (Russell): In view of the hon. the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Neary) having moved the adjournment of the debate, before I recognize the hon. the President of the Council (Mr. Marshall), I have been asked if I would extend an invitation to all members of the House of Assembly to attend a short performance by the Theatre in the Schools group in the lobby of Confederation Building at 1:00 P.M. today.

The hon. the President of the Council.

MR. MARSHALL: Mr. Speaker, just before I move the adjournment of the debate, I believe there is a final meeting of the Resource Policy, or the final department. Is it 9:30 A.M. on Monday? Is it here or at the Colonial Building?

MR. STEWART: Here, the Department of Development.

MR. MARSHALL: The estimates on Development here in the House of Assembly at 9:30 on Monday morning.

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